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City University of New York PH.D. 1986

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MORATORIUM AND MINISTRY: A MODEL OF THE ADULT DEVELOPMENT OF FORMER ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS

by

Paul F. Ginnetty

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the City University of New York

1986

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July 17, 1986
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Abstract

MORATORIUM AND MINISTRY: A MODEL OF THE ADULT DEVELOPMENT OF FORMER ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS

by

Paul F. Ginnetty

Adviser: Professor Laurence Gould

This dissertation explores the ways in which current notions about normative adult development, especially those proposed by Daniel J. Levinson, relate to the experience of former Roman Catholic priests. It is proposed that the role restrictions proper to priesthood correlate with an idiosyncratic experience of some common adult developmental tasks, at least in terms of their timing and external enactment. Two case histories are examined to support the hypothesis that for some men the years of seminary and priesthood represent a psychosocial moratorium. The decision to pursue this non-normative lifestyle may bespeak a lack of preparedness to negotiate some of the normative adult developmental tasks, notably separation from family of origin, sexuality and intimacy, and issues around competition and advancement. The moratorium setting offers such men psychological time and space within which to address unfinished developmental business. That

developmental work is often pursued in activities and investments of the self which are parallel or analogous to the enactment which is being deferred. While the specific developmental enactment is being postponed the broader developmental work may be proceeding apace. The decision to leave priesthood in such cases is likely to be an expression of growth, representing the ability to and the need to experience tasks once deferred. It is likely that the idiosyncracy of the ex-priests' early adult years will leave areas in which they must catch up developmentally, both in terms of their negotiation of concrete developmental enactments and the residual psychological work of emerging from the moratorium. There may well be some final costs of having deferred particular enactments in terms of the extent to which such men can recoup or the price they must pay to do so. There are also likely to be some benefits of having experienced a moratorium, ways in which their idiosyncratic experience has allowed for particular enactments and kinds of intrapsychic experience which are more difficult and less common within the mainstream. The moratorium hypothesis suggests that there can be greater variability in normal developmental experience than the prevailing concepts of a fixed sequence of age-linked developmental tasks would suggest.

PREFACE

This study represents a personal journey, one which depended upon the guidance, encouragement and good will of a number of people. Even in the most solitary moments of study, reflection and writing, the "internal representations" of this supportive community propelled me forward along the paths of exploration and discovery. I want from the outset to thank my co-travelers for their invaluable contributions.

I am especially grateful to Eric and Vinny. Each man shared generously and patiently of his time and, more importantly, shared his history and inner life with remarkable candor and trust. The hours I spent with each of them were always interesting and often moving and inspiring. The testimony of their lives attests to the powerful, adaptive forces of development which can enrich the adult years.

I have had the privilege and good fortune or working with a committee of gifted, stimulating and congenial persons. Special thanks goes to Dr. Larry Gould whose scholarly, clinical and common sensical grasp of adult developmental realities first inspired my interest in this

field. It was Larry who helped me recognize the importance of my topic when it first appeared in germ form during my earlier studies. Over the past few years he has helped me bring those ideas to term. My thanks is also due to Drs. Vera Paster and Paul Wachtel who were always interested, supportive and generously available. They, like Larry, were able to be empathic and supportive while maintaining an appropriate stance of academic rigor, challenging me to look beyond the obvious. Drs. Louis Gerstman and Daniel Rothenberg graciously served as readers and provided valued insights during the final days of this sojourn.

Some special friends read the manuscript in its various stages and helped me sharpen my focus, clarify my language and concepts, and discover the joys of orthodox spelling and pronunciation. This group includes G. Roger Wheeler, Esq., and Drs. James O'Toole, Thomas Negron, Michael Weaver and Frank Verdicchio. Dr. Verdicchio, in particular, helped me to integrate my study with the demands and excitement of my own adult development. In particular he allowed me to discover that I was entitled to complete this project and to enjoy the challenges and perquisites of post-doctoral existence.

Finally, my undying thanks to the central cast of characters in my own developmental drama, to my friends, my family of origin and, most importantly, to Carole, Meaghan and Patrick. The latter three especially have suffered along through every step of the process as we finished "our"

dissertation and earned "our" degree. Throughout they have encouraged me, put up with me, continued to make demands of me as spouse and parent and, in doing so, have richly rewarded me and reminded me of what is most important in life. Even in the loneliest moments there has always been someone to do it with and for.

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THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair;
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Evolution of the Idea of Adult Development.

The notion of adult development is a very recent addition to the history of ideas. For many centuries a more static model prevailed, reflected in the ancient conviction that "there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:10) Thus, until recent years the post-adolescent human being tended to be regarded as frozen within a static homogeneity of experience called adulthood--a routinized holding pattern which endured until death. Even Freud, the great explorer who mapped out the course of development within the early years of life, left the paths and passages of adult growth uncharted. In fact his momentous discoveries of the potent influence of early events upon subsequent experience may have abetted the tendency to overlook what was new and different in adult experience. Attention focused on repetitive dynamics, the recapitulation of unresolved childhood conflicts in the events and decisions of adult life, a "perpetual recurrence of the same thing." (Freud,

1922, p.16) It would seem that one aspect of the truth had largely obscured another, as concepts such as fixation and the compulsion to repeat overshadowed and seemed to obviate the idea of ongoing development.

It was Jung, Freud's erstwhile disciple, who pioneered a more dynamic view of adulthood. In a brief essay now regarded to be a landmark of adult developmental theory, Jung (1960) proposed that the nature of life changed in a systematic way throughout the years. Using the daily course of the sun as his metaphor, he asserted that the afternoon and twilight of life are qualitatively different from its morning-there truly is something new under the sun! We spend the earlier "hours" of life "broadening and consolidating our physical existence," (p. 394) pursuing achievement, material attainment and acknowledgement within society. Such expansion, however, is gained at the cost of a certain limitation of consciousness and of psychic potential as "we limit ourselves to the attainable." (p. 394) After life's noon, which Jung posited to be between the ages of thirty-five and forty, an individual is increasingly challenged to embrace a deeper level of consciousness, to renegotiate the values of the more active phase of life while cultivating a sense of interiority and the willingness to deal with issues of mortality. From Jung's perspective, life as an adult represents neither stagnation nor repetition but change and development.

Some Organizing Principles of Adult Development.

Jung's brief essay proved to be a truly seminal document, containing in germ form a number of the central themes addressed by subsequent authors. He introduced several ideas which have particular relevance for this study. First, he suggested that one can identify discrete epochs within adult experience, each with its distinctive character and tasks. The order of such stages, like the procession of morning into noon, is not random or haphazard but reflects a systematic unfolding of personal development. The individual is challenged to respond to the demands of each life stage, negotiating its respective tasks. The notions of stages in adulthood and successive developmental tasks have become prominent conceptual organizers in the field. Moreover, Jung focused not merely on changes in observable roles and behaviors but on certain profound intrapsychic shifts which are related to the external enactments. His discussion of the process of individuation--the integration of masculine and feminine and other purportedly dichotomous aspects of the self--introduced notions which have remained central themes in the literature. Finally, Jung's essay presumes some relationship between chronological age and the emergence of particular developmental enactments and intrapsychic concerns. The nature of this relationship between age and stage has been oft debated over the ensuing years.

Over the course of the fifty or so years since the first appearance of Jung's essay, a number of authors have proposed more elaborate and comprehensive schemata of the order and timing of developmental stages and tasks as well as the nature of and the timetable for intrapsychic evolution. Erikson (1950), for example, presented a model of the eight ages of man. He saw the progression of these stages as conforming to an epigenetic principle, implying that they follow an invariant sequence, each stage having its period of ascendancy--the psychosocial correlate of a critical period. Successful negotiation of any given stage depends upon adequate mastery of those preceding. Vaillant (1977) in his longitudinal study of the evolution of adaptational styles throughout adulthood reaffirmed and expanded upon this epigenetic sequence. Vaillant and Milofsky (1980) presented empirical evidence to support the sequence.

Gould (1978) outlined what he regarded as predictable, age-related stages in the evolution of "adult consciousness." Optimally, each stage brings "transformations" in one's view of self, in the nature of object relations, in the meaning of work and in the general "posturing of the self" in the world. The focus is on the reworking of false assumptions about life--leftover protective devices which represent the recrudescence of childhood consciousness in the events and decisions of adult life. This intrapsychic process is intimately tied to the

procession of specific developmental enactments. Particular events such as moving away from one's childhood home, making career choices, engaging in sexual activity, and experiencing marriage and parenthood (see also Benedek, 1959) reawaken or intensify elements of childhood consciousness, thereby providing opportunities to work them through.

Levinson and his associates (1978) offered a comprehensive and in-depth picture of development during the adult years. Based upon data derived from intensive biographical interviews conducted with forty men, Levinson concluded that there is a universal, underlying pattern of life cycle evolution involving a normative sequence of developmental periods--each such "season" having its own distinctive character of living, crises and tasks. These tasks "define essential work that people must engage in if they are to form a way of living that is appropriate to their current time of life and that provides a basis on which further development can occur in subsequent periods." (1980, p. 289) Contrary to his own initial expectation and, he admits, contrary to our everyday intuitive presumptions about such matters, Levinson discovered significant age linkage in the unfolding of the seasons. Not only do these developmental epochs proceed in a fixed, invariant sequence, but the onset of each period is linked to a particular chronological age in a rather strict manner, with a maximum deviation of three years in either direction. There is,

according to Levinson, an inherent timetable of life structure evolution.

> This finding goes against the conventional assumption that development does not occur in adulthood or, if it does, that its pace varies tremendously and has almost no connection to age. On the contrary, it seems to be closely age linked. (1978, p. 19)

Each of these authors has made a significant contribution to the evolving field of adult development. The implicit and often explicit goal of these various efforts at theory building has been to create a commonly agreed upon model of what constitutes normative adult development--what Gould (1978) has called a "Dr. Spock for adults." (p. 12) So far the variegation of human experience has militated against the creation of any one definitive model or handbook of what constitutes normative adult development. Nevertheless, several commonalities have emerged, yielding some consensus about the developmental tasks and inner preoccupations proper to the various periods of adulthood. Among these commonly cited tasks of adult development are, listed in the hypothesized order of their chronological ascendancy: separation from family of origin and from the pre-adult world; achieving mature sexual mutuality and interpersonal intimacy; working at advancement and becoming one's own man; realizing generativity; and resolving the intrapsychic polarities (what Jung called the process of individuation).

The Present Study. This study explores the relevance of these hypothesized tasks (and their timing) to the

experience of a particular, somewhat idiosyncratic population--former Roman Catholic priests. This interest grew out of an earlier project. In the initial stage of my study of adult developmental theory, I had undertaken the exercise of conducting a biographical or life history interview as a means of more fully understanding some of the theoretical notions about adult growth. After having met for several hours with a forty year old male subject, I began to sift through the interview data, attempting to analyze it within the framework of the normative, age linked sequence of developmental stages and tasks and the predictable course of intrapsychic evolution during adulthood.

It happened that this particular man had followed a "less travelled" road into adulthood; his experience did not readily conform to the models with which I was familiar. He had recently left the priesthood, having spent the previous twenty-four years of his life as a member of a religious order. At the time of our interview he presented quite a mixed developmental profile (at least in terms of his negotiation of some of the more observable tasks along the road of adult development). On the one hand, he was a talented and accomplished individual who had had a rather distinguished career as a cleric. He was clearly a man of insight and of considerable personal maturity. Nevertheless, he also experienced himself to be a beginner, a novice in many areas of adult life. He was anxious to

enter the mainstream, to establish himself in the "outside world." In the process, he was confronting for the first time in his life a number of challenges including dating, making a decision about marriage and parenthood, exploring the secular job market and pursuing financial autonomy. In sum, he seemed to be facing all at once developmental tasks which normatively would have been distributed over the previous two decades.

It became clear to me (based upon the literature and my own personal familiarity with the parameters of priesthood) that this man's experience, while idiosyncratic, was not unique. The idiosyncracy of experience was a reflection of certain lifestyle elements endemic to priesthood and, hence, would presumably apply to other men who had followed the same vocational path. A consideration of some of the typical aspects of the priestly lifestyle will serve to further highlight this idiosyncracy of adult experience, suggesting ways in which a man's negotiation of certain adult developmental tasks may be affected by his pursuit of the priestly vocation and, thus, may not conform to the norm in terms of the presence, order and timing of various developmental phenomena.

A priest's promise or vow of obedience, for example, is likely to affect his experience of autonomy and self determination. Most often the priest is not free to decide where or with whom he will live or work. Such decisions are made by, or at least strongly suggested by, his superiors

who typically make such determinations within a limited range of options. A priest's lifestyle of poverty prevents him from accumulating personal wealth but also frees him from the burdens of providing for his own material needs. Operationally defined, such "poverty" usually means that while the priest personally owns nothing, the often considerable resources of the community or diocese are at his disposal. He can thus depend on being fed, clothed, housed and educated, and in many cases he can expect to have anything from airline tickets to analyst's bills paid for by the religious institution. This consideration would also seem to raise issues about autonomy and separation. Furthermore, the priest ususally does not have to compete in the secular job market, a fact which may skew his experience of the task of working at advancement. Given the so-called vocation crisis of recent years, an able bodied and sound minded priest need never worry about unemployment.

The vow which is most likely to make for idiosyncracy of experience is his commitment to celibacy. Just after high school (in some cases earlier or later) the candidate for priesthood enters into a celibate lifestyle. Whether or not he is always personally faithful to his vow of chastity (i.e., whether or not he may choose to pursue illicit sexual activity), the fact remains that committed relationships, marriage and family are not allowable elements within his lifestyle, and he does not have to go through the normative process of making decisions about these particular

enactments of the developmental tasks of intimacy and generativity.

In short, there is reason to suspect that the experience of a man who has spent a significant period of his adulthood within the seminary and priesthood will be non-normative in terms of his negotiation of certain of the average expectable adult developmental tasks. He may have many impressive accomplishments to his credit, but what is likely to be equally striking in the profile of such a man is what he has not yet done--the apparent deficits or postponements in the realization of personal and financial autonomy, career advancement and certain aspects of sexual maturity, including making decisions about marriage and paternity.

These lacunae of experience raise important theoretical questions. What is the meaning of these apparent deficits in experience? Do the years of seminary and priesthood represent the avoidance or deferral of work on developmental tasks (e.g., intimacy) or merely an absence or deferral of specific enactments of those developmental tasks (e.g., marriage)? Is the absence of experience more real or apparent? Is the actual developmental work on hold or is it being pursued in less obvious ways along parallel paths of development? In either of these cases, to what extent might a man be able to recover from these apparent deficits of experience?

This study is devoted to an exploration of these questions and issues. My goal is to explore how the experience of priesthood relates to the prevailing wisdom about adult development. I am interested in the psychodynamics of choosing, following, and finally leaving this idiosyncratic life path. I wish to explore the internal and external consequences of living out the priestly vocation, of becoming a member of a subculture which requires that one forego, or at least defer, certain normative developmental tasks--or at least some of their most typical forms of expression or enactment, e.g., financial autonomy, marriage and paternity.

The experience of priesthood, i.e., the years of seminary and priesthood, cannot be studied in isolation. It is necessary to examine a man's earlier experience to explore his motivation for following such an idiosyncratic path. Likewise, it is useful to follow the process of his transition to post-priesthood adult existence. Considering these issues in temporal sequence, a number of orienting questions arise.

1. To what extent might the decision to enter the seminary relate to adult developmental issues? The candidate for priesthood is adopting a lifestyle which will make his experience of certain adult developmental phenomena somewhat idiosyncratic. Is that idiosyncracy of experience a coincidental by-product of the desire to be a priest or might it be to some extent an intentional determinant of the

decision? In this respect, it is important to assess how well a man's earlier experience had prepared him to confront the normative challenges of adulthood. In what ways might the decision to enter seminary be an expression of unpreparedness for or conflict about these tasks?

2. The second consideration involves the actual dynamics of the seminary and priestly years. How does the pursuit of priesthood actually affect the course of these developmental tasks? What kind of growth occurs or fails to occur during these years? Again, the absence of particular developmental achievements can have widely different meanings. Does it represent merely the deferral of the enactment of certain roles or activities, or is there evidence of a more radical postponement--a delay in negotiating or even an outright avoidance of the intrapsychic developmental work upon which the external enactments depend? Where there is evidence of conflict over or lack of preparedness for particular enactments, to what extent, and how, is a man able to work on those issues during the seminary and priesthood years?

3. To what extent does the decision to leave ministry relate to adult developmental issues? To what extent, if any, is the wish to leave priesthood inspired by a desire to experience certain enactments of development which the priestly lifestyle does not permit? In those cases where there is evidence of earlier conflict or deficit, does the decision to re-enter the mainstream represent any change in

those issues? Have these concerns sufficiently evolved over the years of seminary and priesthood so that a man is now able to address developmental issues once deferred?

4. What is the course of development after leaving the priesthood? What are the consequences--both practical and intrapsychic--of having deferred certain developmental enactments? Are there any lacunae of experience which an ex-priest needs to fill? Stated colloquially, to what extent might he need to catch up? To what extent is he actually able to do so? How does he set about this task? What are the factors which are likely to inhibit the process of catching up? On the other hand, what experiences of the priesthood years might facilitate the adjustment process, thus bridging any apparent gaps of experience?

5. What are the ultimate consequences in terms of the ex-priest's adult development? Is there ultimately a price to pay for having pursued a non-normative road? Are there any inherent, unavoidable costs of having postponed the enactment of certain developmental steps--either in terms of the limits to which a man can actually catch up or the price he must pay to do so?

6. Many of the previous considerations arise from a deficit model of priesthood. Such a perspective highlights everything that is <u>not</u> happening during the years of seminary and priesthood, e.g., a man does not marry, does not father children, does not have to support himself or others by competing in the economic marketplace. Such

observations are accurate, as far as they go; there may well be consequences for such gaps of experience. A more optimistic model, however, would also consider what the seminarian and priest may be doing instead, in place of the normative developmental enactments which are apparently missing from his experience. Does the experience of priesthood allow for other developmental enactments and kinds of intrapsychic experience which are more difficult, and therefore less common, within the mainstream? In other words, are there life areas in which such a man may actually have a headstart on development and be ahead of the game relative to his age peers?

Three Models of the Vocational Choice of Priesthood. The answers to these orienting questions will depend upon the personal, psychological meaning of priesthood in particular cases. I suggest that there is likely to be a broad continuum of experience in terms of the dynamic meaning of the choice of the priestly vocation and the ways in which the priestly role affects a man's adult development. An individual's decision to enter the priesthood, and remain in the priesthood, could derive from a range of motives--motives which may be quite conflictual or relatively conflict-free.

Considering, for example, the developmental milestone of achieving heterosexual intimacy, a particular man's adoption of the idiosyncratic stance of priestly celibacy could reflect a range of personal meanings. At one extreme

would be the case of a man who is developmentally ready to relate as lover or husband but who makes a largely conscious decision to forego the enactment of these particular roles in favor of a vocation for which celibacy happens to be a juridical requirement. Such a state could be summarized by the equation: minus enactment, plus capacity. Such a man presumably chooses to be a priest <u>despite</u> the restriction of celibacy, despite that particular aspect of being "role-bound." (L. Gould, 1979) Celibacy is accepted as one aspect of what Schallert and Kelley (1970) have called the "role incumbency" of priesthood. The theoretical questions arises as to how such a man addresses the developmental task of intimacy within a celibate context, the extent to which celibacy affords him an adequate environment in which to continue his growth. If such a man ultimately leaves priesthood, could the decision to leave be related to any discontent about the role-boundness of celibacy, the ways in which it restricts the pursuit of particular enactments of the developmental task of intimacy?

At the opposite pole would be the case in which the absence of developmental enactment represents a total avoidance of the requisite psychological work: minus enactment, minus capacity. Such a man could be said to choose the priestly vocation precisely <u>because of</u> the juridical requirement of celibacy, a welcome role restriction which coincides with and serves to mask pre-existing existential inhibitions in the area of sexuality

and intimacy. Marcia (1964) has referred to such a condition as the state of ego foreclosure. Here one would expect to witness little progress in sexual maturity and relational capacity during those years and, for that matter, little motivation to abandon celibacy.

I posit that a middle case would reflect some combination of the elements of role restriction and psychic inhibition. Here the equation would read: minus enactment, some capacity or a growing capacity. In such a case the developmental enactment is necessarily deferred because the requisite intrapsychic and interpersonal readiness is still being forged. The juridical requirement of celibacy affords such a man a less pressured inner and external environment within which he might gradually address issues of sexuality and intimacy, areas in which he had experienced previous difficulties or delays in development. In contrast to the inertia of ego foreclosure, Marcia (1964) here emphasizes the active struggle to grow and work things through which betokens a state of ego moratorium. Erikson (1958) had previously applied this notion to the adult experience of a famous young cleric, stressing the important opportunity for deferral of enactments which Luther and some other young persons find in the state of psychosocial moratorium, "one possible way of postponing the decision as to what one is and is going to be." (p. 43) In such a case the decision to leave priesthood may be an expression of increased

readiness to return to the challenge of adult heterosexual intimacy.

I suggest that the motive for pursuing priesthood and the dynamics of the priestly years will determine the nature and extent of any deficits of experience as well as the extent to which a man can successfully "catch up." The need and ability to catch up will depend upon the ways in which priesthood represented in particular cases either the deferral of developmental enactments or also the deferral or avoidance of the corresponding developmental work. In the most psychically bleak case (foreclosure) the ex-priest might well be unable recoup any developmental lags. Indeed, he might evidence very little desire to do so. In the middle case (moratorium), the ex-priest presumably faces the need to return to concrete tasks previously deferred, having gained in the interim the psychic capacity to confront now what could not have been confronted then. Here catching up would be expected to be a prominent life theme. Even in the most optimistic case, where deferral was incidental to role, there is presumably a need to catch up. The re-entry process here might entail the need to recover from any limitations of experience proper to the priestly role (role boundness) as well as the need to condense enactments once deferred into a shorter period of lifetime remaining.

Organization and Focus of This Study. The present study explores the relationship between the supposedly normative tasks of adult development and the apparently

idiosyncratic elements of the life experience of priests. The concept of moratorium will be explored as a dynamic which underlies and may serve to explain this idiosyncracy of experience in many cases. The relationship between the prevailing theories of adult development and the experience of the seminarian and priest will be explored from both directions. First, in what ways do such general concepts inform an analysis of the individual's actual adult experience? A number of questions will be considered including: how the decision to enter and to leave priesthood may relate to adult developmental issues; how a man pursues or is unable to pursue these developmental tasks as a priest; to extent to which the decision to leave priesthood relates to adult developmental concerns; whether there are deficit areas in which developmental work awaits him after priesthood or possible aspects of experience where he is developmentally ahead of his age peers.

Also important, however, is a consideration of the ways in which the idiosyncratic experience of this population might test and further refine some of the general conceptions of what constitutes normal adult development. If, for example, a man defers the experience of certain developmental milestones and is able to catch up at a later date, how does this postponement of at least the enactment of adult life challenges square with the popular notion of a fixed sequence of developmental tasks? The experience of such a man would seem to raise some conceptual questions in

this regard. Does adult development in every case depend upon the enactment of certain tasks in a particular order? Can a person skip steps and return to them later, perhaps working on several steps simultaneously in an effort to catch up? Is it possible that stages and tasks are being negotiated even when the average expectable enactments are absent; can developmental tasks be pursued in less obvious ways, on a parallel track of displaced or sublimated investments of the self? Similarly, it has been assumed that there are certain intrapsychic correlates of particular developmental stages, e.g., a hypercathexis of masculine qualities during the earlier years spent in life's marketplace, or an increased sense of detachment and interiority during the second half of life (Jung, 1960; Levinson, 1978) It seems likely that the ex-priest's postponement of some observable tasks will have implications for the intrapsychic configuration as well, producing a corresponding idiosyncracy of inner experience and thereby raising questions about the universality of existing theories of normative intrapsychic evolution.

The literature review is organized around a consideration of some of the commonly perceived developmental tasks of adulthood. Woven into the discussion of these developmental tasks is a consideration of the possible variations of experience proper to the seminarian and priest. Two case histories which illustrate this

hypothesized idiosyncracy of adult development will be presented thereafter.

I have used Levinson's schema of developmental periods and tasks as my basic framework, incorporating the insights of other authors as they apply to particular developmental tasks or phenomena. In general, I have found Levinson's ideas about adult development to be particularly coherent and useful. In some respects his ideas are also the most provocative, inspiring the desire to test his notion of a universal order of tasks and the concept of age linkage against the experience of my population-- both in terms of the contents of their seminary and priesthood life structures and the later adjustment process.

Levinson's schema of age-linked stages has become an influential theory within the field of adult development. His model has been greeted as a clinically useful paradigm which can help to discriminate between normative, phase-appropriate developmental crises and those which suggest the presence of individual conflict or pathology. The notion of seasons in a person's life is helpful to the extent that it is predictive, providing a framework within which the vicissitudes of adult development may be understood. The theory is of less help, however, to the extent that it does not embrace the experience of diverse populations. Stewart (1977) and Taylor (1980), for example, tested the applicability of Levinson's model to the life structures of adult women and discovered some significant variations of

experience. It is, likewise, my contention that the Levinsonian paradigm must be somewhat modified if one is to adequately assess the experience and life issues of men who have pursued the less frequented road of priesthood. My hope is that the non-normative or even counter-cultural nature of the priest's experience may prove a fertile ground in which to generate alternative, expanded hypotheses of adult development--constructs which can embrace the experience of such a subpopulation and thereby broaden the scope of what can be considered typical or predictable "pasages" (Sheehy, 1976) into and through adulthood.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TASKS OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Preliminary Concepts. In order to better appreciate Levinson's model of the "seasons" of adult development, it is important to understand some of his working concepts. The change and growth experienced during the various periods of adulthood is reflected in the evolution of the individual's "life structure," a key notion within this system. Life structure is understood to be "the basic pattern or design of a person's life at a given time," (p. 41) the changing posture of self in the world. Life structure involves a confluence of interrelating biological, psychological and social factors. Hence it encompasses a person's love relationships, marriage and family life, occupation, relationship with his inner self, personal interests and a multiplicity of social investments.

The principal units for study are the choices a person makes in the evolution of his life structure--his fashioning of these decisions and how the decisions in turn refashion him, becoming warp and woof in "the fabric of one's life." (p. 42) Levinson sees the life structure as evolving

through a universal, invariant sequence of alternating stable and transitional periods. During the stable or "structure building" periods the primary developmental task is to build a viable and meaningful life structure around the choices made and goals embraced. But because no life structure can incorporate or express all potential aspects of the self in the world, every stable period perforce eventuates in a transitional (structure changing) period wherein neglected or repressed aspects of the self begin to stir and demand attention. The developmental task of such transitional periods is to question, to reappraise the existing life structure in an effort to modify or abandon its inadequate or problematic elements while exploring new possibilities and options around which to build one's life during the next stable period.

Overview of Early Adult Experience. The eras of the life cycle upon which Levinson focused, and which correspond to the parameters of this study, are those of early and middle adulthood. Levinson's Early Adult Era, spanning the years from 17 to 45, clearly parallels Jung's "morning" of life. In the average expectable instance, it is an epoch of biological vigor and heightened mental acumen, of energy poured into the multiple challenges of establishing one's adult status within society. According to Levinson,

> Early adulthood is the time to pay his dues and make his essential contribution to the survival of the species: begetting and raising children, maintaining a marriage and family, giving his labor to the economy and welfare of the "tribe"--that part of

> the species in which he is most fully invested. (p. 22)

Consider how, from the outset, the experience of the seminarian and young priest would appear to be idiosyncratic in its broadest aspects. Whatever his contribution to the quality of "tribal" life may be, he does not participate in the more concrete projects of providing progeny or even tax revenues. A finer consideration of the constituent tasks of this phase of life will help determine the extent of this idiosyncracy, whether it is more real or apparent, and the degree to which it may be dynamically motivated.

The First Task: Separation. The first period within Early Adulthood is, as might be expected, a transitional phase. In the Early Adult Transition (age 17 through 22, plus or minus two years at each pole) the young man must negotiate the related tasks of separating from the pre-adult world and exploring the possibilities for an initial adult life structure and identity. The first task involves gaining distance, psychological if not also geographical, from one's family of origin. Such a differentiation will presumably be further defined when the young man becomes involved in forming his own family of generation. Gould (1978) has perceptively explored the false assumptions which must be challenged if one is to adequately separate from one's family and assume an adult posture in the world. He sees the major developmental work between the ages of 16 and 22 as that of confronting and mourning the "childhood

consciousness" belief that "I'll always belong to my parents and believe in their world." (p. 45)

Priests and Separation. The conceptual question arises as to how a young man's pursuit of the priestly calling may relate to the issue of separating from family of origin and the pre-adult world. In what ways might separation issues contribute to the decision to enter the seminary? How might the experience of seminary and priesthood in turn influence a man's negotiation of the task of separation, yielding an idiosyncratic experience in this regard? Some preliminary considerations suggest themselves regarding the relevance of separation issues to religious commitments. Marcia (1964), for example, has suggested that the meaning of such a religious investment will vary depending on one's level of separation and individuation. The person who has achieved a separate identity is likely to have struggled with and reevaluated his religious heritage, rejecting some aspects while accepting other elements as his own. The person in a state of moratorium is still struggling with these issues. The person in foreclosure has yet to raise any personal religious questions, suggesting a reluctance or inability to face issues of separation and individuation. "His faith, or lack of it, is virtually 'the faith of his fathers (or mothers as the case may be) living still.'" (p. 29)

Individual cases are likely to vary in terms of the degree of separation and individuation involved in the decision to become a priest. The decision to pursue

priesthood can represent more or less continuity with parental values and with one's pre-adult world view. In some cases this vocational choice may represent the fulfillment of a parental prayer. Here the pursuit of priesthood is likely to offer substantial or even absolute continuity with one's pre-adult world--posing the danger (and opportunity) of continuing to belong to one's parents and believe in their world. In other cases there would seem to more discontinuity with parental values and childhood experience. Consider, for example, the situation of a man who enters the seminary against the strenuous objections of his parents--the historical figures of Francis of Assisi and Martin Luther come to mind. Here the religious commitment may be embraced as a vehicle for separation, whether real or apparent, successful or not. In either of these scenarios, of course, separation may remain an unresolved and conflictual issue.

Regardless of the parental climate, the very fact of moving from home to seminary is likely to bestir separation issues. On a practical level, entering a seminary or monastery often involves considerable physical separation. The training institution may be geographically quite removed and there usually have been (until recent years, at least) very severe restrictions on the frequency of visits and even correspondence with family members. Of course, while there may be considerable external separation, the internal, psychological separation may not proceed apace. One is

reminded of Mahler's (1975) insight into these same processes during an earlier phase of life, namely, that if actual separation outpaces the development of the psychic structure needed to truly individuate, a satisfactory internal sense of separateness will not occur.

Levinson pointed to the possibility of such a difficulty when a young man finds himself prematurely removed from the parental home. "His new life setting may provide a quasi-home, where he functions in part as a child in relation to parent surrogates." (p. 73) The danger of such a premature external parting is that it may inhibit the later, phase appropriate, internal process of separation, yielding a "pseudo-adult whose yearnings for parental caring and grief for the lost family, continues to interfere with the emergence of a valued adult self." (p. 74) This dynamic may well apply to the case of the boy who enters a high school "prep" seminary. William Erickson (1983) addressed this issue in his description of one of his priest clients. This man's

> too-early commitment to the Church, and indirectly to his mother, was not unusual. "The priesthood is full of devoted eldest sons of demanding mothers," he commented one day. But, in making a conscious commitment to the priesthood very early in his adolescence he committed himself to defending against and fending off many of the most critical aspects of his own development. (p. 387)

In some cases, however, the seminary may provide a more neutral setting (than the family) within which to work at separation--a buffer zone or transitional state between

total dependence upon family and being entirely on one's own. The importance of adolescent peer groups in allowing for safe and gradual separation from the family has been cited (Lidz, 1968). The seminary may provide a more institutionalized version of this same dynamic, and this may be one of the more important aspects of the moratorium experience in some cases.

Given the perennial nature of issues of separation and individuation throughout the life cycle, and considering the ways in which these processes might be reflected in and/or affected by the choice of the priestly vocation, it is important to explore the relevance of separation issues to this population. Are separation issues to any extent involved in the initial vocational choice? Does the assumption of the religious role allow a man to defer issues about separation and individuation? Could premature separation or conflict with parents over this vocational choice leave a residue of unresolved separation concerns? Conversely, is it possible that in some cases the seminary experience affords an opportunity for gradual successful separation which would not be otherwise possible. If so, how do separation issues evolve over the years of seminary and priesthood? To what extent might leaving priesthood represent the resolution of separation issues (or the activatation of new ones)? To what extent, if any, does the process of catching up entail work in the area of separation?

Entering the Adult World. In this structure building period (ages 22 through 28) a young man faces the challenge of creating a relatively stable first adult life structure. This challenge, says Levinson, is an inherently paradoxical one. On the one hand he must remain open to exploring the various possibilities of adult living, resisting any temptation to call premature cloture on the debate of life. He should avoid rigidly fixed commitments and self definitions which would preclude the necessary, phase-appropriate provisionality and tentativeness of his investments. "Even when he makes relatively binding initial choices regarding marriage and occupation, they still have a provisional quality: if they don't work out, change is still possible." (p. 79)

On the other hand, his activities must have a sufficient quality of stability and personal investment to provide a sense of rootedness and continuity as opposed to the alternative of irresponsible, schizoid drifting. Levinson depicts the dangers and difficulties inherent in steering between the Scylla of overcommitment and the Charybdis of underinvestment. Some men drift aimlessly while, at the other extreme,

> are men who early in the period make strong commitments and start building what they hope will be a stable, enduring life structure. These men usually make their key choices, especially of spouse and occupation, in the Early Adult Transition and try to maintain great continuity with the pre-adult world. They tend not to explore alternative possibilities or to question the life structure they have built. (p. 80)

Priests and Stability/Provisionality. At first glance it seems that the situation of the seminarian/priest might well correspond to the scenario of premature stability outlined above. The priest in training spends his early adult years in the largely sheltered and regimented environment of the seminary, a setting which would not seem to allow for extensive experimentation or exploration. In addition to such external constraints, there are likely to be intrapsychic factors which discourage a sense of provisionality. The notion of fidelity to one's religious calling would seemingly militate against much of a climate of tentativeness, of "hanging loose" about this early adult career choice. As an oft cited passage of scripture has it, "the Lord has sworn and he will not repent: 'tu es sacerdos in aeternum (you are a priest forever [italics mine]).'" (Psalm 110)

Hence this period could be perceived not as a time of searching but of the lock-step pursuit of a predetermined goal. Whether the seminary is chosen because of or in spite of its character of stability, the practical implications are likely to be the same. With this one early decision to enter training for the priesthood, most subsequent determinations regarding life structure and lifestyle seemingly fall into place. Place of residence, living companions, course of studies, work and duties and, of course, marital status become a given. The only decision called for is the implicit, preconscious, ongoing decision

to stay. The young man is apparently spared the trials and errors of experimentation--the newness and strangeness of trying on a series of different roles and life stances. The Early Adult Transition of such a man could tend to fuse with the Entering the Adult World phase, yielding an early assumption of the novice role within the world of religious formation and the adoption of the stable identity--albeit, a prematurely stable one--of the priest-in-training.

On the other hand, it could be maintained that there is something peculiarly provisional about seminary and priestly life. In some senses there are few life commitments which are as easy to undo. In a number of seminaries with which I am familiar, the leavetakings could be very rapid and unfettered indeed. The young man who had decided to leave (or who had been asked to leave) would mysteriously fail to appear at the dinner table one night. Before the community had finished their meal he was packed and on his way--with none of the goodbyes which, it was feared, might scandalize, upset or perhaps tempt his peers.

Priests have traditionally been taught not to put down their roots too firmly as they must be prepared for frequent and often abrupt transfers. Such transfers are, ostensibly, a simple matter of packing up one's limited belongings and unpacking them in another rectory or monastery. Leaving the priesthood is--at least on some levels--hardly more complicated than such a transfer. In fact, on occasion a man's decision to leave ministry has been presented to

parishioners under the guise of Father having accepted "another assignment." There would thus seem to be a built-in provisionality--if it doesn't work out, one leaves, there being no spouse or children to deal with or property to apportion. Priesthood is in some senses a relatively reversible state of life--in stark contrast, for example, to what both Stewart (1976) and Taylor (1980) found to be a striking lack of provisionality in the life structure of women whose early adult experience included the responsibilities of bearing and raising children.

Hence there are elements of both provisionality and stability inherent in the role and lifestyle of the seminarian and priest. The nature of the balance forged in individual cases will vary. In some cases this vocational choice may provide the optimal opportunity to be both committed and open to new life directions, a chance to satisfy the Levinsonian task of building a stable but provisional first adult life structure. In other cases the choice may have quite a different meaning, allowing a man to escape or defer either the demands of commitment or the uncertainties of exploration.

One could view the deferral or avoidance of either aspect of this task as secondary by-products of a primary motive to be a priest. In some cases this is presumably the case. In other instances, however, the vocational choice may be largely motivated by a desire to defer or avoid the work associated with this task. It could reflect the

avoidance of exploration through the early assumption of a well defined, unifocal commitment. Conversely it could provide an unusual opportunity for unfettered "hanging loose." Moreover, both elements may be simultaneously active. Erikson (1958) observed that the qualities of overcommitment and ready reversibility are not necessarily incompatible; indeed, they are constituent elements of the experience of moratorium. In his discussion of Martin Luther's monastic years, he suggested that early overcommitment to such an ideology and rigorous ascetic challenge can actually be an unconscious means of deferring the assumption of a fixed adult identity. A man is consciously commited while unconsciously keeping his options open.

> It may seem strange that as definite and, in fact, as eternal, a commitment as is expressed in the monastic vow could be considered a moratorium, a means of marking time. Yet in Luther's era, to be an ex-monk was not impossible; nor was there necessarily a stigma attached to leaving a monastic order, provided only that one left in a quiet and prescribed way...I do not mean to suggest that those who choose the monastery, any more than those who choose other forms of moratoria in different historical coordinates (as Freud did, in committing himself to laboratory physiology or St. Augustine to Manichaeism) <u>know</u> that they are marking time before they come to their crossroad, which they often do in the late twenties, belated just because they gave their all to the temporary subject of devotion. The crisis in such a young man's life may be reached exactly when he half-realizes that he is fatally overcommitted to what he is not. (p. 43)

<u>The Cardinal Tasks of Early Adulthood: Loving and Working.</u> The two areas in which a man is challenged to make

a commitment reflect Freud's axiom about "lieben und arbeiten." According to Levinson, the twin tasks are to pursue an occupational direction that is both viable and personally meaningful, while forming a marital relationship with a woman who will support one on this journey. He observes that synthesizing these primary investments of the self is no simple matter. "No one can succeed fully in these tasks." (p. 83) In fact, the EAW life structure of the majority of men (53% of his subjects) was found to be incomplete and unsatisfactory or even oppressive. Perhaps the priest's deferral of this challenge is incidental to his desire to enter ministry, or maybe it reflects an consciously or unconsciously motivated postponement. In either event it would appear that he is, at least temporarily, spared the work of coordinating these investments of self, of balancing the specific enactments of marriage and career.

The Second Task: "Lieben"--Intimacy, Sexuality and Marriage. Most theorists regard the pursuit of adult heterosexual relational capacity, with the attendant challenges of forming a marriage and family, to be a central developmental mandate. Erikson saw the challenge of intimacy as crucial. The young adult, having hopefully emerged from the Sturm and Drang of adolescence with some nascent sense of ego identity, must be willing to risk the fusing of identities in "mutual psychosocial intimacy with another person, be it in friendship, in erotic encounters,

or in joint inspiration." (1968, p. 135) The capacity for mature genitality is seen as the hallmark of this kind of mutuality, affording the supreme experience of mutual regulation in which, ideally, the opposing pulls of ambivalence and distancing are periodically dissolved.

Erikson's notion of genitality is broader than time spent in bed. His more encompassing job description of this developmental task involves the following:

1. mutuality of orgasm
2. with a loved partner
3. of the opposite sex
4. with whom one is able and willing to share a mutual trust
5. and with whom one is able and willing to regulate the cycles of
   a. work
   b. procreation
   c. recreation
6. so as to secure to the offspring, too, all the stages of a satisfactory development. (1950, p. 266)

In sum, while the concept of intimacy may encompass friendship and "joint inspiration," there is nevertheless a clear sense that the normative resolution of this developmental crisis will entail the experience of heterosexual (genital) pairing, an experience which is incompatible with a celibate lifestyle.

Vaillant (1980) expanded the criteria of intimacy beyond Erikson's original "mutuality of orgasm." Yet his position remained somewhat equivocal. While he conceded that intimacy need not entail marriage, he also found the presence of a stable marriage to be one of the best overall predictors of adult adjustment. Nevertheless, he

acknowledged that within certain cultural and vocational contexts--the church is explicitly mentioned--other "markers of intimacy" must be sought, as there can be within those settings healthy and highly generative individuals who have never married.

Vaillant and Milofsky (1980) established as an operational marker of intimacy that one had "lived with another person, other than a blood relative, in an interdependent and intimate fashion for ten years or more." (p. 1349) While this definition sounds more inclusive, the authors also observed that this other person is almost always a wife. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the experience of most priests would satisfy this criterion of sustained, interdependent living. One must consider the general mobility of the priestly lifestyle, the frequent transfers, as well as what had been, until recent, more psychologically informed years, the active discouragement of friendships which appeared to be too intense or exclusive in nature. (Goergen, 1974)

Levinson also sees forming a marriage and family as a normative developmental challenge of early adulthood. All of his forty subjects were or had been married and 80% of them had had a child. Levinson comments that "powerful forces impelling us toward some form of marriage and family seem to be a given in the biological and psychological makeup of the individual and in the nature of human society. (p. 207) While on the concrete level these tasks might seem

to be accomplished in the actual events of weddings and births, the real developmental work is, of course, carried on before, during and after such marker events.

Levinson stresses the gradual, cumulative nature of growth in this area, especially with respect to a man's evolving ability to relate to women. So profound and central a task--that of realizing adult, peer relationships with women--is obviously not accomplished overnight. The years of early adulthood involve a gradual process of exploring the meaning of "woman" in one's life. A man is increasingly able, it is hoped, to work through conflicts over sexuality, dependency, rageful feelings towards the powerful maternal figure, and the related ambivalence about the feminine aspects of his own personality. "It takes time for a young man to learn about his inner resources and vulnerabilities in relation in women, and about what they offer, demand and withhold from him." (Levinson, p. 106) Gould (1978) pursued a parallel track, detailing the aspects of childhood consciousness that must be reworked in one's relationships with women.

All of this, says Levinson, represents very difficult and frequently painful developmental work. The nature of the difficulty and strains reflects the distinctive character of the developmental period (early adulthood) in which marriage and family building generally occur. It's what he calls a "bootstrap operation," something a man needs to do in order to grow but something he is required to do

before he has the psychic means to do it well--an on the job training kind of situation. A man somehow does it before he is ready to. Not to be willing or able to attempt the task betokens a developmental failure.

Priests and Intimacy. The decision to pursue a celibate calling is likely to affect a man's negotiation of many aspects of the developmental challenge of intimacy. Celibacy, by definition, disqualifies the priest from the task of forming a marriage and family--the modal avenue along which the developmental challenge of intimacy is pursued. Moreover, if he is faithful to his vow of chastity, he will also forego the experience of sexual intimacy. Even if he does allow himself illicit sexual encounters, they are likely to be colored by and limited by his public profession of celibacy and the dissonance between this profession and his actual behavior--hardly an ideal climate in which to pursue a love affair.

Hence the requirements of celibacy militate against the typical enactments of the developmental task of intimacy. In a broader sense, however, the priest is neither disqualified nor excused from the task of intimacy. Goergen (1974) stressed the importance of achieving celibate forms of intimacy. In terms of heterosexual intimacy, the celibate is faced with the challenge of discovering the meaning of women in his life and forming adult peer relationships with members of the opposite sex. The absence of the genital dimension and marital potential will

circumscribe this process but need not preclude it. Levinson (1978) has enumerated the great variety of relational components which exist between a man and a woman. These include affection, emotional intimacy, romantic love, sexual expression, dependency, nurturance, friendship and collaboration. Priests eschew sexual and marital union but are not without other forms of relating to women.

Indeed, the nature of the seminarian and priest's relationships with women is likely to be diagnostic of the meaning of celibacy in his life and, by extension, the meaning of his choice of priesthood vis-a-vis the demands of adult development. Again, the absence of certain enactments (in this case, sexual and marital relating) does not necessarily indicate an incapacity for such. Some men become celibate because celibacy happens to be a juridical requirement of the priestly role. The history of their relationships with the opposite sex, of their attitude towards sex and towards their own sexuality indicates that they would have been ready for the more normative enactments of the task of intimacy.

Leah Davidson (1980) in a study of ethnic variables in psychoanalysis provided a clinical example of such a man. She described her analytic work with a young priest whose Italian background seemed to have contributed to a comfortable sense of earthiness, interpersonal connectedness and sexual vitality. "He felt full blooded even as a priest...his roots were a valuable asset to his self esteem

as a priest, even in celibacy." (p. 276) Some men were presumably capable of taking on the tasks of intimacy before they joined the seminary, and their capacity may grow apace during the years of formation and ministry. It is likely that these men will have less catching up to do after leaving ministry, although it does seem that some readjustments would be inevitable in the wake of numerous years of celibate living (the need to work through the aftereffects of that aspect of role boundness).

In other cases, however, the choice of celibacy may be partly or largely determined by pre-existing conflicts and inhibitions regarding intimacy--existential obstacles to sexual intimacy and marriage which necessitate the juridical ones (or at least render such restrictions more palatable). It is important to investigate whether these issues evolve at all over the course of seminary and priesthood. Is anything happening during those years?

Where the choice of celibacy is an expression of psychic foreclosure around the task of intimacy, one would expect to observe an active avoidance of meaningful work on sexual concerns and issues of intimacy--a retreat to the role of the asexual cleric who avoids women entirely or permits himself only superficial, highly controlled and sterotyped relationships with them. Relationships with men might conceivably suffer the same fate. The idea of playing catchup would hardly apply to such a scenario. There would seem to be little motive to do so and, even if there were,

the prognosis would be bleak considering the crippling nature of the conflicts which presumably necessitated the original foreclosure and the ensuing years of psychic stagnation.

A more optimistic case is where the years of seminary and priesthood betoken an active struggle to address and resolve some pre-existing conflicts about intimacy, where they provide a psychosexual moratorium. Vaillant (1977) identifies such a dynamic in the lives of some of his Grant Study subjects.

> In their twenties, many such men and women have experienced real difficulty with intimacy, yet over the years they have managed to give richly of themselves to the next generation and to grow in the process. I suspect it is not coincidence that <u>such individuals all achieve strong group allegiance, as if the security of group membership provides them the security and strength that most adults find in one-to-one intimacy</u>. [italics mine] (p. 216)

Vaillant's observation suggests that such a choice can represent an adaptive rechanneling of energies impeded by developmental difficulties. Stated colloquially, some men may choose for a time to make a virtue of necessity--to pursue a noble path which requires them <u>not</u> to do precisely that of which they are at the time incapable. With time and corrective experience, they may find themselves better equipped to return to those developmental tasks which were originally problematic.

If, in fact, the seminary and priesthood represent for some men a moratorium period and setting within which to work on unfinished business concerning sexuality,

relationships and commitment, some questions arise. What elements of a man's early experience contribute to the need for such a moratorium in the first place--in other words, how does he differ from the man whose assumption of the priesthood is apparently more free from conflict? In what ways might conflicts and concerns evolve over the years of religious life--in other words, how does the experience of the priest in moratorium differ from that of his colleague who is in a state of psychic foreclosure?

It is important to explore the ways in which a man's experience within the moratorium years is preparing him to confront developmental challenges once deferred. Does his attitude towards sex and his own sexuality change over this period? What is the nature of this change and what experiences seem to facilitate it? Does change occur in conjunction with or in the absence of sexual expression? Does his manner of relating to women evolve over the years? Of the various relational elements articulated by Levinson, what aspects are most operative during the seminary and priesthood period? Is there movement toward the attainment of adult peership with women? If so, again, how prominent a factor is the specifically sexual dimension in promoting this change?

Research by Halstead and Halstead (1978) indicates that the seminary and priesthood may indeed provide a sexual proving ground for some men. They analyzed the percentage of priest and nun subjects who had ever (even once)

experienced various sexual behaviors during three periods in their lives: before entering the seminary or convent; during their religious life; and after leaving. (Their definition of celibacy is that a person had never experienced any of these behaviors, including masturbation.) 126 questionnaires completed by 50 ex-priests and 76 former nuns yielded the data presented in Table 1.

Table 1

% Who Had Ever Experienced Various Sexual Activities Before, During and After Religious Life or Priesthood

	Before	During	After
Masturbation	47%	57%	85%
Intercourse	11%	15%	82%
Oral Genital	9%	5%	75%
Homosexual	11%	21%	16%
Celibate	46%	32%	10%

In terms of the moratorium hypothesis, it is interesting to note the apparent sexual dormancy before entering religious life. (The average age for entering religious formation was 18 for both sexes.) In those first eighteen years of their lives, most subjects had not had any genital experience with another person and almost half of them had never masturbated. The Halsteads noted that "the number of people who were sexually active actually increased after taking the vow of celibacy." (1978. p. 88) They did

not present the raw data which would allow the reader to differentiate between the experience of nuns and priests but they did note that the men were more likely to have experienced intercourse--85% of the 15% who had intercourse during religious life were men and 100% of the male subjects had intercourse after leaving priesthood. Women were somewhat more likely to engage in homosexual activity during religious life--62% of the 21% who had had that experience were women. Ultimately, they concluded that "celibacy and religious life are not necessarily synonymous." In fact, it apppears that most subjects used the years of seminary, convent or priesthood as a way station towards greater sexual expression.

Within the framework of the moratorium hypothesis, some further dynamics might be considered. It is possible, for example, that a growing ease in relationship with women might occur during the years of seminary and priesthood precisely because of the celibate role restriction. Relationships with women during the these years have what might be considered the advantage of beginning in a more neutral, less charged context. Initially the man's public profession of celibacy precludes the scenario of sexual intimacy or ongoing commitment. This factor may allow such relationships to start more slowly, as friendships which do not immediately engage conflicted aspects of the self. It is possible that later in the natural history of such relationships--when there is a more solid basis for caring

and trust, the sexual and dependent aspects can be gradually introduced and are more likely to be successfully integrated than if they had loomed as bald challenges from the outset.

The latter consideration prompts a somewhat more radical suggestion. If it is possible that the goal of adult heterosexual intimacy can be pursued in heterosexual relationships which are not explicitly sexual, might it not also be pursued to some extent in relationships which are not even heterosexual? Can friendships with other priests and seminarians (relationships which may or may not include sexual and genital involvement) serve as a testing and proving ground for the developmental task of intimacy. As Hartmann (1958) has observed, "it is possible, and even probable, that the relationship to reality is learned by way of <u>detours.</u>" (p. 18) In either of these cases, the man's decision to leave ministry could represent a readiness to return to the developmental crisis of intimacy with enhanced ego strengths and compensatory resources gained during the interim--a second chance developmentally to do now what could not be done before.

I have suggested that the choice of a celibate lifestyle can have different meanings in individual lives, from a largely conflict-free component of the priestly role to an expression of moratorium or even psychic foreclosure. Similarly, the issues of celibacy and sexuality may be a more or less prominent factor in an individual's decision to leave ministry. In the case of the man who leaves to get

married, one of the following two dynamics is likely. Either the man was always capable of that particular enactment (identity achieved) and finally tired of the role restriction of celibacy, or he may have been initially incapable of this particular expression of intimacy (moratorium) but has, by virtue of his personal growth, become able to face the challenge of marital intimacy.

Likewise, it would seem that the need to catch up (as well as the desire and the ability to do so) will vary greatly depending upon a man's experience, including the development which occurred or failed to occur during the seminary and priesthood era. In some cases the years of celibacy may leave a residue of obstacles and inhibitions to be worked through. It is also conceivable, however, that the experience of celibacy has enriched the ex-priest's appreciation of intimacy, has yielded an ability to relate well and deeply to a number of persons beyond his spouse. Specifically, one of the possible legacies of celibacy may be a greater than usual comfort with relating on an intimate level with friends of the same sex, an experience which Levinson found to be sadly lacking in the life structures of most of his subjects.

The Third Task: "Arbeiten"--Working at Advancement. The other principal task of the early adult era involves forming an occupation and working towards advancement and seniority within it. Levinson sees the major work in this area as occurring after the questioning, reappraising period

called the Age Thirty Transition (ages 28 through 33). It is during the Settling Down period (ages 33 through 40) that a man must build his second adult life structure. In doing so, he generally focuses on ("settling" for or upon) those aspects of his life which are most central and important to him, which will constitute his "personal enterprise." The world of work is usually a primary focus. Having passed through the novice phase of the twenties, a man in his thirties faces the challenge of consolidating his occupational skills and identity, gathering in the process the experience and credentials needed to move from junior to senior status within the adult world.

Levinson employs the particularly evocative metaphor of "the ladder" to capture the nature of this developmental task. Each man's ladder is unique, reflecting the idiosyncracy of his aptitude and dreams. It may involve an an "increase in social rank, income, power, fame, creativity, quality of family life, social contribution--as these are important for the man and his world." (p. 59) The ladder has an internal aspect, its personal meaning, as well as an external social aspect which provides more objective criteria according to which success or failure may be reckoned. The occupational realm is likely to be the most focally cathected area in this latter regard. The work world lends itself to quantifiable units (rungs) of advancement, e.g., to become a foreman, a sergeant, a full professor, or, one supposes, a monsignor or abbot. Most

often there is an implicit, if not also explicit, timetable connected with such achievements--'and to do so before I am thirty-five or forty.'

Vaillant also sees the pursuit of such quests as endemic to the normative phase which he has identified as the time of Career Consolidation. He is impressed by the driven, totally absorbed quality of the period. A man in this period reaches mightily for the golden ring and is not especially given to self-reflection or social critique. This period in life has the flavor of an adult latency (or Industry) stage--short on conscious conflict or introspection and long on doing.

> Rather than question whether they had married the right woman, rather than dream of other careers, they changed their babies' diapers and looked over their shoulders at their competition. (1977, p. 216)

Regardless of what might be perceived as the shallowness or even crassness of this stage, Vaillant asserts that it is an essential link in the epigenetic sequence, something a man must do.

Levinson sees this concern with advancement and seniority as reaching a crescendo in the second half of the Settling Down period, the so-called Becoming One's Own Man (BOOM) phase, ages 36 through 40.

> A man's primary developmental tasks in Becoming One's Own Man are to accomplish the goals of Settling Down, to advance sufficiently on his ladder, to become a senior member of his enterprise, to speak more clearly with his own voice, to have a greater measure of authority, and to become less dependent (internally as well

> as externally) on other individuals and institutions in his life. (p. 144)

Becoming One's Own Man is often an emotionally charged process, as a man struggles with the forces that seem to hold him back--both external obstacles and internal conflicts and prohibitions. It is a time fraught with contradiction as a man longs to be both autonomous yet affirmed, to speak freely with his own voice but to experience his message as accepted and validated.

A man's pursuit of his own seniority is likely to reawaken unresolved conflicts, fears and desires from the past. This unfinished business can include left over narcissistic vulnerabilities, oedipal themes and issues around dependence and authority--the legacy of the little boy within the adult. "It is the little boy inside the man who transforms the ordinary mortals with whom he is involved--bosses, wives, mentors, colleagues--into tyrants, corrupters, villainous rivals, seducers and witches." (Levinson, 1978, p. 146) A man must do battle with these spectres in hopes of reaching a higher level of resolution whereby he might become more truly his own man. (This phase, incidentally, provides a good example of how a developmental view of adult experience embraces but goes beyond the psychoanalytic concept of repetiton. "When severe conflicts and difficulties occur at this time," says Levinson, "they must be seen both as a renewal of pre-adult problems and as a reflection of the developmental work of becoming more fully adult." [p. 148])

Priests and Advancement: Whereas a man's assumption of celibacy has fairly obvious implications for his pursuit of the task of intimacy, it is less clear how the developmental task of working at advancement will be affected by the choice of the ministerial profession. To what extent might the choice of this vocation relate to issues about advancement? How cathected are achievement and advancement within the seminary and priestly life structure? What opportunities for advancement exist? To what extent is the image of the ladder a satisfactory metaphor for the experience of such men?

The latter question is many faceted and suggests contradictory considerations. On the one hand there is much to suggest the relevance of ladder language. The church is a decidedly hierarchical organization which offers some opportunity for upward mobility. The majority of curates eventually become pastors (or at least get transferred to a more prestigious parish). A handful of pastors become chancellors or bishops. The hierarchy is pyramidal--there's not much room towards the top. Nevertheless, it does represent a possible ladder. Other possibilities for advancement are more subtle. A priest might, for example, become quite well known and much in demand as a gifted preacher or spiritual director. Moreover, some priests are simultaneously involved in other roles and job spheres--the so called "hypenated priests," e.g., priest-psychologist, priest-editor--and thus may also be climbing rungs within

that other professional field. Furthermore, Levinson clearly states that the ladder need not be simply a matter of promotions and pay raises, but for some individuals might involve less quantifiable progress along the lines of social contribution and human welfare.

Nonetheless, I submit that the image of climbing the ladder may not adequately describe the experience of priesthood. The activities which would, at least theoretically, appear to be most central to the priestly vocation--spiritual guide, model, comforter, leader of worship, "alter Christus" (other Christ)--do not readily lend themselves to precise definition or norm referenced stratification. In a similar vein, Taylor (1976) has suggested the inadequacy of the ladder motif in conceptualizing the life experience of women whose prime occupation involves homemaking and child rearing. It's difficult to quantify growth and progress as a mother or spouse. Similarly, it would seem hard for the priest to point to measurable rungs of compassion, or holiness or "priestliness" that he had scaled. Moreover, to do so--to point to one's progress in virtue--would perhaps be to sin against pride and so to be knocked down a rung or two! The New Testament (Lk: 14, 8-11) tells the moral tale of the man who assigned himself a place of honor at the banquet, only to be relegated to the lowest place. Conversely, the humble man cowering at the back of the room is invited to sit at the dais. The moral of the story would seem to be that

there may indeed be a spiritual ladder but the best way to reach the top is not to climb, or at least not to appear to be climbing!

Hence there is some sense that advancement and ladder climbing are deemphasized, and may even be devalued, within the priesthood. As was true in the case of celibacy, the choice of the priestly vocation is likely to have different personal meanings relative to this issue of advancement. Some men may have had no pre-existing conflicts about competition and achievement and presumably chose priesthood despite any inherent deemphasis of advancement activities. These men may have successfully found a way to satisfy advancement needs within the clergy or in some other area of self-investment or may have found a satisfactory means of sublimating their pursuit of success. It is possible that for some of these men, the situation and climate of priesthood ultimately afforded an insufficient opportunity for advancement, or offered too many mixed messages about the propriety of such a pursuit. Such men might be expected to have finally tired of the situational curtailments of their ladder ambitions and of the deferral of the enactment of particular achievements. These men may have left priesthood in search of a profession where they could be less role bound and could more readily scale their ladders. Houck and Dawson (1978), based upon the Rorshach responses of 152 Roman Catholic seminarians, concluded that those who leave the seminary and priesthood are likely to be more

aggressive than their peers who persist. "Leavers do not find outlets for their aggressive impulses in the seminary [and] thus are driven to change their goals." (p. 1136)

For another sort of man, however, the priesthood may have offered the opportunity to postpone the enactment of advancement and achievement and to thereby dodge or defer the psychological work of confronting conflicts about assertion, competitiveness and success. Mark Kane (1977) found most of the priests he studied to score very high of passive-receptive scales. A passive young man, conflicted about ambition, might well feel anxious, conspicuous and victimized within another profession. Within the priesthood such passivity might appear less conspicuous, more role syntonic. Few environments or professions would seem to place so much emphasis on service and so little on personal advancement or achievement. As a priest a man could hope to avoid the head to head competition which he fears while making a profession of altruistic surrender (A. Freud, 1966) in the milieu where the meek hope to inherit the earth. Again, virtues can be born of necessities.

Where this avoidance of the active and assertive aspects of development is a function of psychic foreclosure, little change or growth would be expected. But if the deferral of assertion and competitive engagement is a symptom of a moratorium experience, one would expect to observe an active struggle to come to terms with these issues. Where this is the case, what experiences within the

seminary and priesthood seem to contribute to a greater comfort with and ability to deal with issues of assertiveness and advancement? Are there experiences of success or mastery within the priesthood which may prepare a man to pursue more secular career goals? In general, does the experience of the moratorium prepare such a man to return to and more directly confront issues, choices and situations once deferred, to face now a developmental mandate which he could not have negotiated previously.

It may thus occur that in one case a man eventually decides that he has to leave priesthood in order to be more free to pursue advancement. In another case it may be that a man discovers that he is finally <u>able</u> to leave priesthood because he has finally allowed himself to integrate his wish for advancement. In the first case the restriction is experienced as external and situational; in the second as a personal, intrapsychic inhibition. In either event, how much evidence of the ladder phenomenon is there within the post-priesthood life structure? Where does the ex-priest experience himself to be on the ladder--high enough or struggling to catch up?

A related practical issue, of course, is the extent to which the skills and credentials gleaned during the previous years are translatable to the new life setting. How much continuity and carry-over is possible? Is a man able to somehow make a lateral transition to a reasonably senior role (rung), or might he be facing that bottom rung called

"entry level"? There are likely to be important individual differences in this regard. The priest who has a Ph.D from Princeton, for example, will almost certainly be in a different position than the one who has a bachelors degree from a non-certified seminary college. The man who had established himself in a career before entering the seminary may have an advantage over the ex-priest who entered religious life at the age of thirteen.

The man who leaves priesthood at age 45 may experience a greater urgency to climb the ladder than the one who departs at age 29. On the other hand, he is also likely to confront more realistic obstacles. Carola Mann (1985) has written of the important role of reality in the dynamics of mid-life. Reality confronts a person with the fact of mortality and human limits. A man making a radical mid-life career change, she suggested, must accept that "being middle aged effectively limited how far he would be able to go in a new field where he would have to start from scratch." (p. 291) Thus it would seem that age, training and pre-priesthood experience will affect a man's ability to work at his own advancement upon re-entering the mainstream. No doubt there are many other and perhaps less obvious variables which will affect a man's attitude towards and progress along the post-priesthood ladder.

<u>Becoming One's Own Man and Priesthood.</u> A related point is whether the life structure of priesthood allows for a sufficient sense of Becoming One's Own Man, of affirming and

voicing one's own sense of authority. Certainly a priest is a figure of some authority, and exercising and achieving comfort with this priestly authority could be for some men a real vehicle of BOOM. The role may help consolidate a man's personal development in this regard. But it could also be observed that priestly authority is a largely delegated authority, derived from the superior and ultimately, it is believed, from God. The priest, it could be said, is listened to precisely become he does not speak with his own voice but, rather, as a messenger of a higher authority.

Some men may nevertheless manage quite well to become their own persons as priests (just as some priests find acceptable ladders to climb). Other men, however, may experience more difficulties or suffer from pre-existing inhibitions in this regard. Barry and Bordin (1967) suggested that ministry is attractive to certain men because it automatically bestows upon them the status of authority.

> Within certain limits, no matter what his personality or competence, the priest *a priori* enjoys an authority, a dignity, and a security not granted to others without trial, and these factors may play a considerable role in the choice of the priesthood. (p. 397)

A recent work of fiction nicely highlighted the possible relevance of BOOM issues to the priestly role. Andrew Greeley, the noted priest-sociologist, has written a number of novels which have been regarded as controversial within traditional Catholic circles--controversial because they deal honestly with the sexuality and life concerns of

priests. His novel Ascent Into Hell (1984) is an account of a man's departure from priesthood. It is striking that so many of the issues faced by the protagonist concern the challenge of BOOM. At one point the hero is confronted by a wealthy, successful parishioner who has had enough of the priest's passive stance.

> "You've got no balls, Father; you're a hack; you're the dummy through which the monsignor speaks. [italics mine] A man like you would never make it in my world." (p. 144)

Forced to compare himself to his age peers, to this assertive CEO and to the other executives and professionals in the parish, the priest concedes the following self assessment:

> He was a clerk, an errand boy, a flunky, a man permitted no hormones in a community where hormones counted enormously. Not to have a woman was perhaps understandable, but not to be his own man was inexcusable. [italics mine] (p. 144)

I suggest that this is an instance where art aptly captures lived experience. Consideration of the vow or promise of obedience is relevant here too. Insofar as the superior dictates, or at least strongly suggests, the priest's assignment, residence and other life details, a sense of becoming one's own man may be difficult to achieve.

Is BOOM sufficiently possible within the priestly life structure? To what extent might vocational obstacles to BOOM contribute to the decision to leave? Schallert and Kelley (1970) in interviews with 317 "drop out" priests

frequently encountered complaints of powerlessness, of having "no voice."

> "Why should I bother developing my talents, trying to engage myself in a creative way in the life of the Church, when it won't make any difference in the long run? I've had the door slammed in my face too many times when I've approached my superiors. Creative involvement for them means simply 'I'm a maverick.'" And others put the same question in another way. "The future of the Church is in the hands of one or two men. It will take them a long time to bring about any meaningful change. Why should I piddle my life away waiting for these changes to take place?" And still others "I am a mere 'cog in a wheel,' simply replaceable." (pp. 447-48)

A study by Reilly (1978) based on questionnaires completed by 233 active priests found that problems with authority and lack of communication with the church hierarchy were the two most serious problems faced by priests. Moreover, the statistics bear out the importance and intensity of these issues during the so-called BOOM years. While only 27% of all priests surveyed expressed concerns about problems with authority, 44% of priests ages 35-44 complained of this difficulty. Similarly, 35% of the priests surveyed complained of a lack of communication with the hierarchy, but 51% of those in the 35-44 age group expressed this sentiment. Reilly also found that disagreement with church positions in matters of faith and morals created a great deal of role conflict for the priests surveyed and for the smaller sample whom she interviewed. "Many men do not agree with Church policy yet they are official representatives of the Church and are expected to

present and uphold these teachings." (1978, p. 83) She found that it was difficult for such men to speak with their own voices and still remain in the active ministry. Often they were faced with the choice of "either ritualistic conformity to Church teachings or departure from the ministry." (p. 84)

In a similar vein, Schoenherr and Greeley (1974) found inner directedness, defined as "guidance by an inner core of principles and character traits, rather than by external influences," (pp. 412-13) to be the single most significant personality variable in accounting for decisions to leave ministry. Hence a man's inner directedness--the echo of his own authoritative voice--may finally lead him out of priesthood. It is also possible that a man needed an experience of moratorium to come to terms with the challenge of becoming his own man. In such a case, development during the years of seminary and priesthood may have allowed a man to discover his own voice and to speak more freely with it, to outgrow conflicts about becoming his own man. In either event, how prominent are BOOM concerns in the lifestyle of the ex-priest?

Mid-life and Its Tasks. Whatever the course of the Settling Down period, particularly the success or failure to achieve the goals which fueled the BOOM years, structure building once more gives way to questioning and change in the form of the Mid-life Transition (roughly ages 40 through 45). Levinson identifies three developmental tasks as

proper to this time of life. The first is to terminate the early adult era and reappraise the life structure which was formed within it. The second quite related task is to work at modifying certain life structure elements, including one's relationships with younger persons. The third task is to deal with and hopefully to reconcile a number of intrapsychic polarities. For the purposes of this study I will concentrate on the mid-life structure element of relating to the young and on the negotiation of the intrapsychic polarities.

The Fourth Task: Generativity, Relationship with the Young. An important life structure element likely to undergo modification at mid-life is what Levinson has called the Relationship with Young Adults. Normatively a man at forty has children who are being ushered into early adulthood--even as he is leaving that temporal domain. "No longer a youthful father raising small children, he is a father entering middle age and seeking new ways of relating to his adolescent and young adult offspring. (pp. 254-55) He is taking a step away from "the more elemental form of the parental impulse" (p. 253) i.e., actually raising a young family, to that wider, more abstracted form of caring for the next generation which Erikson (1950) has called generativity. Considered in its most concrete aspects, the experience of the ex-priest will not conform to this norm. He is likely to be actually starting a family at the time in

life when most other men are celebrating or lamenting the emptying nest.

It was noted above that while Erikson's concept of intimacy included a great variety of relational patterns, there was nevertheless the strong sense that it would normatively include actual sexual pairing--an experience not available to the celibate. A similar tension is evident in his discussion of the succeeding developmental challenge of generativity which he defines as "primarily the concern for establishing and guiding the next generation." (1968, p. 135) While generativity is not simply coterminous with procreation and is broader than the physical begetting of offspring, nevertheless, Erikson suggested that this challenge of adult growth is more directly and even more fully met by those whose nurturing activities include the actual biological generation of children.

He conceded that there are persons who either because of misfortune or "special and genuine gifts in other directions" (1968, p. 13)--celibacy within the ministry would seem to apply here--may displace the parental drive to various forms of altruistic and creative giving. Nevertheless, Erikson would seem to have the bias (and not necessarily an unreasonable one) that such subliminatory activities are clearly second best. "The concept of generativity is meant to include productivity and creativity, <u>neither of which, however, can replace it as</u>

designations of a crisis in development." [italics mine] (p. 138)

This limit to the efficacy of sublimation seems inevitable given the close relationship between this Eriksonian stage and that of intimacy. Normatively the first challenge leads to the second--"the ability to lose oneself in the meeting of bodies and minds leads to a gradual expansion of ego-interests and to a libidinal investment in that which is being generated." (p. 138) Generativity, he adds, must be seen as a crucial step along both the psychosocial and the psychosexual schedules of development. The celibate apparently pursues the former course without being immersed in the latter. Hence the priest's chosen exclusion of a genital outlet in the stage of intimacy has repercussions for the subsequent stage as well, making his experience idiosyncratic (by way of being strictly subliminatory) for both.

Vaillant (1980) was more explicitly generous and expansive regarding the applicability of the concept of generativity to those who have pursued a celibate lifestyle. Generativity, he explains, is a broader concept than merely raising crops or children. "It involves assuming responsibility for the growth, well-being, and leadership of others," (1980, p. 1350) and thus includes the roles of mentor and guide--specifically to young adults or to society at large. Thus the earlier priestly activities of these men (and indeed the ongoing work of men who have not left

ministry) might well be deemed generative in this broader sense.

Generativity and Priests. The developmental task of attaining generativity can thus be interpreted in a strict sense which requires an actual procreative role or in a broader, more nuanced way which emcompasses all manner of giving to the next generation. A consideration of the experience of my population could yield support for either interpretation; the testimony of their lives seemingly cuts both ways. On the one hand they spend a number of years as celibates who are involved in an ostensibly generative profession, assuming responsibility for the growth and well-being of others. Conceivably, many priests are able to find creative and satisfying ways of caring for and contributing to the development of others. Indeed, this may be another area in which the priest has a head start; he spends his early adulthood making those sublimated and broadly generative investments of self which Erikson and Levinson have designated as tasks proper to mid-life. Hence the testimony of their priestly life structures suggests than a generative lifestyle does not depend upon procreation.

On the other hand, their departure from the celibate lifestyle opens up the possibility of actual paternity. That new possibility may be a coincidental by-product or to some extent a directly intended result of the decision to leave priesthood. It is important to assess in particular cases how the procreative motive may contribute to this

decision, the extent to which the desire to father is a factor in the decision to stop being "Father." Is there in certain cases something missing in the more sublimated form of generativity which prompts a wish to experience what Levinson calls "the more elemental form of the parental impulse"? (p. 253) In terms which parallel the discussion of the priest's negotiation of the developmental challenge of intimacy, does he perhaps feel a need to move from broader, more sublimated and vicarious forms of experience toward activities which more directly address the developmental need, i.e., toward sexual expression, marriage and, finally, parenthood. (Appropos of this, Davidson [1979] has described the therapeutic process in working with Roman Catholic patients, especially priests and nuns, as a matter of encouraging movement away from sublimation toward more direct involvement and risk taking as the preferred response to life.)

Once again the original motivational factors must be considered. Is the postponement of the specific developmental enactment of parenthood simply an indirect consequence of the desire to be a priest or might there be some underlying dynamic determinants--possible conflicts about begetting children, offering them supplies and serving as their model? If so, are there experiences within the years of seminary and priesthood (moratorium) which serve to prepare a man for actual parenthood, which somehow make the idea of fatherhood more consonant or acceptable?

In either event, how prominent is parenting in the catchup agenda of ex-priests? Practically speaking, what are the implications of beginning fatherhood at a later age? While men who defer parenthood do not face some of the concrete biological consequences encountered by women (the difficulties or dangers of conception later in life), there are still likely to be practical implications of postponement. What are the possible stresses or difficulties associated with having deferred this developmental challenge? While a man can become a father at almost any time in his life, he only has one opportunity to be a twenty year old father. In some vague sense perhaps there is a biological imperative at work, at least in terms of physical vigor and life expectancy as they affect the decision to father a child. On the other hand, what might be the advantages of having postponed parenthood? In what ways is the 35 or 45 year old better equipped to assume the mantle of paternity? Has having been "Father" given him any head start in learning to father?

The Fifth Task: Individuation, Resolving the Polarities. Jung saw the mid-life period as a crucial juncture in the lifelong process of individuation. The specific developmental challenge of mid-life is to surrender the state of simple monistic consciousness in order to understand and embrace the divided or dualistic nature of existence. The person growing into his middle years is faced with "the necessity of recognizing and accepting what

is different and strange as a part of his own life, as a kind of 'also-I.'" (p. 393)

Such a balanced vision was not possible or even advisable during the so-called morning of life. The exigencies of establishing oneself led to, and in fact depended upon, the neglect or even active exclusion of certain aspects of the self. Dimensions of the personality remained dormant and repressed as a man was busy with achievement--restricting his consciousness to the attainable.

> Many--far too many--aspects of life which should also have been experienced lie in the lumber-room among dusty memories; but sometimes, too, they are glowing coals under grey ashes. (p. 394)

At life's midpoint these embers are likely to ignite. To shift metaphors, the stifled voices of these neglected dimensions of the self whisper or even clamor for attention.

What results is likely to be a tempering of the values, ideals and style of living which held sway during the first forty years. Typically, the driven, hypermasculine man may now be introduced to the untapped feminine, receptive elements of his personality. Hopefully, these aspects of the self will no longer be held at arm's length but will be explored and integrated. Simultaneously, there is expected to be a mounting need and challenge to look within, to develop a sense of introspection and interiority which had not been realizable during the marketplace years of the twenties and thirties. Jung does not predict a complete

reversal of qualities, but rather a better balancing and integration of apparent opposites, an growing ability to come to terms with the shadow side of the self. Thus a man does not become entirely feminine, nor does the extrovert evolve into a recluse. One must live, says Jung, with the tension of opposites.

Levinson (1978) has provided a further elaboration of this process of exploration and integration. The process of mid-life individuation, he maintained, involves the challenge of reconciling four major paradoxes, aspects of the personality which had previously been thought to be dichotomous and polar. He identifies these four polarities as Young/Old, Destruction/Creation, Masculine/Feminine and Attachment/Separateness. The latter two will be considered in this study.

Masculine/Feminine: Resolving the Polarity. Both Jung and Levinson see the masculine/feminine dichotomy as an inescapable by-product of the normative developmental tasks of early adulthood and the corresponding culturally and socially conditioned definitions of masculine and feminine endeavors. The need to establish oneself as a man, to get ahead, to attain power and success is seen as depending upon the supposedly masculine characteristics of assertiveness, stamina and daring--a general style of thought and action unblunted by sentiment. A man engaged in such a pursuit has no time for--indeed, he is likely to be quite threatened by--the so-called feminine qualities, the "softer," more

affective, nurturing and perhaps dependent aspects of his personality.

The developmental task at mid-life is to come to terms with the basic archetypal meanings of masculinity and femininity. The previously repressed or split off feminine aspects must be experienced and accepted as part of oneself. Those aspects of the self which had been projected onto women (or assigned by way of projective identification to the "special woman") must be welcomed home to where they first originiated. Hinton (1979) described Jung's therapeutic interventions with mid-life men as encouraging the patient "to win back the feminine part of himself from projection...to heal the sick woman in himself." (pp. 534-35)

The feminine can be integrated only to the extent that it becomes reframed and more positively referenced. Thus perceived, the feminine can be experienced--no longer as weak and worthless--but as enriching one's inner life, interpersonal dealings and avenues of creation. It would seem that the process is circular --the feminine becoming ever more positively regarded and responded to in the self and in others as it becomes further integrated into one's life structure. As masculine and feminine become more integrated, aspects of life which had been rigidly segregated along gender lines can begin to interpenetrate and enrich each other, making it possible for a man to be at once ambitious and nurturing, analytic and empathetic.

Attachment/Separateness: Resolving the Polarity. A second dichotomy concerns the tension between attachment and separateness. Once again, the exigencies of early adulthood tax one quality disproportionately. The demands of survival and the personal challenge of carving out one's own niche in the world require that significant energies be devoted to engaging with, adapting to and, in certain ways, modifying the external world--all of which are "attachment" activities. The man in his twenties and thirties is likely to have difficulty developing the corresponding sense of separateness, the ability to explore the inner world of imagination, fantasy, play and meditation. Jung (1960) points out that while it is normal and necessary for the young man to be engaged with and rooted in the external world, the rules and priorities of existence change over the years, demanding an increasing sense of interiority and contemplation.

> For the young man is it almost a sin, or at least a danger, to be too preoccupied with himself; but for the ageing person it is a duty and a necessity to devote serious attention to himself. After having lavished its light upon the world, the sun withdraws its rays in order to illuminate itself. (p. 399)

Levinson observes that a man at mid-life "needs to reduce his heavy involvement in the external world...he must turn inward." (p. 241) Such interiority is necessary in order to reappraise one's life, to tone down the strident demands of the striving ego and to become more familiar with the inner voice of the archetypal self. An associated

development is what he calls "detribalization," a growing critical distance from the limited values and outlook of one's particular society. Detribalized man seeks a more balanced, universal and philosophic view of existence than was possible during the early years of striving to establish and hold one's place in society. Eliot Jaques (1965) saw such a deepening, more philosophical approach to life (and to art) as a function of having confronted and to some extent integrated the fact of one's own mortality, a process of reworking the depressive position.

The Polarities and the Priest. I suggest that the idiosyncratic character of the priest's life structure will influence, and perhaps significantly skew, the man's placement along the continuum of these polarities. The deferral of certain developmental enactments, and possibly of the corresponding developmental work, is likely to correlate with a non-normative balancing of these intrapsychic elements. In some cases there may even be a complete reversal--a negative image of the expected configuration. What is "figure" for their age peers may be "ground" for them. In some cases the idiosyncratic balance of intrapsychic polarities could be a primary cause of the developmental deferral--a man chooses to, or even has to, defer certain common enactments because he marches to a different intrapsychic drummer. In other cases the idiosyncratic intrapsychic profile may be the result of the deferred enactment itself--once having adopted the priestly

role, a man finds himself selectively exercising certain aspects of his personality (and not exercising others).

Consider how the history of postponements of developmental enactments and the hypothesized need to catch up may relate to their experience of the masculine/feminine polarity. Some possible dynamics suggest themselves. They spend a number of years in a service vocation which could be presumed to exercise the more nurturing, feminine aspects of the self. They also stand in a tradition of spirituality which places a premium on submissiveness--a receptive, open listening in prayer, a willingness to be filled and led by the Spirit. Mark Kane's (1977) comparative study of Protestant ministers and Roman Catholic priests found the latter to score significantly higher in the personality traits of passivity, receptiveness and dependence. Fenichel (1945) underscored what he saw as the inherent passivity of celibacy, citing as an extreme form of passivity the "self-castration" of priests, "symbolizing the abandonment of all activity in order to attain a passive-receptive merging with the omnipotent person." (p. 365)

In general, then, there would seem to be a greater than usual loading towards the feminine pole, at least as the feminine has been socially and culturally defined. (Bem [1974], for example, empirically tested prevailing notions of what constituted masculine and feminine traits and behaviors. Expressions such as "compassionate, sensitive to the needs of others, gentle and yielding" were associated

with femininity. "Assertive, competitive, ambitious and forceful" were identified as masculine traits.) In some cases this accentuation of the feminine, nurturing aspects of the personality could be essentially a by-product of the priestly role, a stance which evolves as role syntonic. In other cases there may have been pre-existing personality traits which pulled for such a profile prior to the career choice. Hence this accentuation of the feminine may be an outgrowth of, or a predisposing determinant of, a man's career as a priest. In either event, how does the experience of seminary and ministry affect the masculine/feminine balance? I postulate that in some cases the decision to leave ministry is related to an emerging shift in this balance. The discovery and acceptance of previously dormant assertive, competitive and masculine dimensions of the personality could prepare a man to confront developmental tasks previously deferred, and to emerge from the experience of moratorium.

Moreover, the hard work of leaving and having to establish oneself in the world is likely to depend upon and, in turn, further enhance the development of so-called masculine traits. In fact, the flavor of the mid-life individuation process for some ex-priests may well resemble what Hinton (1979) described as the challenge that women face at mid-life to integrate the animus, to pursue "the development of focussed objective thinking and more independence and assertiveness in the world." (p. 536) At

the time in life when their age peers are busy taming and reining in the masculine, phallic aspects of the self, the ex-priest may need to truly unleash them for the first time. Similarly, the passive, receptive, so-called feminine qualities are likely to become cumbersome and even unaffordable as a man begins to climb the ladder at age forty.

A similarly paradoxical development might be expected in terms of the vicissitudes of attachment and separateness in their lives. Normally the several years of training for the priesthood, and often the priestly lifestyle itself, afford unusual opportunites for solitude, contemplation and the pursuit of the inner journey. Indeed, it is a highly valued biblical and contemplative stance to "be in the world but not of it." Thomas Merton (1971), one of the seminal Roman Catholic spiritual writers of this century, often advocated the contemplative posture of loving the world from afar. Of course, some men may be largely unaffected by this role element of separateness and contemplation. In other cases the reflective, distanced stance may be accepted as an element of the job desription but as essentially inimicable to the individual's temperament and personality. In yet other cases, the separateness and solitude of the priesthood might provide an institutional setting in which to live out one's own detached and circumspect style of dealing with the world. Houck and Dawson (1978), comparing the Rorschach responses of Catholic seminarians to established norms found

the seminarians to be decidedly more introversive than their secular age peers.

I suggest that in some cases the decision to leave ministry reflects a readiness to become more engaged in the affairs of the world. Leaving the priestly lifestyle behind (emerging from moratorium), a man embarks upon a new, less restrictive and less protected relationship with the world. In a reversal of what Levinson found to be true of his population, it is likely that the ex-priest has done enough "being" and needs to be more actively "doing," (1978. p. 243) becoming more, rather than less, engaged with the world outside the self. In such cases, what developments during the seminary and priesthood years serve to prepare a man for such a shift? What are the stresses associated with such a metamorphosis? What aspects of contemplativeness or solitude survive the process of catching up?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND RATIONALE

Levinson (1980) stated that we are still at an early stage of theoretical sophistication about adult development. He said that there is a need for "more and better theory" (p. 289) about the variety of ways in which adults change and grow. The present study aims to add to that growing fund of knowledge about adult experience. The modest hope is to provide more theory. Insofar as this study offers useful insights into the experience of an understudied and idiosyncratic population, it may also contribute to the development of better theory--more expansive, nuanced and inclusive constructs which can embrace experience which diverges from the norm.

This is a theoretical, hypothesis-generating study which explores the relevance of prevailing adult developmental theory to the experience of men who have been priests. Two in-depth case histories will be employed to explicate and add richness and texture to the theoretical explorations. It would have been possible to include a larger sample, had I been willing to concentrate on one or

two highly focused aspects of adult experience. My preference, however, is to examine the whole picture, to explore the depth and breadth of a man's lived experience. I believe that this kind of broad and intensive research is a necessary preliminary step in the process of generating hypotheses which can enrich the still fledgling field of adult development. I take heart in the counsel of Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) who observed that while the single case method has obvious limits in terms of the generalizability of its findings, it nevertheless places the investigator in the estimable company of Freud, Erikson and Piaget. As Robert White has observed, "lives cannot be adequately understood unless they are described at considerable length." (1966, p. iii)

Subjects. The two volunteer subjects whose case histories will be presented were selected according to two informal criteria. First, each man must have spent at least ten years within the world of seminary and priesthood. This criterion was intended to guarantee that a considerable period of the man's adult life had been spent within the clerical role, suggesting that it represented a significant influence in the evolution of his adult life structure. (One subject was a seminarian for nine years and a priest for three years; the other spent fourteen years in seminary formation and twenty-two years as an ordained priest.) Secondly, each man must have left the priesthood at least three years prior to the study. This consideration, it was

thought, would allow for sufficient passage of time after the period of deferral and the accumulation of enough post-priesthood experience for at least the initial features of the process of re-entry and adjustment to the mainstream to have emerged. (The first man left four years ago, the second has been out of the priesthood for seven years.) Beyond these conditions, the subjects were chosen at random with no consideration as to their present level of functioning or whether their experience of priesthood conformed to the identity achieved, moratorium or foreclosure model.

Method. The challenge of this kind of research is to study the depth and breadth of a man's life experience--profound and pervasive issues such as separation, intimacy and ambition. Certainly these are realities which do not lend themselves to ready quantification by means of a Likert scale or the forced choices of personal preference inventories. Rather the method must be exploratory. The research instrument must elicit the raw material of experience, serving as an ongoing stimulus for the subject's memories, associations and reflections. Only an interview format is likely to do justice to the complexity of lived experience, allowing the researcher the opportunity to learn the most about the subject's life.

Accordingly, I employed the retrospective life history method. Levinson has described the dynamics of such biographical interviewing as an amalgam of different relational qualities. It partakes of the depth and

incisiveness of a clinical interview, the breadth and objectivity of a biogrpahy, and often the intimacy of a talk between old and good friends. The attitude and skill of the interviewer are essential elements of the research; his personality is as much an instrument as the interview protocol itself. Some data can only be accessed by a participant observer.

For the purposes of this study and for use in future research with this population, I developed an interview protocol (see appendix) which was designed to evoke consideration and treatment of the experiences and themes which are central to this study. The vicissitudes of these various events and concerns, e.g., intimate relationships, competition, and a sense of interiority, were traced throughout the chronology of the individual's life. The followup to particular items was open-ended, tailored to the idiosyncracy of each subject's experience and preoccupations. It was thought that this open-ended method would allow the interviewer to clarify material and to follow any new directions of inquiry which the emerging data might suggest.

Each man was given a general orientation to the purposes of the research and signed a release form (see appendix) permitting the investigator to tape record the interview sessions and to present the data in this study. The initial process of data collection entailed a total of fifteen hours of biographical interviewing. The first

subject, Eric, was interviewed for seven hours over three sessions. Vinny was seen for four interviews which lasted a total of eight hours. Sessions were conducted a week or two apart--an interval which allowed for an adequate sense of continuity while permitting sufficient time between sessions for both the interviewer and subject to reflect upon the emerging portrait of the man's experience. Each subject was interviewed both at his home and at his workplace. This arrangement was chosen both for the sake of the volunteer subject's convenience and in the interests of gaining a fuller appreciation of his current life structure and style.

Tape recordings of the interview sessions were utilized to construct biographies which portrayed both the processes and the particular contents of each man's life structure evolution. These biographies were then analyzed within the context of the prevailing notions about normative adult development and my own hypotheses about the adult experience of priests. Each man was given a copy of his own biography and of my interpretation of his life experience. If both subjects had been willing, each would have also received a copy of the other's case history and a feedback session would have been scheduled where both men could share with the interviewer their reflections upon the data and the theory. As it happened, neither of the subjects was comfortable with the idea of a joint session. Their reluctance was a reflection of the extent to which they had disclosed very intimate aspects of their lives to the

interviewer and, as such, was understandable. Accordingly, a private feedback session was held with each man wherein each shared his reaction to my interpretation of his biography and to the general hypothesis of moratorium. Each man was also encouraged to use this session as an opportunity to correct any factual errors in my presentation of his life and to suggest any changes in the biography which might better safeguard his anonymity. Some minor errors were corrected and some non-essential aspects of their stories were altered in the interests of further protecting confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR: TWO LIVES

ERIC

Profile. Eric Swenson is thirty-four years old. He is married and has one child. He works as an occupational therapist in a Veterans' Hospital and has a small private practice as a therapist in a suburb of New York City. He had been a diocesan priest for four years and has been out of priesthood for three years.

Background. Eric was the oldest of four children born to Swedish-American parents. He has a sister two years younger than he and a brother and sister (twins) born when he was almost ten years old. He grew up in rural Maine, within "a very stable, pretty Catholic solid kind of family." While his parents were quite involved with each other and openly demonstrative of affection within their relationship, only his mother was able to translate such warmth to the task of parenting. She was emotionally available to the children and Eric enjoyed a very close relationship with her.

Mr. Swenson was perceived as far less available, always at work or busy working around the house.

> He just didn't know how to be and just spend time with his son and that was the worst thing. It still is. It's a very sad memory. I wish he had more access to his tender feelings. That really has had a profound impact on my whole life.

When his father did get involved, it was usually to provide some rather harsh discipline. Eric remembers his father's black moods which could unpredictably explode into rages and beatings. "So often he'd be in a crazy rage and beating, whaling the crap out of us--out of me, especially, because I was the oldest.

Family members developed ways of coping with Mr. Swenson's rigidity and wrath. Generally Mrs. Swenson and the children denied or suppressed their own anger. "There was a lot of you know, repression within the family--you could never really fight out loud." They did, however, find less direct ways of reacting to his harsh and demanding manner. While Mr. Swenson meted out the punishments, Mrs. Swenson was far more involved with the children and was in a position to enforce his edicts or not, as she saw fit. Frequently she was less than zealous in carrying out his commands, both because she found them to be excessive and because she resented the tedious role of playing warden to unhappy children. Thus, Mrs. Swenson and the children found passive-resistant ways to "undermine his authority."

On a few occasions during his latency years Eric defied his father in a more open manner. He was dealt with so severely that by the time he had reached adolescence, he had lost all desire to rebel--"it was gone by then." In the process he believes that he also lost most of his capacity to feel. His younger sister, however, became an openly rebellious teenager, sexually active and drug involved. Mr.

and Mrs. Swenson had terrible arguments about how to deal with that situation, she seeking to understand and communicate with her daughter and he wishing to "clamp down." Eric became very frightened that his parents would divorce over this issue, a fear which strengthened his resolve to suppress his own anger and rebellion and to become the "healer" within the family.

> I was like a perfectly behaved teenager--no, never--I was <u>not</u> a teenager really. I just obeyed everything and was a good son.

Eric had some initial difficulties adjusting to school. He was so "terrified" of leaving his mother that the principal had to carry him into the first grade classroom his first few days of school. His teacher was kind and grandmotherly, and he adjusted within a couple of weeks. During second and third grade, however, he experienced serious conduct problems, exacerbated by teachers "who had no understanding of me and simply clamped down like my father always did." By the middle grades he had learned how to "comply" and did quite well for the rest of his academic career. He was popular with his peers and always had a number of friends. Always there was one friendship which was identified as special, a best friend--a pattern which remained true into adulthood.

He did poorly in sports, experiencing that arena as a "place to display your incompetence." He found it threatening and humiliating to compete, to be "compared to other boys" in an area of such obvious weakness. He found

many other areas, however, such as academics, debating, music and school politics where he could be quite competitive. In fact, he relished competition. He remembers that he would pick target activities and competitors, e.g., to be a better actor than this classmate or a brighter algebra student that that one, and would pursue that goal relentlessly. "There was no losing; I wanted to win and I thought that's how you gained acceptance too."

His efforts to find acceptance through achievement met with only partial success. While his mother continued to see him as her "bright and shining star", his father would always find the flaw, "the chink in the armor." Only in pursuing priesthood would Eric eventually find a goal and achievement which his father could find worthwhile.

The idea of priesthood has a multigenerational history within the Swenson family. While Eric's mother is not particularly spiritually minded, his father's family is intensely religious. Eric's grandfather had run away from home in order to escape the pressure of his mother's expectation that he would enter the seminary. His son (i.e., Eric's father) seems not to have aspired to priesthood. Eric's interpretation is that his father had such a poor self image that he never felt worthy of the priestly calling--"he never thought the he, lowly among men, could attain to anything so lofty as the holy priesthood." He did, however, become deeply involved in church

activities, teaching religion classes, leading the men's group and offering, for free, his services as a professional plumber. The fact that his many hours of service to the church were at the expense of time spent with the family was a source of considerable tension within the Swenson's marriage.

Eric remembers that the idea of becoming a priest first emerged when he was nine years old. He remembers being impressed by the way family members and his parochial school teachers would speak of priesthood as "just about the best thing in the world you can do--there was no vocation that was higher, certainly not marriage!" By age twelve he had resolved to follow this noble path. His mother was against the idea, conceivably because she didn't want to lose yet another Swenson man to the church. "I mean she would come out and say 'you don't want to do that'." Eric would not be dissuaded from his goal. Because of his intense attachment to his mother he decided that he would not enter a high school "prep" seminary but would wait until after graduation. There were times during those high school years when he briefly considered other career options, but he would always come back to priesthood because that was the aspriation which could elicit a gleam in his father's eye.

> When I talked about priesthood, there must have been something special that happened there, and he would say piously "do what you want--it's God's will," you know, that kind of thing. But the message is "this is how you will please me."

The progress of Eric's priestly vocation both affected and was affected by his psychosexual development. He received his sex education from both his parents when he was nine--at the time his mother was expecting the twins. In retrospect he is amazed at how frankly they spoke to him about birth and intercourse and masturbation. There was, however, a vey strong moral edge to the instruction, particularly on the part of his father "so that always it was connected with guilt." The message was that sex is wonderful but only the married are allowed to be in any way sexual. Thus, for example, his father imparted a lot of factual information about masturbation while conveying at the same time the implicit conviction that the practice of masturbation "never existed" in his son's life. This double message triggered "massive guilt" since Eric had masturbated at least once a day since age four--a pattern which would continue throughout his (so-called) latency years and adolescence and into adulthood. The guilt intensified significantly after he decided to become a priest. He made frequent trips to the confessional in hopes of recovering--however briefly--the state of grace, but generally he felt like a chronic and condemned sinner.

He was always skinny and unathletic and generally had a very poor physical self concept. "It never dawned on me really until, I have to say, it was in my late twenties that I felt that I, the possibility that I could be sexually attractive to somebody--it took a long, long time."

Nevertheless, he dated from the seventh grade on. These were strikingly "monogamous" relationships; he always focused on one exclusive relationship at a time. He had three of these relationships, each of about two years duration, prior to entering the college seminary.

In all three cases the relationship remained quite platonic; sexual expression was limited to very controlled necking. He remembers feeling very envious of his more sexually adventurous peers. The idea of priesthood restrained him, serving as a safeguard to chastity. On those infrequent occasions when he was tempted to be more sexually expressive,

> it [priesthood] added a dimension of fear somehow, that I would not be pure enough to be a priest. That definitely was there. You had to keep yourself--just like all the good Catholics were keeping themselves for marriage--you had to keep yourself for priesthood.

In retrospect he recognizes that the notion of priesthood provided a rationale for his own sexual inhibitions. Avoiding sexual expression for a noble vocational reason helped mask the underlying truth that he "was terrified of it." It is interesting to note that his most intimate interpersonal relationship was with a girl who was clearly <u>not</u> a girlfriend. Rather, she was a confidante and soulmate, someone whom he trusted enough to share his deepest feelings about family, vocation and even sex. It was in this non-romantic, non-sexual, "celibate" relationship that he felt most connected.

An important aspect of his sexual development was his concern about his sexual orientation. His lack of athletic prowess, his poor physical self concept, his inability to be more sexually expressive with girls, and especially the lack of paternal interest and affirmation had the combined effect of making him feel very unmasculine. Comparing himself to his peers who were competent in sports and experienced with sex, he felt inadequate, an "oddball."

> I think mostly I felt I was gay because a lot of my fantasy life was homosexually oriented at that point. I just felt real rotten about myself basically.

It is interesting to note how the idea of being homosexual is fed by and, in turn, feeds into his poor self concept.

In summary, Eric's decision to study for the priesthood served a number of functions and unifies a number of the themes of his pre-adult life. It reinforced him in the role of the "good son...the listener and the kind one and the do-gooder." One aspect of being the good son was that he strive to be asexual. He remembers feeling that celibacy would be an easy accomplishment. Except for his longstanding habit of masturbation, he had had no sexual experience--"you never had it so you never knew what you were losing." Another important element of good son status was that he never be angry or rebellious. His perception of the other vows betrayed a strong element of self abnegation and submission.

> Poverty and obedience seemed like glorious ideals. I mean, it wasn't like it was a horrible thing, you know, to give up your

> will and freedom. Oh, that's wonderful! To give up all you possessions--Oh my God--you couldn't ask for anything greater than that!

Paradoxically, he felt triumphant in this act of submission. He remembers keeping his vocational intentions secret until graduation day when he announced them to a packed auditorium as part of his valedictory address. "It was real dramatic to be this kind of witness." Presumably, Mr. Swenson was quietly proud.

So, in being the celibate, compliant good son, he had finally found a potential way to please his father. But, ironically, as much as his entering the seminary was an accommodation to his father, there was also the semi-conscious sense in which it represented a turning away from the father in search of new and more balanced male figures with whom to identify. He was attracted to the priests he had met mostly because they were unlike his father, because they demonstrated that men could have feelings, could be tender or concerned. They affirmed the hope of affective development.

> They had wonderful feelings. You know, they were just so much more alive...certainly more alive than my father. That was tremendously appealing. They had what I'd consider a nice feminine, you know, sensitive and yet seem manly.

<u>The Seminary Years: Intimacy.</u> The diocese to which Eric belonged was too small to have its own seminary so he was sent to a small experimental seminary in Vermont about 250 miles distant from his hometown. The separation

from family, especially from his mother, was quite difficult. "I remember seeing the station wagon drive off and feeling a big empty space inside." In some respects, however, Eric purposefully intensified the experience of separation, deciding, for example to let go of all his pre-seminary friendships as a way of "burning his bridges," giving up everything for this high calling. He made new friends rather quickly, however, friendships which were satisfying and enduring. In fact, the experience of friendship was the most rewarding aspect of his seminary experience.

At times these relationships could be frightening because of the intensity of feelings with which they were vested--"only because my needs were so--I mean that's where I was able to make some connection to my own needs for intimacy, so relationships tended to be pretty intense." Certainly part of the intensity and part of the fear concerned the homoerotic yearnings with which he was "consumed." He was aware that some of his classmates were sexually involved with each other, but he avoided any outright homosexual engagement for the next several years. He cites two reasons for his abstinence. One reservation was that most of the seminarians who were homosexually active also happened to be fairly "wierd" and unattractive persons, unhappy misfits in many areas beyond their sexual orientation. The other, and more compelling, reason to

abstain was that Eric was still "scared to death" of any form of sexual intimacy.

This fear also inhibited any heterosexual exploration at that time. This small and fairly progressive seminary allowed college level students to date. Eric would frequently go out to the movies or to bars with large coed groups but only once during the four years did he go out on a real date. As had been the case in high school, he did have one very close but platonic relationship with a girl during his college years. He later found out that her feelings for him had been more romantic and sexual than he could permit himself to perceive at the time, and certainly more sexual than he could allow himself to feel towards her.

Thus during the years of college seminary there was no sexual expression with another person. There was a lot of sexual tension which was ususally expressed in sexually charged conversation and humor--Eric became the master of double entendres. Such talk, however, only seemed to heighten the tension. He continued to masturbate daily and had begun to feel more comfortable with that form of sexual behavior--enough so that he no longer confessed it as a sin. He loved to look through pornographic magazines whenever he had the opportunity. He would never buy these magazines--that would have been too active a pursuit of this forbidden interest. The content of the material didn't matter; it could be homosexual or heterosexual in nature as long as it featured "people naked and showing their genitals." By the

end of college he joined some classmates in some adolescent-like excursions to the local adult movie theatre. Pursuing this interest in a group made it feel more fun and less guilt provoking. Finally, it was also during the college years that Eric first told someone of his homoerotic fantasies and desires. He finally confided in his spiritual director and, much to his surprise, found that these wishes were not ridiculed or condemned but calmly understood and dealt with as a normal aspect of development.

In summary, as the college years drew to a close, the experience of his burgeoning sexuality had begun to raise doubts about his ability to remain faithful to the celibate calling. What had first seemed easy now seemed potentially problematic and increasingly dissonant.

> I mean the ideal was celibacy, celibacy, celibacy, right? And here I have this, I mean, incredible--masturbated frequently, wanted to be in the sack with anybody a lot of the time.

During the next five years of his training, the years of "theology" (graduate theological studies) the issue of sexuality emerges at an accelerated pace and, with it, the issue of intimacy. Eric sees his growth over those years as intimately connected to his experience of psychotherapy. He had begun treatment during his first year of theology. The transition to the theologate had been a difficult one for him. He and his classmates had been transferred to a large, very institutional type seminary in Boston. Eric hated the large, impersonal seminary environment and felt very

alienated and adrift. He recalls, for example, how he dreaded to wear the cassock which all theology students were expected to wear, fearing that he would be swallowed up in the collective--just one of the many. "It was not only like losing masculinity--it's a dress, after all--but it was also losing identity and, God, I barely had any identity--I didn't want to lose the precious little I had."

More than anything he felt deeply depressed. In retrospect, he recognizes that the depression was not new--he had felt that way since childhood. Considering his life experience up to that point, he distinguishes sharply between what he calls the public and the private self. The public Eric had always been extroverted, engaged, achieving and confident. The private Eric, to the limited extent that he allowed himself to have feelings, felt detached, empty and worthless. In therapy he began to explore some of the sources of his depression--the good son's fear of anger and sex and his unremitting hunger for a father.

As he was able to experience his needs and feelings in therapy, he found himself becoming more available to emotional and sexual intimacy in his relationships. In the fall of his second year of theology, he became briefly involved with a woman graduate student. In this relationship he was able for the first time to explore some degree of sexual intimacy. Concerns about celibacy and his residual fear of intimacy and sexuality prevented him from having intercourse (and from remaining in the relationship

for very long), but this relationship clearly opened up the possibility of adult sexual expression.

The following spring he spent a semester away from the seminary. This required practicum experience involved working in an ecumenical inner city project in Atlanta. Eric loved the work and was excited at having a host of new relationships to explore. The experience of being away from the seminary had a profoundly liberating effect.

> I was away. I was a thousand miles away. I had a car at my disposal. It made me feel much more like a regular guy.

His sense of autonomy seemed to have aided the process of sexual exploration. The first fully genital experience of his life occurred that spring. It was with another man, a seminarian from another diocese. This was not an especially profound interpersonal relationship but it was significant in that it opened up the whole area of genital intimacy. Meanwhile Eric fell in love and became sexually involved with two women who were also working on the project. He sees that spring as a time of pan-sexual awakening--"once it opened, it opened!" Curiously, however, his relationship with both women stopped short of full genital expression. He wanted to go to bed with each of them but heterosexual intercourse was somehow too threatening. He remembers pouring his sexual energy into fierce tennis matches with each woman and generally dulling the desire with hours of drinking together and smoking pot--anything to distract from their desire to make love. "I

still wanted to be a good cleric and I still was in many ways."

Somehow it seems that making love with a woman would have been a greater threat to "good cleric" status, would have been dystonic with celibacy in a way that making love to a man was not. Strictly speaking, of course, homosexual intimacy is as much an offense against chastity as it heterosexual intimacy. I suspect, however, that, practically speaking, heterosexual intimacy is a greater threat to celibacy; it has more potential to jeopardize the celibate commitment. The difference, I believe, revolves around the issue of interpersonal commitment. Eric's sleeping with another seminarian did not automatically create a vocational crisis. The relationship and the vocation could conceivably coexist, at least for a while. The "morning after" they were both still living in the rectory--guilty, perhaps, but still together and still pursuing their individual journeys towards priesthood.

On the other hand, becoming fully intimate with a woman would have probably raised more immediate questions about his vocational goals--do I really want to stay here and pursue my vocation or do I want to leave so I can be more fully and more freely with her? What does she expect and need from me? As intimacy with a woman increased, it would tend to create a tension, a dissonance with the lifestyle--a sense of being torn--that intimacy with a man need not. As Eric expressed it, he curtailed the relationship with those

two women for fear that they might "blossom" and would thereby distract him from his all-consuming goal.

> I was just totally focussed on getting ordained. I sacrificed more relationships because of that. That's one of the great sadnesses of my life that I really forewent--however you want to say it--a lot of good relationships because ultimately they didn't fit in with that pattern.

(It is interesting to note that he maintained one of those relationships for the next five years. It remained a long distance, platonic relationship until Eric was on the verge of leaving the priesthood. As an expression of his decision to leave priesthood, he renewed that romance and had his first experience of heterosexual intercourse.)

In any event, the experiences of that spring had a profound impact upon his subsequent development. First, he began to see himself as capable of "very nice intimacy" and as physically and sexually attractive both to men and to women. "It changed my body image and sense of appeal." Moreover, the relationships with the two women served to reopen the question of his sexual orientation.

> I began to see myself as having a possibility as a heterosexual...Here's another whole sex that I could begin to relate to in a mature way, more natural, more normal kind of way.

His interest in women increased and his image of them evolved from asexual "sisters in Christ" to being appreciated as real, sexual, embodied persons. He likens it to the "major shift" which he suspects most males experience during adolescence.

> It's like, I mean it's what you're supposed to do when you're a teenager, that kind of thing. I got a chance to do it ten years later.

The spring term ended and it was time to return north to the seminary. Eric had less than two years to prepare for ordination and his dedication to and wish to prepare himself for that goal intensified. Given this agenda, he could not permit himself any further heterosexual experience. Once the genital dimension had been opened up, however, it pressed for further expression. Two of his longstanding male friendships within the seminary took on a sexual aspect, involving periodic genital intimacy.

These were very profound experiences, contacts which, he feels, freed him for deeper intimacy. It was a matter of letting someone else see behind the public self.

> The sexual experience was a place were you could just--for God's sake--be with somebody for the first time in my life and just relax and not be terrified that you were going to be known.

Despite the associated guilt, this depth of intimacy with men was "healing", a balm for some of the wounds suffered in the emotionally deprived relationship with his father. The homosexual experience was "a place where men [could] express affection" and, as such, "it needed to happen." Eric suspects that his decision to enter the all male environment of the seminary was an unconscious search for that kind of healing contact with men. The genital experience was both an expression of his increasing comfort with male intimacy and an avenue to greater comfort with intimacy in all its

forms. It also enhanced his sense of himself as a male, "to begin to relax a little bit with maleness and what that was about." As ordination time approached, however, the homosexual contacts were experienced as increasingly dystonic and eventually ended. It didn't feel right for someone soon to be ordained to be sexually involved in that way and he felt the need to "try to get my act together, live this out, see if I can do this [i.e., celibacy]."

Authority. While the seminary years brought dramatic changes in the area of intimacy and sexuality, the issue of authority remained largely dormant. The college seminary was so unstructured that authority was barely an issue. The house of theology was more structured and hierarchical. Eric responded as he had throughout his life, by being the "model student" and "good son" while he expressed his rebellion in secret infractions of the rules, e.g., cutting those classes where his presence would not be missed or sneaking a couple of drinks before Christmas midnight mass.

He was not able to challenge his superiors directly during those years. He was afraid that a direct confrontation with them might result in his expulsion from the seminary; he didn't want to do anything that would jeopardize his approval for ordination. His compliant strategy safeguarded his vocation but seemed to undermine his sense of himself as an adult and a man.

> You were always accountable to somebody for your activities and I always found that to be a pain in the ass all the way through. It never felt like you

> were a man in that sense, an autonomous being--that was part of that whole issue for me of maleness.

Recall that the spring he spent away from the seminary, when he had his own car and credit cards and could keep his own hours was a watershed season for personal growth.

Advancement. Related to the issue of authority is a consideration of his own sense of authority and expertise, his ability to assert himself and advance within his career. Here Eric experienced considerable success. He did well in his studies and exceptionally well in his internship experiences in ministry. He poured great amounts of energy and creativity into his work with people and felt very effective and appreciated. Outside, engaged with people, he felt alive, as opposed to feeling "lousy about [himself] in the seminary, in that life which seemed so dead all the time."

As the long awaited goal of ordination approached, Eric redoubled his determination to be a priest. His sexual transgressions (except for masturbation) had ceased for the time being. He had made a workable accomodation to the authority system. He felt good about himself as a minister. He even survived one final pre-ordination crisis. During Eric's final year of training, his spiritual director left the priesthood. It was a difficult and protracted decision, one which he shared with Eric. In fact, their roles seemed to reverse that year as Eric became at times the older man's counselor. In retrospect, he feels that being placed in

that role was unfortunate. He was so busy counseling the other man that he "had no place to talk about [his own] doubts."

All doubts were suppressed as that year drew to a close. In fact, Eric felt quite confident and triumphant, "pretty inflated" at having made it to ordination since "many had fallen by the way." He remembers feeling very angry at those who left. He would "cut them right off" (even as he was cut off by some of his peers when he finally departed). In retrospect, Eric realizes that behind the rage and scorn he directed against those who had not persevered, he was actually very jealous of the "fallen"--especially those who had fallen into exciting new careers and relationships!

Priesthood and Beyond. Eric's career as a Catholic priest lasted a little under four years. For the first three years he was a curate in a moderate sized parish in Portland, Maine. During the second and third years of that assignment he became progressively unhappy with his experience as a priest. He asked to be transferred, thinking a new position might rekindle his interest in ministry. Eight months into this new assignment, he left the priesthood.

Intimacy. Eric cites the issue of celibacy as his main motive for leaving ministry. His experience of intimacy and sexuality continued to evolve during the years of priesthood. Having made a firm commitment to priesthood and

celibacy at the time of ordination, Eric began his priestly life determined to make celibacy work--to find ways of experiencing intimacy and personal growth while remaining faithful to his vows. This proved to be a difficult pursuit. During his first assignment he lived with a number of priests in a large rectory which he experienced to be "emotionally a dead place...desolate." He found most of the men to be distant and formal, generally unavailable for friendship. A few were actively alcoholic, promiscuously gay or chronic psychiatric patients. He did have one close friend there, but each man's schedule made it difficult for them to spend a lot of time together. Frequently Eric would wind up spending his day off alone. In the second year of priesthood Eric's friend was transferred to another parish about fifty miles distant, after which the relationship began to "wither." (Kippes [1981] identified the lack of friendship and interpersonal communication within inter-priest relationships as the factor most erosive to loyalty to one's vocation.)

Increasingly Eric looked outside the rectory for his emotional support. He developed a number of friendships with lay people, including a very intense but entirely platonic relationship with the parish secretary. Although she was many years his senior,

> We just really hit it off and could talk openly about just being human. I felt a real closeness and a real support there that was not motherly.

Some of his most valued relationships were with married couples. He enjoyed spending time with them and sharing "vicariously" in their relationships and home lives. "I was wanting that for myself but I couldn't say that at the time."

Meanwhile the sexual tension continued to mount. Eric directed a lot of that energy to his work. He also kept up a rigorous regime of physical exercise, a phenomenon which, in retrospect, he regards as "narcissistic worship of the body." Even as he "swam [his] brains out" at the pool he was becoming more convinced that "I was going to go crazy if I didn't just go out and screw my brains out as a regular thing."

In the second year of priesthood, the loneliness and the unremitting tension could no longer be contained--"Vesuvius erupted," spilling over into sexual relationships with two of his priest friends. Eric sees the sexual gratification as an attempt to nourish and fortify his depleted self.

> I was doing lots and lots of work--giving, giving, giving, giving, giving, and in those relationships [the homosexual ones] I was able to just get some of my own needs met on a basic, basic level.

The homosexual expression filled an immediate need but was ultimately unsatisfying. It was episodic and experimental and something which occasioned considerable guilt and longing. The sexual satisfaction served to remind him of what was missing in his life--a lasting and exclusive intimate relationship. What he really wanted was a "lover,"

someone with whom he could be sexually expressive as part of a "regular ongoing love relationship" where the sexual was but one aspect of an evolving life together.

The freedom to pursue that kind of love relationship progressed as Eric was able to reexamine his feelings about priesthood. He had asked for the transfer to Bangor thinking that his unhappiness would yield to a new challenge and a new environment. When the new assignment brought little relief, it began to occur to him that "the life itself was at the root of the depression...it's being a priest that is the problem." In Bangor he began his third therapy relationship. Both of his previous therapists had been men who had clear religious affiliations. (Kehoe and Gutheil [1984] presented a very perceptive case study of a priest who chose another priest to be his therapist, a choice which proved to be a resistance to exploring certain themes in therapy. Such a choice, they concluded "may contain both the wish to be understood and the wish not to have to discuss certain matters." [p. 584]) In any event, Eric's new therapist was a woman who had no particular interest in things religious and was "not invested in keeping [him] a priest."

In this relationship he was able to gradually explore his reasons for being a priest, confronting his need to sacrifice his sexuality and autonomy in order to please the demanding father. He began to experiment with different images of himself, different possible outcomes of his life's

script besides the dogged pursuit of the priestly ideal. The growing sense of freedom and understanding reached a climax during one particular therapy session--he remembers the date and the hour--when he suddenly came to the emotional realization that he had other options in life. "I was entitled to live my own life. It just dawned on me 'I don't have to be a priest anymore.'"

Central to this realization was the discovery that he neither wanted nor needed to forego sexual expression and intimate relationships in his life. "I no longer have to be celibate. Internally what happened was I didn't have to be the good son to my personal father anymore." He knew that he didn't want to remain trapped in a lifestyle which he experienced as frustrating and loveless. He became acutely aware of the others whom he perceived as terribly trapped.

> My worst fantasy about celibacy was looking at the old men in the rectories, shuffling around, miserable human beings. And I thought "I don't want to be like that, I don't." There were very few role models of the "joyous life of celibacy." It's just something quite tragic about it all.

The knowlege that he would soon leave the priesthood freed him to become actively heterosexual again--this time without the previous contraints or guilt. He rekindled the relationship with Jennifer, the social worker whom he had known from his assignment in Atlanta. This time he was ready to have intercourse with her, finally satisfying a hunger which he had felt for the past five years of their platonic love relationship. Sex was awkward at first but

profoundly pleasurable and deeply emotional. Eric describes it as "wonderful", "fabulous."

> I felt very masculine, very potent and, God, a woman found me attractive as a man just in my body. It was really nice. I wasn't repulsed by the female body. It was really great, a very important moment, a very holy moment.

The fullness of sexual awakening had finally overtaken him at the age of 29.

Shortly after his reunion with Jennifer, Eric met and fell in love with Terry. The intensity of his feeling for her frightened him at first, but his experience in therapy and in other relationships had taught him not to run. "I trusted enough sort of the whole process to know that in my guts--I knew that this was the right woman to be with." He had already decided to leave the priesthood and feels that he would have left whether he had been in a relationship or not. Having Terry "to leave with, for" made the decision that much easier, and the leavetaking occurred that much sooner.

Three months after he met Terry, Eric moved out of the rectory and found an apartment in southern New Hampshire. The relationship developed at an accelerated pace from that point. After several weeks of commuting a hundred miles each way to be with each other, Terry moved in with him. Ten days later he proposed to her. They were married five months later.

The decision to marry was experienced as a risk. Eric felt that he still did not know enough about women, about

Terry and about himself. There was much to fear. On the other hand, there were a lot of things which he found reassuring. He and Terry had developed a deep level of trust and communication in their relationship. He loved to spend time with her, to talk with her, to be playful, and the explore their intense sexual attraction to each other. Terry was more affective and naturally open than he. With her he was able to loosen up, to experience his feelings and to express them more openly and spontaneously. Within the safety of this relationship he was able to admit and express those feelings which his public self had always censored and denied, feelings of anger, envy or resentment. With Terry he was able to fight, openly and at times intensely--an experience quite unlike the choking climate of black moods and suppressed rage which had infected his family of origin.

> Marriage has been really important in terms of having a relationship where I could show my dark side, where I could be moody, a son of a bitch, get angry, lose my cool not be all together. I mean, in other words, just be a human being and be known and loved that way.

It is interesting to note that Eric feels certain that he would not have been ready for that kind of trust and intimacy in his earlier adult years. The years of postponement gave him more time to prepare for a marriage relationship. If he had not followed the course of seminary and priesthood, he feels certain that he would have married earlier but that that relationship would have been short lived and somewhat disastrous. He would have entered it

"totally unconsciously in my twenties before I was really capable of it." He feels more confident that his relationship with Terry will endure.

The relationship with Terry has affected his image of himself as a man and his concept of women. He has grown in a sense of his own masculinity. He feels "competent as a lover" and experiences himself as sexually attractive to both women and men. Homosexual fantasies and feelings have become faint and infrequent, and are integrated into a predominantly heterosexual orientation.

> I see the homosexual kind of stuff as a developmental growth that was just lagging pretty much, because that's really not part of my makeup as much anymore. It's still there but it's not like the predominant kind of orientation or anything.

As he has grown in his relationship with Terry, he has become more confident in his relationships with women in general. He finds himself sexually attracted to a number of women and recognizes and accepts the presence of sexual feelings as one aspect of his friendships with women. He feels able to relate to women as real people and to be more real with them, no longer needing the shelter of the priestly role.

> I feel like I bring something to a relationship as a man, and a real nice quality, I mean, empathy and stuff that's really quite nice to have. Whereas before it was--I would relate, you know, prior to leaving it was like the role was a screen and a protection until I decided to leave and that was all breaking down--that somehow I could hide behind the role. I don't hide behind the role so much.

Finally, he finds that the nature of his friendships has changed. His relationships with friends are close but not nearly as intense as before, essentially because these relationships are not cathected with the same intensity of need. His deepest needs for intimacy are satisfied in his relationship with Terry. He misses some aspects of the comraderie of priesthood, the fellowship of like-minded men. Most of the men he has met since leaving priesthood don't have the same value system or the same kind of sensitivity as his clergy friends. His closest male friendships continue to be with current and former priests with whom he shares more common ground.

Generativity. For much of Eric's life, the idea of having children was never an issue. Throughout his childhood, adolescence and early adulthood, the idea of becoming a father was as foreign as the notion of getting married--both represented things he just couldn't picture himself doing. This is hardly surprising in light of the his difficulties identifying with, or struggle against identification with, his father. As he worked through some of his concerns about intimacy and about his own manhood during the later stages of seminary and the years of priesthood, feelings about paternity began to emerge.

At first they appeared in more sublimated guise, in intensely "fatherly" feelings towards the people he served, especially those who were younger than he. Increasingly, however, he felt that there was something missing in this

sublimated, spiritual fatherhood. He loved to spend time with his married friends who were raising their young families. He would often compare himself to them and felt that there was something radically wrong, that he had so little direct responsibility for the lives of others. "It didn't feel right that I had very little responsibility. I felt like a kid still." By the time he was on the verge of leaving priesthood, the desire to have a child had become intense and explicit. The sight of a parent and child enjoying time together at the local shopping mall or fast food restaurant would make him churn with longing. "I would ache to be a Dad. I would see Dads and their kids, and I would just ache."

Before he and Terry were married, they discussed their mutual desire to have children. They felt some urgency to begin a family soon, as Terry was thirty-five years old at the time. Lars Eric Swenson was born two years later. Eric was thrilled to be a father but also frightened. Over the past year he has become more confident as a father. He has been very involved in some of the more concrete aspects of parenting--it's important to him to feed and bathe Lars and rock him to sleep. He is able to be nurturant and playful. He feels very atuned to his son's needs and delights in his development. He recognizes that there's something special in having a son, "probably because that was like the major area of woundedness for me." It gives Eric a chance to be the kind of father that <u>his</u> father was not able to be, to

offer Lars the quality of fathering for which Eric himself had to search elsewhere.

In addition to his investment in parenting, Eric also experiences himself as generative in his work with the clients he counsels in his small private practice. He is also interested in developing services to aid ex-priests who are in transition. For the time being, however, the main thrust of his generative activities is centered in his concern for Lars.

Authority. The experience of ordination altered the way Eric viewed and responded to authority figures. Finally he was a full fledged priest as opposed to a novice or apprentice. Considered strategically, his superiors now had less to hold over him. He couldn't be "shipped" home like some unruly student--he was "a priest forever" and had a right to stay even if he challenged the powers that be. Priesthood gave him a foothold, the opportunity for parity or equal standing with figures of authority. Increasingly he was able to confront superiors more directly when he felt that they were being unreasonable or unfair. Occasionally there were very heated clashes, especially when Eric felt that his wishes or needs were not being given sufficient weight. "They would make decisions that would affect my life over which I had zero input, and zero control--that just rankled me totally." In one such relationship the superior was able to change his style. In another instance,

the person in authority would not bend so Eric openly petitioned the bishop for a transfer.

His challenge to authority also found expression in his dissent from certain Church doctrine and moral theology. He was determined to be a "modern priest, not stuck in laws and ritual but human." (In this respect he seemingly identified with his mother's more humane approach to rules and discipline rather than his father's instincts to "clamp down.") Being a modern priest brought him into one direct confrontation with his bishop--the spiritual "father" of the diocese. Eric had published an article in the local newspaper suggesting that divorced and (invalidly) remarried Catholics ought to be permitted to receive communion. He was summoned for a private conference with the bishop who ordered him to publish an immediate apology and retraction in the same newspaper. This demand created a dilemma for Eric. If he refused to comply, the bishop could suspend Eric's faculties to function as a priest. If he complied, he would do violence to his own belief system. He decied that a passive-aggressive response was indicated--he agreed to publish the recantation "and then just never did." He calculated, correctly as it turned out, that the bishop would be too preoccupied with other crises to ever notice Eric's sin of omission!

Meanwhile Eric was exploring in therapy his difficulties relating to authority, the history of his early thwarted rebelliousness and subsequent overcompliance in

relationship with his father--his need to be the good son. Increasingly he came to discover how his desire to be the good son had contributed to his vocational choice. He began to see the priestly role as an institutionalized embodiment of his own inhibitions, the ways in which he thought he needed to limit himself. "I always had the nagging sense of there's so much within me that's not being expressed...I would feel tremendous rage or just, just anger or frustration and like blocked, just blocked...and having this sense of maybe it's the life." The decision to leave reflected the decision to stop being blocked in many areas of life.

The effects of Eric's decison to leave priesthood are still being worked through in three significant authority relationships--his relationship with his father, with the church, and with God. While other family members more or less accepted Eric's decision, his father was very angry and disappointed. Eric had let him down in the worst possible way. Because of geographical distance and the limits to their relationship, they have not been able to talk about the issue at great length or depth. Four years later, Mr. Swenson seems somewhat more resigned to his son's status, but he may never accept it. Recently Mr. Swenson told Eric how disappointed he was to have "lost a priest."

> "I was very disappointed for having lost a priest." That's how he put it, a priest, not even--no sense of me in there.

Mr. Swenson's rigidity and disappointment evokes a variety of feelings in Eric. He is angry and hurt. He also feels some pity that his father's own happiness should depend so much on his son's achievement, that his hopes were so thoroughly dashed, that his constricted world view causes him so much pain. Finally, he also feels guilt. His father's disappointment finds an echo at times in self-accusation--the belief that maybe he **did** let everyone down and that he is, therefore, not entitled to lead a happy and successful life. Obviously he's still working on this issue of entitlement--his right to pursue his own life--both as it is enacted in his relationship with his father and in its broader manifestations. He still, for example, experiences moments in his dealing with superiors at work where he finds himself slipping into the role of the good son, but generally feels that he is better able to step out of that role when necessary, to assert his own wants and needs.

Leaving priesthood radically and abruptly changed his relationship to the church. In terms of observable roles he changed, seemingly overnight, from being the leader of worship to being a total non-participant. He explains that not attending church was an important symbolic step. For the first time in twenty-nine years he was free of the influence of the church and he felt "free as a bird." He did not have to be the good son of holy mother church. Staying away from church best conveyed that message.

> Well, it was just like, you know, you've had enough of my life and my balls and my

> energy, and you're not getting another minute of my time and energy until I'm god damned good and ready. So it just felt delicious defiance...because I had done the perfect teenager thing.

He had finally found a context in which to be totally rebellious. To the litany of encroachments on the part of the church ("you've had enough of my life and my balls...") one might also add "and you had enough of my Dad in those years when I was searching for him to be a father to me."

Despite his anger, Eric senses that someday he will want to and will be ready to achieve some rapprochement with organized religion, be it Catholicism or some other sect. He suspects that eventually it will be important to find some communal expression and support for his private spiritual sentiments. But it's too early to return yet--he's still too angry.

Finally, the decision to leave priesthood is connected to his image of and relationship to God. Over the past several years his image of God has become "much more vague but much more benign." God, he discovered, was not a severe and demanding father who insisted on Eric's self holocaust of priesthood. Instead, God was increasingly perceived as the nurturing one, a God who celebrates human growth and development. Accordingly, when God considers Eric's departure from the priesthood, "God is delighted--I'm sure God is at the heart of it." Thus Eric is able to be angry at his father and at the institutional church without being angry at the idealized father, God.

Advancement. Competition and advancement had always been important themes in Eric's life. During seminary, mininstry was the arena where he could excel, where he could experience himself as effective and appreciated. After ordination, his enthusiasm for ministry became more selective. He had little enthusiasm for saying Mass, finding it "infinitely more boring than [he] had ever anticipated." Many of the other aspects of parochial life were similarly dull. He did, however, enjoy hearing confessions as it was an opportunity to practice his skills as a counselor. He also liked preaching because of the feedback he received from the parishioners and because it gave him a chance to compete with some of the less gifted speakers among his peers. Generally, however, he found satisfaction in the challenges which he created for himself rather than the tasks which came with the priestly role. Thus, for example, he initiated counseling groups for the divorced and bereaved. "I tended to have to put my own mark on the priestly work to make it interesting...where I felt authority is where I created little programs." Ultimately, however, these proved to be "small areas" and were not satisfying enough.

He had ambitions to climb within the ranks of the diocese but did not stay in ministry long enough to pursue those interests to any meaningful extent. He lobbied hard to get one particular job as director of an inner city mission, but was told that he was too young for such an

assignment. He felt angry and thwarted. As the months of priesthood progressed, he began to doubt whether priesthood would ever afford him adequate opportunities for self advancement.

> I felt like I had lots of good horse power under the hood but it wasn't getting used. As I got more and more into priesthood, I felt more and more dichotomy with my peers outside the [priesthood] and I felt like I was doing something that was pretty meaningless. I would go [visit], you know, people my own age and they would have homes, children, regular possessions and that--I really longed for that. I found that really difficult. A real career--<u>it never felt like a real career to be a priest</u>.

Over the past four years since he left the priesthood, Eric has been actively pursuing what he considers to be a real career. He carefully investigated various options before he left, finally deciding to get a degree in vocational rehabilitation counseling. He couldn't afford to go back to school immediately (and he sensed that he wasn't quite yet ready to return to student status) so he worked for two years as a bartender and cab driver. He feels proud of the quick transition he made to life on "the outside." Within a week of leaving the rectory he was set up in his new apartment and job. It felt good to be back in the mainstream, "just hanging out with normal people." He continued to work full time when he entered the graduate program. His schedule was arduous, but it provided him with a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

Last year he finished his degree and began to look for work. He takes obvious pleasure in the fact that he was offered every job for which he was interviewed. He discovered that the "people experience" of his priestly years had made him marketable within the social service field. The experience seems to have translated well. He likes the competitive feeling of going out and landing a job, of trying to make a living that can support his family. He has also built up a small private practice as a psychotherapist. Between his regular job and the private clients he is able to keep his head above water financially. It has been only recently that money "is not a major concern that I lose sleep over." He feels he's finally moving out of the survival mode "to the next mode--whatever that is." He sees himself as having finally caught up with and as keeping pace with his age peers in this regard. Even though he has no savings or other equity at this point in his life, he believes that those things are finally within his reach if he continues on his present course.

In terms of long term goals, he hopes to expand his private practice while maintaining some involvement in the vocational rehabilitation field. He enjoys writing and would like to contribute to the literature in both fields. He feels more committed to this work than he did to priesthood because his current career is more clearly <u>his</u> choice and is more overtly for his benefit, as opposed to

the altruism of priesthood.

> There was always the sense in which you were not making your own decisions as to which job you wanted and it was always in the service of the greater church. This is my life. This is for me and for our, the family.

He still must struggle at times for a sense of his own entitlement, his right to pursue his life and achieve success. It seems that one symbol of his increasing sense of entitlement to live his life is the dramatic change which has occurred in his fantasy about how his life will end. During the years of priesthood he had a repetitive dream wherein he died at a very young age of cancer of the throat. His association to this dream is that the throat "had to do with self expression...it was like the connection to the rest of the body, anger, sex, everything [that] was not getting expressed." Today he imagines that he'll live a very long and happy life and will die at an advanced age of a sudden heart attack. (Lachmann [1985] presented a similar case of a young man who suffered from a fear of imminent death. As his sense of self grew during the course of treatment he was able calmly accept his transience while developing a sense of his own continuity in time. A symbol of his cure was his decision to plant a garden of perennials, reflecting "a newly gained expectation that he would live long enough to reap the flowers and vegetables in the seasons ahead." [p. 195]) Apparently the future has opened up before Eric in a similar way.

The Polarities. Because of Eric's youth--he is currently thirty-three--it will be several years before one could assess how his idiosyncratic development might affect his intrapsychic status at mid-life, the question of the balance of intrapsychic polarities. Already, however, there is evidence to suggest that his experience may not conform to the supposed norm. A sense of himself as masculine has not been one the prominent motifs of his early adulthood. "That was a hard commodity to come by" during the majority of his life. Just as masculinity was an area of special woundedness, there has been a greater than usual appreciation for and comfort with the feminine in his life thus far, as witnessed in his strong identification with his mother, his nurturing style and a wide range of artistic investments.

I would make two predictions regarding Eric's experience of the masculine-feminine polarity at mid-life. The more obvious one is that he will face less of a need to integrate the feminine, having done much of that work throughout his life. The more speculative prediction is that, if anything, Eric will continue to tip the balance toward the masculine pole well through his middle years. Having made a late start in that area of psychic development, his catchup needs will call for an intensification of masculine mentation and striving for several years to come, even if that is somewhat at the

expense of some of his already developed feminine sensibilities.

Similarly, the detached, separate, contemplative dimension of experience has been unusually cathected and developed over the course of Eric's first decade and a half of adult experience. While he appeared to be attached and engaged with the world outside, Eric actually never felt very connected to things. The public self was engaged; the private self remained quite detached. In recent years that dichotomy has been reconciled. He finds himself actively engaged in the outside world, pursuing achievement and advancement, more connected to and less critical of that world's values and goals. Simultaneously, his attraction to meditation or contemplation has waned. He doesn't pray any more. He finds that his spiritual dimension is best exercised not in retreat from the world but in active involvement.

> I believe my spiritual life resides in, right now, in the ordinary stuff of life--having a son, just being with my son...I feel very comfortable with [that] for now, at this point in my life, making money, getting established in a job.

Thus his current spirituality calls for him to be less contemplative and more active--a factor which is likely to skew the supposedly normative disengagement from the world and inner explorative process of mid-life.

ERIC: INTERPRETATION

In order to explore the meaning of Eric's seminary and priestly experience, it is important to assess how well his

early development would have prepared him had he decided to pursue a more normative adult lifestyle. There is considerable evidence which suggests that the events and relationships of his childhood and adolescence left him unprepared to confront some of the normative adult developmental tasks as he entered chronological adulthood. This is certainly true in the areas of sexuality and intimacy. His parents had readily provided factual information about sexual functioning but had also managed to imbue the topic with guilt and fear and the subtle but compelling message that Eric himself was not entitled to sexual feelings or any form of sexual expression. Certainly the prevailing Catholic culture of that day would not have counteracted those impressions.

His daily habit of masturbation remained a shameful secret, unintegrated within his life. Likewise, much of his sexual ideation was homosexual in nature and therefore considered shameful and had to be hidden. His early attempts at heterosexual exploration caused great internal conflicts and were stifled. Even before he actually entered the seminary, the idea of priesthood provided a rationalization for his inhibitions in this area, masking his arrested development. Rather than experience himself as "terrified" by sexual expression, he saw himself as "keeping himself" pure and innocent for priesthood.

Even so, he was able to achieve some degree of emotional intimacy in his longstanding relationships with girlfriends, particularly with one girl with whom the relationship was most clearly platonic. Celibate relationships seem to have offered less threatening opportunities to explore interpersonal intimacy. Also, this pattern of investing in one relationship which is special and exclusive extends through his whole life, including his close ties to his mother, the "best friendships" of elementary school, those monogamous and largely platonic relationships with girls in high school, and his intimate friendships of the seminary years. I see them as early manifestations of what he would later experience as an intense and explicit need for a "lover", a relationship which would be total, exclusive and spousal. At this earlier point in his life the need was not so explicit, nor was he able yet to integrate the sexual aspect of that longing.

Eric was unable to use the more typical expressions of adolescent rebellion as an aid in separating from his family and from the pre-adult world. In order to insulate himself from his father's brutality and to heal the strains within the family, he adopted the rigid role of the "good son." His passive-aggressive forms of rebellion provided some relief but did not afford him an experience of directly coming to terms with authority, thus depriving him also of a sufficient sense of his own inner authority and autonomy.

His inability to rebel, to test the limits of his own authority, is really a separation issue; it vitiates his ability to function as a self-determining adult. He moves from being the good son of Mr. and Mrs. Swenson to becoming the good son of his new parent, the church. Within the ecclesiastical family, he will continue to work on these authority and separation issues.

The area of competition and achievement was not obviously inhibited, but neither could it be regarded as conflict-free. Eric became impressively accomplished in a number of areas--in part because these activities interested him, in part because such achievements promised to gain him acceptance and affirmation. Ultimately he was narcissistically disappointed, as it was his father's approval that mattered most, and no feat seemed potent enough to gain paternal pride--until, that is, the goal of priesthood emerged.

Eric's decision to enter the seminary was overdetermined. It was in many respects a well tailored choice--addressing several areas and levels of need. In entering the seminary he was submitting to his father in order to finally gain paternal approval. In the sacrifice of his autonomy and sexuality, he had found the quintessential way to become the "good son." The decision required that he put certain aspects of his adult development on hold, but that did not seem to be such a great price. After all, he had had very little experience

of his own autonomy or sexuality or entitlement to achieve for himself. As he expressed it, "nemo dat quod non habet"--you can't give up what you never had. In fact, it is reasonable to assume that Eric was not yet ready to explore these aspects of adulthood, that he required a period of moratorium.

Actually the decision to enter the seminary was a precursor of significant developments to come. Within the moratorium setting of the seminary and priesthood, Eric was able to do some remedial work in the area of intimacy. He gradually learned how to be emotionally close to another person and to be sexually intimate. This growth was achieved through his experiences in a series of relationships--relationships which progressively approximated the adult developmental goal of caring heterosexual intimacy.

For the first six years of seminary he avoided any sexual expression with another person. This fact suggests the presence of considerable restraint and fear, considering that he had such strong homosexual attractions and considerable external opportunities for homosexual involvement, living in an all male environment where such engagements were not uncommon. In the sixth year he experienced a great emotional and sexual awakening. I submit, however, that he had been preparing for that awakening throughout the previous six years of seminary experience, including his experiences in therapy, his growth

in "platonic" intimate relationships with both men and women, and his growing comfort with a number of aspects of his sexual experience including masturbation, sexual fantasy and his interest in pornography. This whole process of exploring and feeling increasing comfort with the sexual dimension has a decidedly adolescent flavor, suggesting that Eric was able to catch up, to make up for ways in which his earlier experience had constricted his psychosexual development.

The relationships which arose out of that sixth year might be considered variations on the theme of adult heterosexual intimacy--he had heterosexual relationships which were not genital and genital relationships which were not heterosexual. He was becoming more open to intimacy with women but still was unable to be fully genital with them because of his own fears and certain role conflicts which supported those fears. With men he was able to fully explore genital sexuality, in part, as has been explained above, because these relationships did not call for the intensity of commitment that a heterosexual liaison might have. They were, however, intensely intimate.

In these intimate sexual associations, Eric was able to soften the defense of the public self, to experiment with sharing the vulnerable private self in relationship. In the process he became increasingly at ease with and accepting of who he really was, a development which would enhance his relationships with both men and women. In some respects,

however, it was important that the relationships were with men. His experiences in these relationships were profoundly healing. They helped him relate to and identify with males and, in the process, to embrace his own maleness. Given the sorry history of his relationship with his father, Eric needed to come to terms with male sexuality before he could feel sufficiently grounded to deal with the opposite sex. That need had been a significant, if largely unconscious, factor in his initial decision to enter the seminary, to enjoy the company of men--men who had such "wonderful feelings." Eric is certain that the homosexual experiences "needed to happen." The moratorium setting of the seminary and priesthood seem to have provided him an ideal context in which to pursue those corrective emotional relationships.

The homosexual experiences were bridging relationships which were preparing him eventually to address the normative adult developmental task of heterosexual intimacy. They were transitional, practicing relationships which built up his sense of self, his physical and sexual self image, his sense of himself as a man who was capable of rich intimacy. In this sense the homosexual phenomena of this period represent pseudohomosexuality--having much less to do with object choice and much more to do with attempts to heal his poor self image, negative body concept and wounded sense of maleness. Eric notes that none of his partners were decidedly gay. Rather they were struggling, as was he, with questions about their sexual orientation, questions which

reflected poor self concepts and considerable ambivalence about sexual expression.

I see the homosexual experiences as exercises in sexual exploration and in male identification--exercises that worked. The homosexual experiences made him feel increasingly masculine, which, in turn, made him feel increasingly drawn to and capable of the challenge of heterosexuality. Moreover, the limits and incompleteness of the intimacy experienced with men served to intensify his longstanding desire for a relationship which was more open to commitment, to exclusivity, a bond which could become spousal. Thus, these homosexual experiences during the moratorium ultimately proved to be his pathways to heterosexual commitment and marriage.

Having played through the pseudohomosexuality, and finally free of the need to be the celibate good son, Eric at long last returned to heterosexual love. This time, however, he was able to integrate the genital aspect, having learned to do so in his intimate relationships with men. The variations finally converge on the main theme, allowing him to be <u>intimate</u> and <u>genitally expressive</u> with a <u>woman</u>. His relationships with women had evolved from the stage of platonic love, through that of limited sexual exploration, to a point where intimacy encompassed the fullness of sexual expression. In his relationship with Terry he seems to have achieved a rich degree of intimacy. The relationship is caring, respectful, enlivening and freely sexual. The

previous delays in his development, the detours and alternative paths, seem not to have any adverse effects in terms of their day to day relationship. In fact, it's a much richer and more successful relationship, Eric feels, and more likely to endure than it would have been had they met and married a decade ago. He needed the time for deferral and psychic detours.

The experience of seminary and priesthood also gave him extra time and a safer environment within which to work on issues regarding authority and his own autonomy. By entering the seminary he transferred those conflicts to a new arena. (This is strikingly similar to what Erikson [1958] observed about Luther--that he was only able to stand up to his father by taking on the Pope!) The new environment offered an opportunity to work some of these issues through. These new relationships with paternal authority figures were less charged and less crippling than the original father-son dyad, allowing Eric more flexible responses than rigid goodness. In fact, most of his superiors were quite benign. Even so, it took him another eight years to feel free to confront them directly--so great were his transferential fears that he remained quite entrenched in his passive-aggressive, avoidant style.

He continued to explore these issues in therapy. Only after ordination, however, did he find solid ground upon which to take a self-determining stand. Being a priest gave him a sense of adult standing, entitlement and safety.

Paradoxically, becoming a priest had been an act of submission to the father; actually being a priest empowered him to wage a more even fight with the father.

He began to challenge the local superiors (the institutional fathers) whenever he sensed that they were threatening his right to self-determination. He openly questioned certain points of moral theology as they have been articulated by the Holy Father and by the spiritual parent of his diocese--challenging the father who makes harsh rules. Eric feels that he made great progress in asserting his own rights and needs during the years of priesthood. Ultimately, however, he discovered that there were inherent limits to the growth in autonomy and self-determination which he could experience as a priest. Priesthood, itself, he decided, was the problem. The priestly role was for Eric the institutionalized expression of good sonship. He had to leave if he was to continue to grow. He would never get better until he got out.

The decision to leave priesthood related to his relationship with his father, with the church and with God. Just as his decision to enter the seminary was an attempt to please his father, the decision to leave the clergy finally faced Eric with the developmental need to risk his father's displeasure. Eric stopped being the celibate good son and managed to survive his father's wrath and disappointment. Weathering that storm greatly enhanced his sense of adulthood.

The experience has unearthed a variety of feelings towards his father. He is angry that his father needed, and still needs him to be a priest, valuing priesthood over personhood. Yet the anger does not seem vicious; his leaving does not impress as sadistically inspired to any great extent. On the contrary, he also pities his father. There is also guilt, suggesting the extent to which his attempts at self-determination are still vulnerable to assault from within and without. Basically, however, there is a calm firmness, the conviction that his life finally belongs to himself, not to his father or any other perceived agent of control.

His relationship to the church still suggests unfinished business. He feels drawn to some form of corporate sharing of belief but avoids any affiliation. He says he is too angry to become involved with the church. Perhaps he is also afraid, threatened that his new found independence will somehow be eroded by any form of contact with the institution. After all, the church has been a potent factor in the lives of Swenson men for generations-they either run away from it or become engulfed within it.

I suggest that his current relationship with the church (or lack of relationship) reflects some unresolved separation issues. Eric had not been able to separate from his family of origin as his sister apparently had through her rebellious behavior. Instead, the separation issues were transferred from the family to the church. The church

became a family within which he could rebel and test the limits, and which he was finally able to leave when he was developmentally ready to experience that separation. What his sister was able to do in her teens in relationship to the Swenson family, Eric was able to do in his twenties in his relationship to the church. As such, it is not surprising that his current attitude towards the church partakes of the typical ambivalence of the young adult who has finally managed to leave home--on some levels he wants to go back home, but in other respects he is afraid that he is not yet ready to have contact with the family without somehow losing his fledgling independence. Avoidance seems like the most prudent course for the time being.

Just as his decision to enter the seminary was overdetermined, so his decision to leave represented a confluence of emerging issues regarding sexuality and intimacy, separation, authority, and, finally, concerns about achievement and advancement. During the seminary and priesthood, Eric remained the superachiever that he had always been. In fact now that he had found a worthy goal, his efforts even intensified. The crisis, however, came as he become more conscious of his motives for priestly service. His priestly work was most often inspired, not by his own interests, but by his need to win acceptance and approval. (Gill [1969] found that many ex-priests had approached their priestly work "aiming unconsciously at the recognition and approval they will gain from those whom they

serve." He found this dynamic to be a considerable source of depression among priests.) In Eric's case, the wish to please reflected the genetic roots of his vocation--it became increasingly clear to him that he had been living out his father's vocation, not his own. There were areas, such as his counseling work, where he was able to be creatively engaged in his own pursuits. In general, however, he experienced most of the specifically priestly activities to be unfulfilling and distracting him from his real interests. He became progressively disillusioned with the priestly dream of altruistic surrender--'I'll work to get you what I can't allow myself to have.' He was facing the issue of whether he felt entitled to pursue his own goals and ambitions.

The decision to leave priesthood represents a shift in this issue of entitlement. In leaving priesthood, Eric was declaring that he was entitled to have his own life, to strive for his own goals and to work for his own advancement. In his new career, Eric is clearly working for his own advancement and for that of his family. The work certainly has a prominent altruistic component, but the interest in others is not at the expense of self-interest. He has been aggressively pursuing his career, eager to make a name for himself in the field and very eager to make money. These ambitions still occasion some guilt--the sense that he doesn't deserve such success--but the guilt seems to be something he understands and tolerates and does not act

on. Generally he seems to be catching up quite well. There is perhaps some denial and naivete evident in his insistence that he has financially caught up to his age peers. In general, however, his experience as a priest seems to have prepared him well for his current career. He experienced a sense of his own competence and talent during the years of priesthood and that feeling seems to have translated well to his new professional setting.

VINNY

Profile. Vinny Rubino is fifty-six years old. He is married and has no children. Vinny is a certified social worker. He is affiliated with two clinics and maintains a small private practice in Boston. For over thirty-six years Vinny was a member of a Roman Catholic religious order. He was a priest for twenty-three of those years. He left the priesthood almost eight years ago.

Background. Vinny was born in Bath Beach, Brooklyn, the third of four children born to Italian immigrant parents. He describes the relationships and interactions within the family as being essentially warm and readily expressive of emotion. When the Rubinos were mad, they yelled; when they were sad, they cried. Despite this "easy show of emotion", Vinny recalls that there was little in the way of more intimate communication--the sharing of personal feelings or concerns. He suspects that other family members may have achieved more closeness with each other but feels that he "was probably not that intimate with anybody in my family."

He recalls his relationship with his mother as being essentially positive but not close or confiding.

> It wasn't distant in the sense that we didn't get along and didn't like each other, but I was just--it was not me to warm up to mother, to be around my mother, to talk to my mother, to share stuff with my mother.

There is some sense that this unwillingness to confide and depend is reactive to some sort of perceived unavailability on the part of his mother. Vinny suggests that she related to her four children in a global, somewhat generic way, that his relationship with her lacked a sense of specialness and uniqueness. Thus, he recalls that she actually did share a certain amount with him, but that it was indistinguishable from what she shared with the rest of the family. "I think she kind of shared with whoever was there. If I happened to be there, it was me." (Vinny's desire for some kind of specialness may help to explain the tension he experienced in his relationship with his oldest brother whom he describes as introverted and distant. This brother had a clubfoot and was perceived as receiving special treatment, somewhat at the expense of his siblings.)

Mr. Rubino is described as underinvolved, looming in the background as "the threat"--a "cop" or "judge" that the mother could call in on those infrequent occasions when her command of the situation wavered. Mrs. Rubino would frequently shield her son from the father's anticipated wrath, conspiring, for example, to forge her husband's signature on Vinny's report cards. Actually Mr. Rubino

seldom hit his children but the anticipatory dread was intense.

> I must have been afraid enough of him. I'm recalling now that I've forgotten all about that. I was kind of like in fear and trembling--"he's gonna beat the crap out of me if he sees I flunked conduct."

There was some conflict in the marriage, largely related to money matters. In fact, the confidences which Mrs Rubino shared with the children frequently revolved around her frustration and anxiety about family finances. Vinny sees these financial difficulties as overdetermined, in part a function of the economic depression of the 1930s but partly due to Mr. Rubino's poor management of his general contracting firm. Even after the depression years, he frequently was not paid for jobs completed, either because he chose customers who were bad risks or because he was not assertive enough in collecting accounts due.

At a time when others in his trade were prospering, Mr. Rubino "never really made it big and he should have." Vinny cites as a symbol of this failed promise the dream house which his father had always planned to build for his family. He finally did build it but halfway through its construction he became anxious about finances and decided to convert it into a two family house so he'd have help paying off the mortgage. The wistful joke within the family is that thereafter the Rubinos never had enough room to hang their clothes--all the closets had been located upstairs in the tenant's apartment.

Vinny tends to minimize whatever tensions or deficits he may have experienced within the family, stressing that he was much more interested and invested in the outside world--including a large and lively extended family. He stresses, somewhat defensively, that his tendency to distance himself from the family was not in response to any problems within the family but was something constitutional and tempermental on his part--somehow innate and not at all reactive to the family environment.

> From the day that I could reach the knob on the door and go out, I went out. I was out on the streets all the time...I was born to go out...there wasn't any rejection on the part--that I can really put my finger on--on the part of anybody in the family of me. I simply distanced myself from them because I had more interesting things to do elsewhere.

Such independence is the most prominent theme in Vinny's recollection of these early years. He seems to relish the image of young Vinny hitting the streets in search of adventure--experiencing loneliness only on those infrequent occasions when he ran out of fun and exciting things to do. He could take care of himself. Even as a preschooler he was a feisty kind who could fight his own battles, often roughing up some of his peers in the process. He had a mind of his own. He was, for example, the only Rubino child not to attend parochial school because he simply refused to get "beat up by nuns."

Strikingly absent from his reconstruction of those early years are any conscious concerns about separation. Sometime during his preschool years his mother had to go

back to work. Recalling that he was placed in nursery school at age four, he denies any separation anxieties and stresses, instead, how valuable that experience was as an academic headstart. He tells with some delight how he "scoffed" at the other children who cried during the first days of first grade, regarding them at the time as "a bunch of sissies."

The only separation which he found to be at all painful occurred at age seven when financial pressures forced the family to move from the waterfront of Bath Beach to a cheaper apartment in Flatbush, about five miles inland. Vinny tells what has come to be regarded within the family as a "famous story" of his fierce independence. Dissatisfied with Flatbush, seven year old Vinny set out on his own and walked back to the old neighborhood in order to be near the ocean again. Although the tale is ostensibly about independence, the intensity of the feelings and certain nuances of the language suggest the presence of displaced separation issues.

> I was very attached to Bath Beach, to the water, the ocean...I remembered feeling very uptight being away from the ocean. I felt like constricted. I felt like imprisoned... it was oppressive. I wanted the freedom of the sea and the beach and the ocean because ever since I was about three years old I spent everyday in the summertime--I was only two blocks--I was born two blocks from the ocean and I was always down there every day and it was like being stripped and torn away from my roots.

It seems likely that attachment to the ocean and the loss of that "relationship" served as metaphors for his primary

relationships where issues about attachment and separation lay unresolved.

Vinny made an easy adjustment to school and got along well with his peers. His description of these associations echoes his analysis of relationships at home---cordial but not too close.

> I don't say I was really intimately--like I really had a real bosom buddy, but I was plenty involved with a lot of guys rather than being on a real deep, deep thing with one or two. I had a lot of friends you know.

He was very bright and did well academically, finishing second in the junior high division at Brooklyn Classical School, a highly competitive and prestigious publically supported prep school. Such a status would have virtually guaranteed him eventual admission to an ivy league college. He left Classical, however, after 8th grade in order to enter the minor seminary. He recalls having some strong feelings at the time about the need to compete in the pursuit of success.

> I remember at Classical School that I--I remember distinctly making up my mind that <u>I did not want to compete.</u> I did not want to have to get ahead by stepping on other people...I don't want to finish going to Classical School and then go to Harvard and become successful because I know I'm gonna have to do it by competing with other people.

Rather than compete with others or "hurt" them or put them down, Vinny decided that he wanted to <u>help</u> others. He recalls writing that intention in his diary at the time he decided to become a priest--priesthood would be a way of helping other people.

Vinny's psychosexual development was intimately tied to his decision to study for priesthood. Sex was never talked about in the Rubino family and he recalls that his parents were never physically demonstrative with each other. He suffered from a fair amount of sexual misinformation during his early teenage years and recalls having the abiding impression that sex was something exciting but dangerous, with "a certain amount of violence involved." He never dated before entering the seminary and his only sexual experimentation consisted of an occasional game of "playing post office" down on the beach. He surmises that he must have been somewhat attractive because the girls didn't mind kissing him, but he also recalls that they didn't do it with the enthusiasm with which they kissed the more handsome boys.

His struggle with masturbation was the particular precipitant of his decision to study for priesthood. He had been masturbating for a year or so before he found out that what he was doing was considered to be morally wrong. This revelation shocked and upset him, and he quickly sought forgiveness in the confessional. He remembers how relieved he felt when he received absolution and how he decided to express his atonement and his gratitude for forgiveness by becoming a priest.

> That definitely was a big hook onto this thing--that I'm bad, I did a bad thing. How am I gonna make up to God for being a bad person, for doing this bad thing? I will sacrifice myself and become a priest and work to help other people find

> the happiness that I have now from being forgiven.

The search for and experience of forgiveness remained potent themes in his life. The main way in which he was going to help other people was by bringing them God's forgiveness, sharing with them "what a great feeling it was to be forgiven." Hearing confessions was the single most important and fulfilling aspect of his ministry. He speculates that his powerful need to be forgiven reflected a considerable amount of guilt "because you can't enjoy forgiveness unless you're enjoying a lot of guilt." The guilt had a number of sources. In addition to sexual matters, he recalls feeling guilty about his violent temper and aggressiveness. In retrospect, he realizes that he also felt guilty about separation--both the actual fact of having left home at age thirteen and his general, characterological style of holding back and keeping his distance.

> I just knew that they missed me. I knew that they liked me and I knew that they would have wanted to have me close to them physically, and I wasn't going to do that for them. So there had to be, under the surface, an underlying kind of feeling bad, feeling guilty that I had deprived them of my presence.

In general the forgiveness theme impresses as another masked separation issue. The emphasis is on the warm and wonderful feelings of being reunited with God and others, of renewing and making right the relationship, reflecting the etymological roots of the word "atonement" in the idea of being <u>at one.</u>

Even at the time he first entered the seminary, Vinny seemed to be aware of the several layers of motivation behind his wish to be a priest. This vocational goal satisfied his desire to help people rather than compete with them. It also seemed a fitting reparation for his sexual sinfulness, a way of expressing his reconciliation with God and of making the same experience of reconciliation available to other miscreants. He was also aware that being a seminarian and future priest would bestow upon him a certain specialness. He always sensed that he was somehow different from his peers--"it was easier for them to know each other and relate to each other." Now that differentness could be translated into specialness.

> It [studying for priesthood] made me feel different from everybody else. It made me feel special. It made me feel chosen and called. It made me feel that I had to choose to be different from everybody else--that I wasn't going to mingle in their pursuits. I wasn't going to date. I wasn't going to have anything to do with girls and I wasn't going to, you know, engage in whatever they engaged in that I thought wasn't appropriate for somebody who wanted to be a priest.

Studying for priesthood promised to provide Vinny with the specialness which he had not been able to find within his family. It also provided a setting in which he would not have to mingle in some age appropriate pursuits--engaging in "whatever <u>they</u> engaged in." It should be noted that Vinny believes that he would never have studied for the priesthood had he not entered the seminary right after 8th grade. He feels certain that if he had attended a regular

high school he would have become caught up in those normative teenage activities and relationships, presumably including the sexual and competitive components of normal adolescence, and would not have found his way back to priesthood.

The Seminary Years. Separation. He made a suspiciously easy transition to the seminary, enjoying "the adventure of leaving home and going to a strange place, going far away." Although he was 400 miles away from home and had no in person or even telephone contact with family members from September to June of each year, he never felt homesick except for a two day period at the beginning of second year when he suddenly and inexplicably found the seminary food unpalatable and longed for his mother's home cooking. "I began to really feel sorry for myself. The food was so bad compared too what my mother cooked and I couldn't believe that I had suffered it all that time."

Authority. Vinny has identified aspects of his early experience which occasioned considerable guilt, notably his excessive independence and rebelliousness, his aggressiveness and his sexual impulses. His experience in each of these areas changed quite markedly during his years as a seminarian. In terms of his independence and rebelliousness, he recalls that he spent the early months of his seminary career testing the limits. He remembers, for example, asking one of his professors whether it was a sin or merely an imperfection to break seminary rules. Told

that such infractions were considered to be only moral imperfections, "I thought that was fantastic; so from then on I made fast to go over the fence", to break curfew and steal apples and cherries from the neighboring orchards.

By second year, however, his pattern of imperfections had caught up with him and he was in great danger of being "shipped" from the seminary. This threat of dismissal affected him profoundly, causing him to become--seemingly overnight--the model seminarian and keeper of the rules. It suddenly became clear to him that he had become very attached to this way of life. He desperately wanted to remain there and he would do whatever he must to be able to stay.

> I was conforming to the system. I wanted to stay. It meant something to me to stay. I was getting to like these guys. I wanted to be with them for the rest of my life. I wanted to be a part of this system, this institution, this world-wide organization that had houses in almost every country in the world where I would always be welcomed. There was a real esprit de corps involved in being a [member of the Holy Name congregation]. I began to really like the order. I fell in love with the order. I was very chauvinistic about the Holy Name Fathers as being the top outfit in the church and I was very privileged to be a member of this crack outfit of commandos for the Lord.

For the rest of his seminary career Vinny became more and more compliant, finding comfort and security in a stance of "blind obedience." Vinny became the ultimate "party man." "I became practically synonymous with the rule." Sometimes his obedience could be quite blind and absolute. He tells stories, for example, of sharing occasional doubts

about his vocation with his superiors who would order him "under obedience" to forget any such doubts or misgivings. The superior spoke in the name of God and was therefore to be obeyed as God is to be obeyed. In a curious slip of the tongue, Vinny describes the process of increasing compliance during those years, how he "got holier and holier, and less obedient and less obedient."

As he progressed along the road to holiness, Vinny experienced a dramatic taming of his sexual urges. He remembers experiencing some sexual tension during the early years, thinking about sex, experiencing erections and wet dreams. The only times he could masturbate would be during the night in a semi-conscious state and even that behavior disappeared within the first couple of years. He successfully combatted sexual thoughts through prayer until, by the beginning of his sixth year of seminary, "all that stuff is under control...sex was not a question" anymore. He did, however, suffer from some scrupulosity which he believes was sexual in origin. For a period of time he experienced obsessive worries--the fear that he had not washed his hands carefully enough after urinating and that he would thereby contaminate library books and other common property and make other people ill. As is commonly true of obsessions of this kind (Freud, 1909) the unconscious aggressive intent is thinly veiled by the conscious fear of causing others harm. This is not surprising in light of the fact that sex and aggression were the two major aspects of

Vinny's experience which seminary and priesthood were supposed to check.

He was vaguely aware that there might have been some infrequent homosexual activity among some of his peers. He felt a strong aversion to anything homosexual, finding it "terrible, disgusting and bad." Once a classmate made an awkward but obvious sexual advance. Vinny literally ran away, feeling shocked and violated. "I felt a feeling of uncleanness, of--you know--not a nice feeling at all."

Vinny had no heterosexual experience at all during those thirteen years of seminary training. During the school year the seminarians had no contact with members of the opposite sex. During the brief summer holiday they were not allowed to date. There was no opportunity to grow in one's ability to relate to the opposite sex because there was simply no exposure to that other half of humanity. Heterosexual intimacy became a non-issue. "I would have to say that pretty much what I thought and felt about women when I went in the seminary at thirteen was pretty much what I thought and felt about women when I got out at the age of twenty-six."

There appears to have been some growth during the seminary years in terms of his ability to explore intimate friendships. Certainly there were factors which militated against such intimacy. One was Vinny's tendency to pursue a number of more limited friendships rather than a few intense or deep ones. This aspect of his personal style found

considerable institutional support in seminary policy which prohibited "particular friendships", i.e., any relationships which seemed too intense or exclusive and thus might run the risk of homosexual involvement. The rule of thumb in socializing was "numquam duo, semper tres"--never two, always three. Despite his personal style and despite his general observance of the rules, Vinny feels that he was able to begin to explore relationships which were somewhat special.

> I was a very good keeper of the rule...and I did not, I deliberately did not have particular friendships but I had a lot of friends, and I did have a couple who were particular in the sense that they were really special friends and we were really close to each other and I really wanted to see them and and they really wanted to see me. We really enjoyed each other.

Advancement. Vinny recalls that his only initial difficulty in adjusting to seminary life was being shocked by the rough behavior of some of his new classmates, certain "Jersey City thugs" who got into fights and used crude language. Vinny recalls feeling dismayed and somewhat scandalized--he had thought that everyone would be "nice and good and gentle." He quickly adapted, however, and began to get along better with these classmates, particularly after he had given one of them a black eye! Seemingly, the sanctuary of seminary would not exempt him from all forms of competition and striving.

Apart from such episodes of pugilism, however, Vinny's conscious aversion to competition remained constant during

his seminary years. He recalls, for instance, that one of the things he liked most about the vow of poverty was its equalizing property--"you wore the same thing everybody else did; there was no competition with regard to clothes." On the other hand, Vinny did have intense spiritual ambitions. There seems to have been some subtle competition in this arena. Vinny felt very proud that he was growing so much in the spiritual life and suggests that he was more strict and devout in this pursuit than his classmates. Moreover, he had certainly outstripped his secular age peers in the pursuit of virtue. "They were out there screwing women and carrying on and living a consumer life and stuff like that and I was living a life of dedication and prayer and study and I was superior to them." Again, the seminary provided an opportunity to feel both different and special.

The final point to be made about Vinny's seminary experience concerns what he called the process of becoming acculturated. He stresses the lack of outside contact and relationships, the total absence of heterosexual outlets, the dependence and obedience, the prolonged student status--he notes, for example, that he never held a job for the first twenty-six years of his life.

> I was being acculturated by this very strong powerful culture, this very strong environment. It was a total environment. There were no newspapers, no radios, no television--nothing but the seminary 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This was the world from which he was about to emerge as the time approached for him to be ordained a priest.

Priesthood and Beyond. Vinny spent twenty-four years as a priest. The first two years were largely a continuation of seminary as he was completing his coursework and receiving the finishing touches of spiritual formation. The final two years were also spent in studies, pursuing an MSW degree to prepare himself for his imminent departure from priesthood. Hence there were twenty years of active ministry, spanning the period from 1956 to 1976. Vinny makes a sharp distinction between the first and second of these decades--the years before and after 1966. It seems clear that his personal history was greatly influenced by historical developments within the church and within the wider culture. Specifically, he was affected by the human relations movement of the 1960s--the sensitivity training programs and the corollary emergence of a more affective, relational approach to spirituality and worship within the church as witnessed in the cursillo movement and related phenomena. Also he was influenced by the evolving theology of the Second Vatican Council, particularly its emphasis on community and human development. Life would never be the same after what he calls "the Big 66."

Intimacy. The most profound changes occurred in the area of affectivity and relationships, including his ability to deal with intimacy and sexuality. Vinny describes the first ten years of ministry as somewhat impoverished emotionally. Community life was largely devoid of "understanding, warmth, [or] real affective sharing." His

seminary friends were stationed all over the country and the world and, although he made efforts to see them, there was little opportunity for sustained friendship. Vinny's assignment called for him to be constantly on the road, preaching week long retreats in parishes throughout the country. He describes his relationship to the people he served as being "close in a distant way." His family and friends told him that he came across as too stern.

Vinny sees much of this sterness as related to his role as a priest and particularly a Holy Name priest. The Holy Name Fathers were popularly regarded to be "lions in the pulpit and lambs in the confessional." They would deal mercifully with the penitent sinner but only after they had thoroughly convinced him of his guilt through a pulpit jeremiad. There is a curious "hit and run" quality to this approach to ministry--the itinerant preacher is able to save people precisely because he does not have a sustained relationship with them!

> We laid down the law on marriage, abortion, birth control--the whole thing--dating, sexual sin, masturbation--the whole story. That was our job, to hit that hard. We felt that was our duty because we were strangers. <u>We didn't have to live with these people--we could hit them hard. Then we could go.</u>

The anti-sexual content of the message coincided with what Vinny remembers as his own attitude toward sex at the time. Despite "lip service" to the sacredness of sexuality, he always felt on an emotional level that "these are bad people

doing bad, dirty things, that they're lesser human beings and all that."

In 1966 he attended a cursillo, a very intense and emotionally charged retreat experience which stresses interpersonal closeness and communion. He began an ongoing involvement in the cursillo movement and, shortly thereafter, began to attend group dynamic and sensitivity workshops. He remembers how alien it felt at first--the idea of expressing intimate and angry feelings--of being available and vulnerable.

> It was taking me a long time to grow from the person who had been practically a whole lifetime--not practically--a whole lifetime, even as a child, being a private kind of person, more stoic. See, I'm an extrovert--not a high extrovert but I am an extrovert--but I'm rather stoic in terms of sharing my insides. I will deal with you as an extrovert but a lot of the dealing will be superficial.

In the context of these secular and religious sensitivity experiences he found himself opening up, owning and sharing feelings, developing relationships, allowing himself to touch people and be touched by them both physically and emotionally.

So strong was his commitment to this style of relating that he sought permission to leave his preaching assignment in order to work as a team member of what is called the Movement for a New Tomorrow (MNT). This is a worldwide association of Catholic priests, sisters and lay people who offer workshops and parish renewal experiences on modern psychologically informed spirituality. The emphasis is on

meeting God in self development and in interpersonal relationships, of bringing about the kingdom of God by developing human communities. From 1966 to 1972 Vinny travelled throughout 49 states and several countries giving MNT workshops and speeches. Having moved out of the Holy Name monastery, he lived and travelled with a MNT team which included nuns and lay men and women. This kind of communal living served to open him up even more to the experience of sharing, of depending, of being affectively honest. It also dislodged some of his clericalism as he began to enjoy experiencing himself as "a member of the people of God" as opposed to being this different creature called priest--"above all the other people in the clerical culture." The experience of intimacy was freeing him from his need to be special.

His new openess and affective freedom found expression in his relationships with women. In the first ten years of priesthood he had had one significant emotional relationship with a woman. This was a very close friendship with a married woman named Natalie. It was clear to Vinny that she was in love with him although they never openly discussed their relationship in romantic terms. In retrospect he realizes that he also was in love, although that feeling was far too threatening to admit to her or to himself at that time. Natalie left her marriage and moved from Montreal to Philadelphia to be closer to Vinny. Still, they remained only good friends until she finally fell in love with

someone else and remarried. At the time Vinny could not allow himself to feel badly about losing this relationship. Unable to acknowledge the depth of feeling between them, he was unable to admit any loss.

Vinny believes that the relationship remained platonic for two reasons, partly because of his strong conscious commitment to celibacy and partly because of his own need to avoid intimacy, a need which the requirement of celibacy protected.

> It was very frightening to allow anybody to get to know me that well and to feel some kind ownership. I was very scared of that, apart from the celibacy thing, the fact that here was this person--this <u>woman</u>--who kind of felt like she <u>owned me</u>, like kind of felt like I had <u>some kind of an obligation to share my feelings and my emotions and my closeness with her</u>.

He responded in the same way that he had responded to his parents' expectation that he be close, deciding that "I wasn't gonna do that for them."

With the emotional transformations of the mid-sixties and beyond, this fear of intimacy and of being "owned" seemed to diminish. In fact when he fell in love with Allison in 1966, it was <u>he</u> who wanted to make a total and exclusive commitment while she didn't want to be restricted to one relationship. It caused Vinny a great deal of pain to realize "I was only one of them...I wanted to be the only one." The relationship with Allison remained unresolved for almost ten years, until she met someone to whom she did want to commit herself. Meanwhile, he was simultaneously

developing a relationship with Bernice. In this case she pushed the idea of commitment while he avoided the issue, partly because of his unresolved feelings towards Allison to whom he remained more attracted. As he gradually accepted the fact of Allison's unavailability, he began to get more serious about Bernice.

There had been some light sexual experimentation with both women but it was only nine years into the relationship with Bernice (nine years after his affective awakening of 1966) that he actually experienced intercourse. It was the first full sexual encounter for both of them and they learned about sex together. It was a profound experience for Vinny. Despite some guilt, he also felt that the discovery of sexual intimacy was good and natural, a "part of evolution." "I was experiencing myself as a person, as a man, as a human. I felt good about it." He presents the guilt as having been largely a matter of role conflict, dissonance between the image of the "holy, pure, chaste father" and the fact that he "was really sexual, in love, Vinny."

He actively struggled for over a year with this conflict. The central issue was whether a celibate lifestyle was a more healthy way for him to lead his life. For a long time he had considered celibacy as something he embraced for the sake of the kingdom of God, anticipating a future and greater reward. Suddenly this program of present renunciation for eventual gratification lost its cogency.

He began to explore whether celibacy offered any immediate rewards.

> I've got to be celibate because celibacy is the best thing for me now--that this is the happiest Vinny Rubino can be now...celibacy, not for some future deferred payment kind of thing.

As he concentrated on what would bring immediate growth and happiness he discovered that he wanted to be "a sexual person in an intimate relationship and married." Moreover, he not only wanted to relate on that level but, reflecting on his early experience--his excessive independence and habitual avoidance of intimacy, he concluded that he needed that kind of relationship.

> I definitely need to be in an intimate relationship given my nature and this kind of early on infantile need to withdraw and escape and not share myself. Vinny Rubino is only going to grow and develop and get in touch with himself and his feelings if he's in a demanding kind of intimate relationship that's going to make me get in touch with myself.

After years of fleeing relationships that made too many demands and seemed to pin him down, he now began to seek them out. He decided to leave the priesthood in order to be free to pursue that kind of demanding intimate relationship.

He and Bernice carried on a long distance love affair--he was in graduate school in Cleveland while she remained in Philadelphia. They discussed their plans to marry once Vinny had finished the degree and could finally leave the order. Halfway through his first year of school, however, Bernice fell in love with someone else. Vinny was "devastated" and suffered the hurt of that separation for

the next two years. He had finally allowed himself to become so attached that he could experience a serious loss.

The end of that relationship did not alter his determination to leave the priesthood. He remembers that he had been careful to keep the distinction straight in his own mind: he was leaving the priesthood in order to be able to marry, not to marry a particular person. Leaving the Holy Name community raised new separation issues for him. He recalls his initial reaction after leaving the order, feeling "cut loose, orphaned, alone." He suffered from the fantasy that he would have a "grim" old age and would "get sick and have no one to take care of [him]." He had seemingly become much more in touch with his separation issues; he did not need to deny them as he once had. However, he also would not let them stand in the way of what he needed to do at this point in his life, which meant leaving the place where he had first allowed himself to become attached.

After the loss of Bernice he developed some new relationships with women at school. He recalls that he consciously kept these relationships somewhat superficial. He knew that he did not intend to stay in Cleveland and he was wary of making any commitments, having recently learned something about the hazards of long distance relationships!

From Bernice on, all of Vinny's significant relationships with women included a sexual dimension. Vinny became increasingly comfortable with and committed to sexual

expression and his own sexuality. Interestingly, he returned to the issue of masturbation, the very concern which had helped inspire his priestly vocation. Throughout the seminary and much of priesthood he had not masturbated, at least never when he was fully awake. Then towards the end of priesthood he had been able to masturbate when fully awake, as long as he was in bed. Being in bed made it feel vaguely related to sleep and unconsciousness and thus, according to traditional Catholic moral theology, implied diminished guilt. On several occasions shortly before he left the priesthood, Vinny challenged himself to masturbate away from his bed. This seemed an important symbolic step, a way of affirming the place of sexuality in his life. "I thought about I have to commit myself to sexuality just as I had to commit myself to celibacy. I've got to make a deliberate act of deciding to be sexual and I've got to explore my own sexuality."

After leaving the priesthood he moved back to Philadelphia where he became involved in two relationships simultaneously. One was more significant. In this relationship (with Rachel) Vinny feels he learned a great deal about how to get what he wanted and needed in relationships, "how to fight for what I need in a relationship and not just to let the other person get out of me what she wants without--and then just get angry about it and get passive-aggressive about it." It taught him how to

stay in a relationship, to refrain from "hitting the streets" when faced with conflict or misunderstanding.

Four years ago he met Lucille. She was a young nurse, as had been Allison and Bernice. Vinny sees the nurse aspect as not coincidental. He sees nurses as having a special nurturing quality, a mothering instinct, which allows them to break through his defenses against intimacy and dependence. It seemed important that Lucille was the pursuer, the one who broke through. Vinny had not been initially impressed by her--she seemed too quiet and reserved to be compatible with his extroverted style. She kept up the momentum in the relationship, calling him and sending him letters. Her willingness to be the initiator affected him greatly.

> That kind of moved me, that anybody cared enough about me to call me, especially a very quiet girl like this. If she was a real loud mouth extrovert and called me I wouldn't have been that impressed. But this very quiet introverted person had to go out of her way, and it really struck me that she must really like me a lot.

He felt very safe with Lucille; he trusted her and felt that he understood her. There was a sense that he could almost predict her responses and could therefore rely on her. "There wasn't that much mystery about her...I just seemed to know all about her. I wasn't taking a chance. I wasn't buying a pig in a poke." The presence of such a steady and reliable figure allowed Vinny to commit himself to a caring and depending relationship and eventually to enter into marriage.

The marriage has been an essentially happy one thus far. But there is also the sense that the feeling of safety and of being loved has come with a price. The main source of tension in the relationship concerns Vinny's lifelong fear of being enveloped or owned. There were tremendous arguments the first year of marriage concerning what he calls his need to be with a lot of people and her need to spend time with him alone. But generally they have been able to compromise, balancing his gregariousness with her need to spend quiet time as a couple. Similarly, Vinny feels that the only possible obstacle in attaining his career goal would be his wife's resistance to his desire to pour more time and energy into his private practice. He is already working five days and four evenings a week and would like to expand into Saturday. He feels "inhibited and held back" by her inflexibility on this issue. Despite this tension there is the sense that Vinny finds the relationship worth the compromises and trade-offs it entails.

He feels that he has changed immensely in his ability to relate to women. Based on his experience with his wife and with previous lovers, he feels more secure with women; he feels that he understands and likes them and is able to negotiate with them. He feels more in touch with his own "female side." "I've been able to learn how to cry, be sorry for myself, be tender and nurturing." Much of that change came through insights into his early relationship with his mother and through some later changes in that

relationship. Despite her apparent interest and attention, he always felt that he was unable to be as warm and open with her as he wanted to. In 1967, just when he was "opening up" through the various retreat and sensitivity experiences, he learned that she was dying of cancer. He wrote her a "clear, explicit" love letter for the first time in his life.

> It was really one of the biggest things I ever did in my life up until that time. I had never imagined myself capable of being that explicit about saying "I love you" to anybody and that was a very important thing to me and I think that when my, after my mother died, I probably unconsciously was looking for a woman to be a replacement for her.

He feels that through reflecting on his early overly independent relationship with his mother and seeing how that pattern affected later relationships, especially relationships with women, he was able to understand and begin to change a central dynamic in his life. He began to explore his neediness, his wish to be nurtured and his reactive anger and tendency to flee when that need appeared to be unanswered.

> I was able to analyze my passive-aggressive feelings--that when I couldn't get what I wanted from people and when I ran away from failed relationships...there was a lot of rage and anger..."the only way I'm gonna get back at these people is to simply leave them, dump them, fuck them, the hell with them. I'll leave them--that I've always succeeded in leaving everybody else and taking up again and I can leave this time and start all over again." And all those feelings of anger and "the hell with them-I can take care of myself" feeling, and saying "am I gonna do this for the rest of my life? Am I always gonna run away? Am I never gonna stay and feel

> the success of saying I can do something about things--I don't have to just feel my anger and feel my frustration and just leave. I can stay and make this thing work!

Authority. Vinny's manner of relating to authority figures evolved over the years of priesthood. After a brief period of rebelliousness as a seminarian, he had adopted a stance of blind obedience and total compliance for fear that he would otherwise be expelled from the idealized Holy Name family. As a priest, some of the earlier resistance and independence returned. His characteristic style remained passive-aggressive.

> I always felt that authority persons were rigid, intractable, inflexible, unilateral, non-dialogic. That you had to simply do what they told you to do and then figure out a way to get around it.

This was how he related to the local house superiors, appearing to comply and then sneaking out of the house or otherwise doing what he wanted.

Much of his time, however, was spent on the road and there he was under the close and constant supervision of one of the senior (thirty years older), more seasoned preachers, Fr. Jerry. They travelled together as a team for several years, the older man giving Vinny assignments, delegating tasks, offering critiques of and even editing Vinny's sermons. As Vinny recalls, Fr. Jerry effectively ran his life. Vinny experienced this authority as very powerful; he was very anxious to please Fr. Jerry and could be "shattered" and "devastated" when he failed to do so. The authority was also perceived as benign, and even enjoyable,

"part of the process of growing up, part of the process of training and learning--I wasn't angry at all."

As the years went by, the relationship moved closer to peership, "as equal as a mentor and mentee can be when one of them is thirty years older than the other, as pals as a father and son can be." The father and son dynamic was central. Vinny calls it "a completing relationship", an opportunity to address unfinished developmental business in his relationship with his father.

> I think that I probably made him work. I completed my relationship with my father with him. I made him work in a way I didn't make my father work.

Vinny was profoundly affected when Fr. Jerry died just before Vinny's move to the MNT. He felt alone and afraid, but ready to assume the challenge of functioning as an autonomous adult.

The structure of the MNT fit well with Vinny's reemerging desire for autonomy. Here he could function as a free spirit, his car and his credit card serving as passports to independence. When he returned to live in a Holy Name monastery in 1972, however, most of the old problems with authority and his passive-aggressive response style returned. The corrective relationship with Fr. Jerry did not readily generalize to monastery life. Since leaving priesthood, Vinny has spent a lot of time in therapy working on his feelings about authority and learning how to deal more directly with supervisors. He feels he has made significant progress over the past couple of years.

He regrets, however, that his feelings about his father's use of authority remained an obstacle in their relationship right up until the time of Mr. Rubino's death last year. Mr. Rubino had been upset when Vinny left the priesthood, not because he was attached to the idea of priesthood but because he was afraid that his son could not make it in the outside world. For example, he immediately changed his will to leave Vinny more money, a gesture which Vinny found at once supportive and somewhat patronizing. Mr. Rubino also had opinions as to the kind of woman his son should marry. Vinny responded by avoiding such topics and, to some extent, by avoiding his father. He feels badly that he was unable to work through his feelings about this powerfully ambivalent relationship before his father's death.

> I knew that he was concerned and interested and wanted to get his viewpoint across, wanted to get through to me. I felt guilty about the fact that I wasn't letting him get through to me. I felt threatened by his use of authority to get me to do what he thought would be the best thing for me as opposed to what I had decided to be the best thing for me. I was afraid that he would try to use some kind of authority, if only emotional or figurehead authority.

Vinny also maintains a profoundly ambivalent relationship with his figurative parent, the church. He would like to maintain some form of ministerial service and is distressed that the church no longer recognizes his priestly calling. It hurts and angers him to realize that the laity "can't call me Father because the hierarchy

doesn't think I'm a good one." He has, however, found a form of ministry which directly challenges the ecclesiastical status quo. As a member of a federation of ex-priests he frequently officiates at the marriages of other Catholics who are not in good standing, e.g., divorced Catholics and other ex-priests, and who are therefore not able to be validly married within the church. As a self-perceived victim of church policy, he serves other victims--the other "bad children" of the church.

Advancement. A man's feelings about authority figures are likely to affect and be affected by his feelings about his own authority, his ability or failure to become his own man. A man's career is likely to be the arena in which this challenge is addressed. Issues of authority and advancement have been an especially charged theme in Vinny's life. It was difficult for him to feel much of a sense of personal authority or power in the early days of priesthood. There was little sense of his own competence as he began priestly ministry. He felt like a late starter. Because he had entered the seminary at such an early age, he did not work in any meaningful sense of the word until he was twenty-seven years old. He remembers how impatient he felt about being in process, anxious to become a veteran and an old hand. Because of the nature of his assignment (itinerant preachers typically spend half of their time on the road and the other half at home resting and studying) he often felt underutilized or worse.

> I was feeling useless. I was feeling I'm not earning my keep...Everybody else goes out to work everyday and I'm sitting here doing nothing but reading and studying and pretty well enjoying leisure and I felt guilty about that. I felt this is wrong, that an able bodied young man like myself should be doing nothing, and I suffered a lot from that.

He did, however, develop considerable expertise and a growing reputation as a preacher. He was in demand, as time went on, and could set up his own engagements and itinerary, a form of "wheeling and dealing" which gained him considerable autonomy vis-a-vis the local superiors. He also experienced a sense of his own authority in his role as confessor.

He felt frustrated, however, in pursuing and receiving the kind of position and recognition within the order which most mattered to him. He wanted desperately to be perceived as a talented priest who had a lot to offer his fellow priests and who could supervise the training of future priests. He was never selected for that kind of assignment. Even in less formal supervisory relationships, e.g., with younger priests who were assigned to travel and preach with him (as he had with Fr. Jerry), he felt insecure in his mentoring role.

> I never felt that people gave me the authority they should have given me...I didn't feel that people wanted to listen to me and obey me. I suffered from that, from feeling "I ain't got no respect."

He wonders whether this feeling might have been partly a projection of his own feelings about authority figures--

because he ignored superiors in a passive-aggressive way he presumed that others did so with him. Perhaps he had more authority than he realized. He also recognizes that he did something to discourage confidence in his authority and leadership. One factor was his strong wish to be liked and the

> fear I have of perhaps not being liked if I am my total strong self. It's more important for me emotionally, I guess, to be liked by people than to be respected. So they end up liking me. That's obvious--they like me but they don't respect me because I'm asking for like and not for respect.

The lack of respect, he feels, concerns the perception that it would be "dangerous" to give him power or authority --not because he would be autocratic, but because he wouldn't be strong enough. Here the inhibition about assertiveness and competition enters in, creating the impression

> that I'm not going to do a good job, that I'm going to be wishy-washy about it, that I'm not going to be dependable. Not that I'm not a good worker--I'm a fantastic worker--but that I'm not going to have the whatever it is to really stand up there and say "O.K., this is the way we're going to do it" and to be really ballsy and tough.

This problem followed him from his work within the order to the setting of the MNT. Within that organization Vinny quickly became recognized as a gifted and charismatic preacher. After he had been with the movement for several years, two important leadership positions became available. Vinny was eager for a promotion and felt that he would have been the logical candidate for either office. He was passed

over for both, having to watch persons with less seniority and experience assume the positions. In retrospect he sees his problems with competition as having cost him those positions. He wanted to be recognized as a leader within the movement without having to assert himself in any way to get the position. Without even letting it be know that he was interested in the job,

> I wanted to be recognized as the person that <u>should</u> be it without having to beat out the others at it, without having to best them, you know, to show that I was better than them, to prove that I was better than them <u>by conquering them in some way or beating them in some way. That it should have just been obvious that I was smarter or more competent or more able.</u>

The issues of authority, advancement and competition have evolved over the eight years since Vinny left ministry. Before leaving he did some careful career planning, consulting with a number of persons in the mental health field. He decided that an MSW degree would be the fastest route toward getting the credentials he needed and that it would be easier and cheaper to pursue the degree while still in the order. He enrolled in graduate school without telling anybody of his intention to leave. He felt somewhat guilty about this tactic, but he felt a sense of urgency to get established on the outside as quickly as possible--"it's really a question of how to go, what's the most practical way I can go."

When he finished the degree he returned to Philadelphia and began to look for work, somewhat afraid that he wouldn't

be able to make a living. He found a transitional place to live, moving in for a few months with a couple of friends, also ex-Holy Name priests, until he found a job and could afford an apartment. His first job was as the administrator of a settlement house. He did well at the job but was not always forceful enough in his leadership with staff and clients. He also developed problems with the executive director. Vinny feels that he was politically naive and failed to keep the executive director adequately informed of the day to day operations, failed to "butter him up." Vinny was demoted and subsequently quit. His next job was a direct service position with a chronic population. He consciously avoided any supervisory or administrative responsibilities in this setting. He did not especially enjoy the work, but he used it to further his career goal, staying in the position long enough and receiving enough supervision to satisfy the state requirements to become eligible for third party payment. He was simultaneously on the staff of a pastoral counseling center doing fee-for-service work. He currently has a small private practice, a fairly heavy case load at the pastoral counseling center and a part time affiliation at a community mental health center as a clinical supervisor, a role he feels he is finally beginning to grow into.

The issue of accepting his own seniority and authority is clearly a growing edge in his life and even shifted during the course of our four interviews. Recently he came

to a critical juncture regarding his position at the pastoral counseling center. Hours before our second interview, he had attended a staff meeting where the director of that center unexpectedly announced his resignation. A number of the staff, many of them less experienced than Vinny and with fewer years on staff, announced their desire to assume the position. Vinny wanted the job badly but, true to his usual form, said nothing, hoping in vain that someone else would recognize and nominate him as clearly the most qualified candidate. By coincidence the content of the interview protocol that day dealt with his ability to work at advancement within the priesthood. As he told the stories of his failure to go after important positions within the Holy Name order and the MNT, Vinny was quite struck by the pattern he was describing. At the next staff meeting of the pastoral counseling center, Vinny nominated himself to be the director, detailing the many reasons why he was clearly the most qualified to assume the role. To his great delight and considerable surprise, the group elected him unanimously.

Vinny basically feels good about his current professional identity. He says he'd give himself a "B plus" in this area of life, maybe even an "A minus" now that he has assumed the directorship. He feels a strong desire to accomplish something of lasting value, to leave a legacy.

> There's a deep, deep thing in there about being afraid to die anonymous, without having been known as somebody very good, very helpful, very important, very talented, a good person who

> did a lot of good for a lot of people.

The content of that legacy has been scaled down over the past few years. For many years he felt that he needed to become a celebrity, to write a bestselling book or invent a revolutionary new approach to therapy. Lately his hopes are less grandiose, to become known and respected in the local community, to offer something of value to his clients and supervisees.

He has, in fact, become quite visible and well regarded within his community. He is confident in the quality of his clinical work. He has become more comfortable with setting and collecting an adequate fee. For a long time he had difficulty charging people enough for his services. He attributes this to the vestiges of priestly altruism and to personal doubts about the worth of his product. (It should also be noted that he feels his father always worked for less than he was worth.) Recently he has found himself able to tell clients,

> what I have to offer is worth $50 an hour
> to you and I deserve to be paid $50 an hour
> and I'm not ashamed to ask you for it.

Money has become an important issue in his life. Between his income and his wife's salary as a nurse he feels he has enough for day to day purposes. He worries at times about the possibility of becoming ill or disabled, and he is acutely aware that he has no pension of any kind. He has become quite interested in investments as a means of providing for the future. He and Lucille own a co-op, but

he would like to own a house, feeling it's important to possess his own piece of the land. He is aware of the fact that the experience of priesthood cost him more than twenty-five years of earnings. He frequently compares himself to his age peers, including many of his patients who are a few years away from retirement with fully vested pensions and other investments.

> I feel like I'm twenty-five years behind. I feel like I have the financial security of a thirty year old guy...I have a lot of feelings about that. I feel a little sorry for myself. I feel some, a little resentment that I did not leave the priesthood sooner to get myself some of this equity.

Concerns about money and financial security have helped him overcome, to some extent, his inhibitions about competing. There is the sense that he is now better able to assert himself--not necessarily because assertion and competition are less conflictual, but because such behavior is seen as necessary for survival in the outside world.

> I have had a gradual growth in learning how to assert myself. Seeing the need to be assertive, seeing the need to be competitive, seeing the need to survive in the real world, I had to be dollar wise. I had to really knuckle down and face reality that the world was hard, that people were tough. I reluctantly had to accept that as necessity.

Generativity. Vinny felt that he was able to be somewhat generative as a priest. He remembers that he felt no responsibility for the physical or material well being of others. Such concerns were foreign to him, and he felt little empathy for those who faced those concrete concerns. He did, however, feel "tremendous responsibility for their

spiritual well being," for keeping them right with God and with their own consciences. He remembers that he enjoyed children and thought that sacrificing the opportunity for parenthood, especially the chance to have a son, was the greatest renunciation entailed in priesthood.

When Vinny actually married, paternity became a complicated question. On one hand he experienced a "very strong drive for the immortality of children, somebody with your genes and your blood and your name that comes after you to remind the world of you." On the other hand there were practical difficulties, notably that of age. When he married three years ago he was fifty-four and Lucille was forty-one. Vinny describes his wife as reluctant to conceive a child at her age and says that he "is not going to push her" on that issue. He cites money concerns and the practical difficulties of raising a young family during what should be their retirement years. As appealing as the idea of having children may be, it could "screw up" their lives at this point. If he could live his life over, his main wish would be to marry at a younger age in order to have at least one child. As it is, he regrets but seems to have made his peace with this aspect of foreclosed possibilities, this area of life wherein he decided it was probably too late to catch up.

Individuation. The non-normative or counter-cultural nature of Vinny's experience seems to have affected his experience of the intrapsychic polarities. One striking

example is his experience of the tension between being old and young. Although there are realistic consequences of his having attained a certain age, such as the decision not to father a child, his existential sense of himself is that he is much younger than his fifty-six years. He feels and thinks of himself as being about thirty-nine. Most of his friends are younger than he, and the women he dated were always more than a decade younger than he. He finds that most men his age look and behave much (fifteen to twenty years) older than he does, and that they have "wives who look old enough to be my mother." He believes that the discrepancy between his chronological and his experienced age is largely a function of his newness to so many roles. He and his wife are in the childless "young couple" stage of marriage. Despite his many years of experience in a service profession, he is a relative newcomer to the social work field. He sees himself as having the equity and financial standing of a 30 year old. Coming out of the seminary and priesthood setting feels somewhat like a rebirth. He is a fledgling.

> I feel like in a way my life as I'm living it now only really began about seven or eight years ago. I feel like I was a young, a young, very young fellow that came out about eight years ago and therefore belongs somewhere in the, in the, between the thirty and forty-five year category.

Similarly, Vinny's experience of himself as being engaged with the world or detached from it has differed from the supposed norm. For the first fifteen or more years of adulthood he felt very separated from the world and its

concerns. The language with which he described his relationship to the outside world underscores this lack of connection and investment. Describing his view of life outside the seminary he says,

> not knowing them out there, it's hard for me to say. But whenever I thought about it at all, I thought...that I was quite different from them. I couldn't imagine myself living the kind of life that they lived.

It was only after he experienced the great affective conversion at age 37 that he was able to recognize his commonality with those in secular society, to wish for and pursue deeper involvement in the affairs of the world. In more recent years as he has begun to feel somewhat more free to compete, his involvement in the outside world has increased. Thus with age Vinny has become more (rather than less) engaged in the outer world. He still experiences a contemplative dimension and values this highly, although it is more difficult to cultivate this aspect of his experience within his present lifestyle. Finally, his experience of himself as masculine has been enhanced by his greater involvement in and striving within the world, although there is also evidence of the more typical mid-life integration of the feminine as witnessed in his increased dependency and affectivity.

VINNY: INTERPRETATION

Vinny's decision to enter the seminary was made at the tender age of twelve, several years before he could be expected to confront any of the developmental tasks of adulthood. Even at that young age, however, there were indications that certain areas of experience were evolving in ways which would leave him less than prepared for those normative adult challenges. The most problematic issues related to separation, relationships with authority, sexuality/intimacy, and competition/advancement--certainly crucial and extensive areas of adult experience.

It is striking that Vinny had so little difficulty leaving home at such an early age. Throughout his early years he seems to have had difficulties forming meaningful attachments to persons, even to his mother. Their relationship lacked a sense of closeness or specialness. Vinny seemed not invested enough to really miss her or anyone else. The only conscious longing he could permit was for symbols of mother: the Brooklyn waterfront and her home cooking. Vinny staunchly maintains that the distance in the mother-son relationship was not reactive to any sort of conflict or deprivation. Rather, it was simply a matter of constitution and temperament--he was too active, outgoing and inquisitive a young man to have developed very strong ties to mother.

I believe that the appeal to temperament and constitution is partly accurate; some children do seem to push off into the world earlier and more energetically than others. Clearly, however, Vinny's flight from the maternal orbit was also reactive to some problems or deficits in that relationship. His abiding guilt over having left his parents at an early age suggests that his leaving was not without conflict. There are at times contradictory indications of what that conflict was about, but the clearest sense is that he perceived early on that he could not get enough of what he needed in that relationship--closeness, warmth, and mirroring of his specialness. (Certainly those supplies were not to be found in his tenuous relationship with his distant and forbidding father.) Unable to deal with the rage and pain occasioned by such unfulfilled longing, Vinny learned not to long, spurning dependence, scoffing at need (witness his contempt for the other first graders who cried when separated from their mothers), vowing never to miss anybody.

This counter-dependence became a prominent characterological pattern of Vinny's. From an early age he adopted a posture of pseudo-independence which masked the unsatisfied needs for dependence and attachment. He remained unattached in large part because of his need to devalue and flee relationships which in any way disappointed him. The intensity of his wish for closeness was translated into the fear that someone would try to "own" or control

him. The real fear, I suspect, was that no one would want to hold on to him. Thus he was faced with the dilemna which Johnson (1985) attributes to the oral character.

> For the oral character, the block is mainly toward reaching. The block says "Don't reach; you will be abandoned." So, of course, he sees the world depriving him, and his quest is to find someone to take care of him. However, his ego ideal of independence and self-sufficiency refuses to allow him to surrender to his needs. He is thereby in a constant state of frustration. (p. 25)

Hence, the apparent lack of separation themes belied significant unresolved separation issues. The move to seminary did not provide a helpful experience in separation in which there could be an experience of missing or somehow mourning and internalizing the lost object. Vinny was not ready to experience true separation because he had not yet allowed himself to experience attachment (insufficient gratification of symbiosis). You can't really leave what you haven't been connected to.

Vinny's difficulties with attachment and true separation certainly affected his early experiences of intimacy. Denying the intensity of his need for an intimate relationship, he kept his distance, assuming the role of the affable outsider. This pattern was certainly true of his relationships within the family, and it also characterized his relationships with peers. He was friendly with all of them but a good friend to none. In particular, he lacked any close relationships with girls. This deficit is not surprising in view of the fact that he left for the seminary

when he was still in his latency years. Considering his general fear of closeness and dependence, however, it is doubtful whether he would have been able to develop age appropriate closeness with girls even if he had spent his adolescence outside the seminary walls. As it happened, he spent his adolescence and early adulthood almost competely isolated from contact with the opposite sex. So isolated was he that he could make the extraordinary claim that his thoughts and feelings about women did not change over the entire thirteen years of seminary. The twenty-six year old was no better prepared to relate to women than the thirteen year old had been! Not much had happened during the seminary phase of this moratorium experience.

The suspicion that Vinny would not have been able to address the normative adult challenge of intimacy is further supported by a consideration of his early sexual history. He received little reliable information about sex. His early and abiding impression was that sex was somehow dirty, dangerous and violent. (Certainly someone with his concerns about hurting others could not have felt comfortable with such a violent activity!) Except for masturbation, he had no sexual experience before his departure to seminary--again, not surprising considering his age when he entered.

His sexual naivete allowed him to enjoy guilt-free masturbation for a time until at age twelve he suddenly made some mental connections--that masturbation was somehow connected to that dark and dangerous thing called sex, that

what he had been doing with his penis was actually that mysterious sin against purity that he had heard about but had never quite understood before. Vinny was devastated by the discovery. He ran to the confessional for forgiveness and vowed that he would never again touch himself in that way. He decided to become a priest, to renounce the sinful pleasures of sexuality. He hoped that being a celibate would make amends for his previous sins and would help protect him from future ones.

In the latter respect his strategy was dramatically successful. His assumption of celibate chastity was abrupt and, after a short time, became absolute. From the time he decided to enter the seminary, he stopped masturbating--at least he never again masturbated in a state of full consciousness. Within the next couple of years even these semi-conscious episodes of masturbation were extinguished. At a time in life when, normatively, his sexual desires and experience would have intensified, Vinny's sexuality became increasingly dormant. As he made his way through (chronological) adolescence, his sexual urges continued to wane until at age nineteen sex was "no longer an issue" for him. Those years represent an apparent foreclosure on his sexual nature.

Vinny's relationships with authority reflect early difficulties and they remained problematic throughout his life. His crippling fear of his father caused him to adopt a passive-aggressive approach to figures of authority. As

he decided in his early dealings with seminary superiors, he would not be guilty of outright sins but he would allow himself some imperfections along the way, breaking or stretching seminary rules. Even this subtle form of rebellion ultimately proved to be too threatening. Owing to his "imperfect" observance of the rules he was faced with the threat of dismissal from the seminary. In response to this threat he assumed an overly compliant posture as a reaction formation against his resentment and wish to rebel. He identified with the aggressor, becoming the perfect seminarian, "Mr. Holy Name," "synonymous with the rule." Development along different lines can proceed at an uneven pace or even in inverse proportions. Vinny's assumption of the model seminarian role represented some progress in addressing the task of attachment/separation (see below) but it betokened an arrest and even a regression in his ability to come to terms with authority, both the authority exercised by his superiors and the sense of authority he could call his own.

Vinny was consciously aware at the time that he was not ready to follow the normative adult course of working at advancement within a career. As he envisioned some of the more mainstream career paths, it became clear to him that pursuing achievement in those roles would entail competition. He was certain that he did not want to compete, or at least that he did not want to <u>win</u> in competition.

This inhibition against competing and succeeding appears to have been overdetermined. It suggests the presence of some unintegrated aggressive and, perhaps even, sadistic urges--why the need for this inhibition against hurting people unless there was also at some level the unconscious wish to do so? (The troubled relationship with his father and the frustration of symbiotic needs are likely sources of this unneutralized aggression.) In this inhibition against competing and succeeding, there were also aspects of identification with the father--the man who either would not or could not achieve success in the construction business. There may have been oedipal themes at word too--if Vinny had allowed himself to develop for another four years at Brooklyn Classical and thereafter at Harvard, he would have had to face the spectre of surpassing his father. Finally, it is likely that the inhibition was also fed by those unresolved separation issues. Despite his pseudo-independence, Vinny was not yet ready for true separation. Pouring his talents into a successful secular academic and career course would probably have demanded more autonomy and independence than he possessed at the time. Considering all of these factors, it is hardly surprising that Vinny decided to become a priest, a man who would help others and not pursue a competitive path of achievement at their expense. The role both expressed and reinforced the inhibition.

Thus Vinny's decision to enter the seminary related, in part, to difficulties experienced in the areas of separation, authority, intimacy/sexuality and competition/advancement. During the years of seminary and priesthood he was able, to greater and lesser extents, to make progress in these various areas of experience. In general, the growth was modest during the thirteen years of seminary and the initial priestly years. The most dramatic changes occurred well into his priestly career.

It was during the seminary years that Vinny began, on an unconscious level, to work on his conflicts about attachment and separation. For apparently the first time in his life Vinny allowed himself to experience a desire to belong somewhere. The Holy Name community became for him an idealized family with which he enthusiastically sought affiliation. He readily surrendered his previous pattern of excessive independence for the privilege of belonging.

A relationship with a world wide institution is, of course, different than relating to a mother or family. There is something global and diffuse about the attachment in the former case. I believe that it was precisely the diffuse and universal nature of that attachment which allowed Vinny to make a commitment. As a Holy Name religious, Vinny could satisfy at once his need to belong and his constitutional/defensive wish to remain a free spirit, to "hit the streets." It felt wonderful, he said, to belong to an association which had houses the world over

--so many places that he could call home. There would seem to have been a security in having so many homes (and parents and siblings)--if one didn't satisfy his needs, there were always others. Actually, it was probably that corporate security which allowed Vinny to begin to form attachments and to make commitments to individual relationships as the years of seminary and priesthood progressed.

During these years his sense of connectedness to his mother increased. He corresponded frequently throughout seminary and priesthood. As a priest he was more free to telephone or visit, and he took every opportunity to do so. He recalls how she loved to see photographs of all the interesting places he visited as an itinerant preacher. Over the years Vinny began to relax more in his mother's presence, to enjoy spending time with her. He discovered within himself the wish and the ability to bask in the gleam in her eye. It is possible that celibacy aided this process. Being celibate, he may have had more of an opportunity to still be her son than if he had been distracted by the often competing roles of husband and father. This extended undistracted contact with his family of origin gave him time to do some corrective work in that relationship, to strengthen his bond with her. A year before she died he was finally able to speak his heart to her in a letter, to own his feelings of love and need. Her death was experienced as a profound loss, one which he

mourned but one which also impelled him to seek new attachments, "to seek a replacement for her."

While he was not able to achieve a similar rapprochement with his father, he was able to use the relationship with Father Jerry as a "completing relationship," a kind of corrective emotional experience. He developed a bond with Father Jerry which he had not been able to experience with his father. The older priest's death was a profound experience of separation, one which was also a rite of passage into adult autonomy. Having allowed himself to experience dependence on this man, having incorporated some of the older man's strength, Vinny was able to explore true independence.

> It was the end of an era for me. It was going to mean my mentor was dead, gone, and I was now finally on my own as an adult, and whatever I did from now on there wasn't going to be anybody else guiding me, leading me. I felt ready to do it, but I felt scared and shocked that now was the time to be it and do it.

He felt a similar shudder of separation when he finally left the order. He had some fear that he wouldn't be able to make it on his own, that he would die miserable and alone. Still, he carried with him the strength he had gained during those years as a member of the Holy Name family. In short, he had been able to use the religious order as a transitional object (Winnicott, 1965), a place to form attachments and to gain strength (to build psychic structure) until he was able to be truly separate, not just in appearance but in fact.

The progress of his ability to withstand attachment and separation was inextricably connected to the vicissitudes of his experience of intimacy. During the seminary years and early priesthood, he made some modest gains in his ability to be close to others, to trust and depend on them. Despite the seminary's prohibition of "particular friendships", and despite his usual compliance with rules, Vinny permitted himself to form some "particular" or special friendships--friends that he would miss and with whom he kept contact after their priestly assignments dispersed them around the country and the globe. In the long and platonic relationship with Natalie he became more open to the experience of heterosexual intimacy--he came closer than he had ever come before to falling in love. His own fear of intimacy and the role incumbency of priesthood prevented him from a full "fall" at that point.

His affective dormancy lasted until his 37th year. He had entered the service of the church in order to escape (unconsciously to postpone) the challenge of intimacy and sexuality. Ultimately his experience as a servant of that very church would lead him back to that challenge. The church of 1966 was in many ways a different church than the one to which he had first committed himself in 1942. Influenced by the emergence of new cultural and theological realities, various factions within the post-Vatican Council church were seeking to create a more human environment for

worship and fellowship. The church's awakening in this regard coincided with and evoked Vinny's personal awakening.

Vinny became an enthusiastic convert to a new style of Christianity and even became one of its spokesmen. The role of priesthood had been redefined for him. After years of being a stern and untouchable cleric, being a priest now required that he be affective and intimate--a prophet of interpersonal union and personal growth. Perhaps Vinny needed the permission provided by this new role. Priesthood created the expectation that he would touch people at deep levels of their existence and may have given him the inner freedom to do so.

The ministry of Father Vincent became increasingly more connected with the needs of Vinny the man. In spreading the gospel of intimacy, he found himself falling in love. The resolution of some of his issues about attachment and separation made him far more open to the experience of intimacy. There seems to have been some carry-over of maternal themes in his relationships with women--in his search for exclusivity, his desire to be the special one in their lives, in his passivity (the wish that they will pursue him, that the nurturing and healing nurse/mother will break through to him).

All the while he had to struggle with certain deeply ingrained aspects of his character: his fear that the other person would not prove faithful or sincere; his temptation to flee before he was abandoned; his need to hit

the streets. Dependency meant that he could be hurt. His experience within the MNT community and in his love relationships had made it somewhat easier for him to trust that the benefits would outweigh the hurts.

Finally, he was able to face the ultimate question--did he want to and would he be able to make a commitment to one person? The corporate commitment to the Holy Name congregation could only carry his development so far. Vinny could only grow so much as a celibate. To further his growth in the capacity for intimacy he had to risk a non-celibate commitment. His insight into this challenge unifies the themes of separation and intimacy and bears repeating:

> I definitely <u>need</u> to be in an intimate relationship given my nature and this kind of early on infantile need to withdraw and escape and not share myself. Vinny Rubino is only going to grow and develop and get in touch with himself and his feelings if he's in a demanding kind of intimate relationship that's going to make me get in touch with myself.

He has found that relationship with Lucille. Despite his periodic temptation to withdraw and despite the ways in which the demands of that one relationship curtail his pursuit of other relationships or projects, he feels happy and hopeful about that relationship. The demands of the relationship are "good for [him] but hard for [him]."

Parallel with his development in the experience of intimacy has been his ability to accept and integrate sexual experience. Similarly the period of dormancy was remarkably

long--a latency from which he began to emerge in his 37th year. Having spent thirteen years of seminary avoiding sex and ten years of ministry preaching against it, he had a lot to catch up on. Gradually the sexual aspect was introduced into his relationships. Only a year before his leaving priesthood, nine years into his relationship with Bernice, was he able to explore sexual intercourse. Similarly it was only in that year that he could accept masturbation. In a wonderfully parallel reversal of the earlier inhibitory process, masturbation was reintroduced into his life, first as a semi-volutary experience and finally as a conscious premeditated affirmation of his sexuality. The testimony of his experience was that he no longer wished to be a celibate, that he wanted to be free to be "sexual, in love Vinny" without the dissonance and restraints of the celibate priestly role. He was ready to emerge from his psychosexual moratorium. His relationships after leaving priesthood became more unabashedly sexual.

There is, however, still a fair amount of ambivalence about his decision to leave priesthood, specifically about his renunciation of celibacy. This was a surprising finding and something he introduced only at the very end of the interview process. Throughout our conversations Vinny conveyed the impression that he had successfully grown out of his need for celibacy--his use of celibacy to protect himself from interpersonal intimacy and sexual expression--and that he was pleased by that growth. To a great extent

this interpretation is true and speaks to the bulk of his everyday experience. It is also interesting to note, however, the undercurrents of doubt and guilt which can trouble him at times. On one hand he firmly believes that celibacy was not working for him, was not making him a happy or healthy person. On the other hand, he wonders whether he might have somehow lost the "gift of celibacy," the grace or charism to live up to the demands of that calling. The idea occurs to him at times that maybe there was nothing wrong with celibacy but, rather, there was something wrong with him that he could not function as a celibate.

Actually the ambivalence is broader than the sexual question and seems to involve unresolved questions about authority and his sense of entitlement to live his own life. He feels certain that God understands his decision to leave --God is not really "hurt" or "shortchanged" by Vinny's departure. Nevertheless, he feels that God "regrets" that Vinny felt he had to leave. In creating Vinny God wanted him to experience the "fullness of [his] manhood and the fullness of relationship." Vinny's fear is that

> I could have experienced the fullness of manhood except for having actual sexual intimacy, but I could have still been fully a man and remained faithful to the vow of celibacy. And maybe He would regret that I wasn't able to achieve it and remain faithful--that I had to do the drastic thing of leaving it as the only way that I felt I had to do that. I probably didn't have to do that--I probably didn't have to leave the priesthood and abandon celibacy. I could have learned how to be a man. I could have become a man and developed many infinite--I mean intimate--relationships, good relationships, but I just--the way it was working for me, it seemed a better

way to do it this way for me.

Certainly his misgivings are in part spiritual and intellectual, reflected in his concern for things "infinite" over things "intimate." I suspect, however, that these doubts betray some unfinished psychological business as well, the lingering emotional suspicion that sex is a dirty and unworthy pursuit and that he is not entitled to pursue his own happiness.

During the years of seminary and priesthood there was scant progress in his ability to come to terms with authority figures and with the nature of his own authority. This has remained until the present a problematic area for him. His passive-aggresive style of relating to superiors continued throughout seminary and most of priesthood. The experience with his mentor, Father Jerry, is a kind of oasis from this pattern. He experienced Father Jerry's authority as benign and felt little conscious desire to rebel. Beginning from a posture of complete submission, he grew over the years in a sense of peership with Jerry. This experience, however, did not seem to generalize to the other authority relationships within the Holy Name order or even to those of the post-priesthood years. The conflict was not to be so easily resolved.

It is not surprising that the best years of Vinny's priesthood were those during which he had a very tenuous relationship with authority structures. As a member of the MNT he was essentially a free spirit, able to come and go as

he pleased, to choose his own speaking engagements and the like. When he returned to the Holy Name monastery, he found the authority structure to be even less tolerable than before. His passive aggressive response style intensified until the time he finally left. In leaving, he was hoping to find some relief from the intrusions of authority into his life. He found some initial relief, but he soon discovered that authority was ubiquitous and that he had to work out a strategy of coexisting with the powers that be.

His unresolved feelings toward authority reverberated in problems assuming his own authority. Vinny himself points out the likelihood of a projective dynamic at work here--because he resented and wished to thwart his superiors he has always presumed that his own supervisees harbor ill feelings towards him. If he were to assert his authority and demand their respect, they would hate him and perhaps openly rebel. So he has tended to curry their approval by abdicating his authority. Being liked has been more important than being respected. Meanwhile, his fear that his authority will not be accepted or effective has often become a self-fulfilling prophecy. In recent years, mostly through his experiences in therapy after priesthood, he had been able to be more direct with his superiors, and he has found that directness translating into an increased ability to make demands of and command the respect of his supervisees.

There are still unresolved issues. The issue of authority remained unresolved until the end with his father. Even as a man in his fifties, Vinny often felt like an unprotected child in dealing with his father. Spending time with his father posed the threat "that he would try to use some kind of authority, if only emotional or figurehead authority" to impose his will. Unable to fend off his father's intrusions and encroachments on his own autonomy, Vinny sought to avoid contact with the older man. There is also an ambivalent relationship with the authority of the church. Vinny wishes that the church would recognize his marriage to Lucille. He also wishes that his could receive some form of ecclesiastical recognition or endorsement of his authority as a minister. Undaunted, he continues on a limited basis to function as a priest, having chosen a particularly rebellious form of ministry--offering the sacraments to his fellow outlaws and outsiders.

Vinny's inhibition against competition and achievement remained largely unchanged during the seminary years. The unacceptable competitive and aggressive impulses seem to have been translated into a sublimated desire to excel in holiness, to be outstanding in virtue. During the priesthood he seems to have grown in a sense of his own power and abilities. He had waited twenty-seven years for his first job, but he soon discovered that he could do it well. He was a gifted preacher, much respected and sought after. This seems to have enhanced his sense of becoming

his own man. He booked his own engagements and set his own schedule.

His major disappointment during the years of priesthood concerned his having been passed over for several promotions within the order and the MNT. In retrospect, Vinny realizes that his inhibitions about the exercise of his own authority somehow contributed to this lack of success. Fearful of the aggressive aspects of authority and power, he presented himself as weak and indecisive. Better that people should not take him seriously than that they fear or resent him. When opportunities for leadership and advancement arose, he was unable to advance his own cause. He took refuge in the somewhat grandiose fantasy that other persons would note his excellence and would draft him for the position. That way he could win not through competition but by popular acclaim. When this wish was not gratified, he would become more angry and eager to control, to take charge and set things right. This increase in his assertive and aggressive feelings necessitated a further strengthening of the inhibition.

Since leaving the priesthood, Vinny has been able to pursue his own advancement in a somewhat less inhibited fashion. He carefully researched career possibilities and chose the one which seemed most feasible and satisfying. He made the somewhat cynical but remarkably practical decision to let the order pay for his degree. He has become more and more confident in his ability as a therapist. His personal goals have become less grandiose, but they still excite him

and fuel his endeavors. He has become more comfortable with money, both receiving it (unlike his father, he has learned to charge enough for his services) and using it to create more wealth. He realizes that he will probably never catch up with most of his age peers in this latter respect (there are some inescapable fiscal consequences of having spent 35 years in a state of deferral), but he is determined to do his best.

After having avoided supervisory positions for several years, he has recently begun to assume that kind of authority. This has been a struggle for him; he has had to do battle with various "demons" along the way, his fear of not being liked, his tendency to present himself as less capable and as not a threat. The most recent incident of having actively pursued the directorship seems to indicate that he is finally willing to take his own ability seriously and to assume the risks of competition.

It's a fledgling development, however, and there are still issues to be resolved. He indicates that his willingness to compete is due to an intellectual assent to the <u>necessity</u> of such striving rather than to an emotional sense of being entitled to do so. Being out in the world has been an eye-opener for him in this regard. He has become more resigned to the necessity of competition as an adaptation to the need to survive in the cold, hard real world. He competes now because he <u>has to</u> rather than because he wants to or feels entitled to.

One final area of concern involves his sense of loss and guilt about having left priesthood and how those feelings color his perception of his current career. While he feels excited about and satisfied by his work as a therapist, he finds that it lacks the spark which he experienced as a priest. Never during the past eight years has he experienced the "extreme elation of priesthood," especially his priestly work within the MNT. His current work is interesting but never as interesting as when he felt he was on the cutting edge of forming a new humanity, of helping shape mankind's "final evolution" (the mission of the MNT). Then he would experience "this tremendous surge of 'aha!', a breakthrough that '<u>this</u> is what these people really need', and having a whole group of people look up at me stunned and say 'God, <u>this</u> is what we need, this is what we got to do'--the tremendous feeling, almost intoxication."

He is aware of the possible elements of grandiosity which inspired his former vision. Maybe the change means that he has simply become less grandiose. Still, he feels that he has lost a vision which was real and which gave a depth of meaning to his life that he has yet to find in his post-priesthood endeavors. Unexpressed by Vinny is the possibility that these feelings of disappointment derive in part from his guilt about having left priesthood, Perhaps he cannot allow himself to feel as happy and inspired again after having made the decision to abandon priesthood, a decision which God may understand but probably regrets.

DISCUSSION

Making one's way into and through adulthood is no easy task. Development invariably entails risk and evokes anxiety. Depending upon a man's personal preparedness for the developmental task at hand, that anxiety and perception of risk can assume relatively mild or quite crippling proportions.

Faced with particular tasks of development and with specific, socially expected enactments of these tasks (e.g., marriage, paternity and investment in career), a young man has three choices of response. He can attempt to address these tasks directly and headlong--entering into the marriage, having the child, striving for the promotion, even if he feels somewhat unprepared for that particular challenge, even if it feels like a "bootstrap operation." (Levinson, 1978) In such a case, the psychological work associated with the developmental task (e.g., intimacy) hopefully keeps pace with, or at least does not lag too far behind, the unfolding demands of the enactment (the daily challenge of living in a committed, caring, sexual relationship). Another option, presumably "inspired" by debilitating levels of anxiety, is to avoid the enactment altogether as an expression of having foreclosed upon the

psychological work demanded by the developmental task itself. Examples of this psychically morbid outcome might include the chronic wall flower who finally retreats to an asexual, loveless existence or the compulsively promiscuous single who has despaired of his capacity for commitment and for intimacy in any form beyond the genital. Erikson (1958) and Marcia (1964) have suggested a third option whereby a young person unconsciously opts to postpone particular enactments and, in doing so, gains the psychological time and space to work on unresolved issues proper to the developmental task itself.

The life experience of priests is of theoretical interest because of the extent to which the constraints of the priestly role prevent a man from experiencing some of the more common enactments of adult developmental tasks. Some of these role restrictions are more obvious--faithfulness to celibacy, for example, would preclude the experience of sexual intimacy, marriage and paternity. Other enactments may be affected in more subtle ways. The vicissitudes of the separation process, for example, could be affected by the vow of obedience and by the priest's economic dependence, or the challenge of working at advancement could be colored by the quality of altruism and nurturance associated with the priestly role. I have suggested throughout this study that in some cases these role restrictions are tolerated as juridical requirements of

priesthood; in other cases they are embraced for more psychological reasons.

The application of psychological principles and insights to a supposedly spiritual domain may be regarded as controversial by some traditional religious believers. The Roman Catholic faith community has traditionally regarded the priesthood as a vocation, a state in life to which one is summoned by divine call. The call is to be responded to and not unduly scrutinized or psychoanalyzed. Nevertheless, I believe that only the most naive and rigidly pious of the faithful would deny that psychological factors and emotional variables impinge upon religious experience and enter into spiritual decisions. The modern Catholic Church has struggled to eradicate the vestiges of dualism and to embrace the understanding that psyche and soma, human and divine, need not be at war but can enrich each other. (Baum, 1971) As Saint Iranaeus, an early Father of the Church, expressed it, "grace builds on nature."

Within this more enlightened, psychologically informed context, it makes sense to ask what the choice of the priestly vocation represents in particular cases. I have suggested that such a choice will reflect one of three distinct dynamic meanings, identity achieved, moratorium or foreclosure. (Marcia, 1964) In the identity achieved status, the young priest-to-be has enjoyed relatively healthy development and would be capable of pursuing the more typical enactments of adult developmental tasks. Such

a man, presumably, could choose any number of roles which would allow him to function as an autonomous, sexually mature, self-interested and goal directed adult. He is capable of marriage, paternity and the pursuit of a secular career (plus capacity). He decides to forego these particular experiences (minus enactment), desirable though they may be, because of a more prominent desire to become a priest. In such a case, priesthood is sought for its own sake, because of what it offers a man--not because of what it allows him to avoid or postpone. The ministry is embraced despite and not because of its elements of role boundness (Gould, 1979).

I expect that the priestly experience of some ex-priests would conform to this profile of identity achieved. To decide a priori that the assumption of celibacy or the pursuit of a vocation of priestly service is always defensive or avoidant borders on psychological fascism (e.g., Fenichel's [1945] virtual equation of celibacy with self-castration). Undoubtedly, some men make relatively conflict-free decisions to become priests. Thereafter, they are either able to lead reasonably autonomous, intimate and accomplished lives as priests, or they leave priesthood if it becomes apparent to them that role boundness jeopardizes their development as adults.

While there may be many men whose experience of priesthood reflects this identity achieved/role bound status, I suspect that this dynamic does not apply to the

majority of cases. A study by Kennedy and his associates (1977) provides some statistical support for this presumption. They determined that only 6% of American Roman Catholic priests could be described as "developed", a condition which they defined in the following manner.

> These men demonstrate achieved growth rather than conflict-free behavior. They have attained a level of personal integration that may be described as mature. They have an effective and operative set of long term values intrinsically religious in character. They are independent, yet reasonably dependent. They love one or more persons with an enlightened self-interest. They are reasonably, but not defensively, aggressive. They have accepted their own sexuality and are working productively on their jobs. (p. 126)

The apparent rarity of such development was not peculiar to priests. The authors suggested that a similarly small percentage of American men in general could be accurately described as developed according to these criteria. This notion reflects what I consider to be the more patent, common sensical reason why the identity achieved status is not prevalent among priests. The reason, simply put, is that development is difficult. Few of us emerge from childhood and adolescence unscathed, with equal preparedness for the whole gamut of adult developmental tasks and enactments. There is more likely to be an uneveness of development, with greater preparedness in some areas and less readiness in others. Rare is the man who does not require corrective experience in some areas or who would not have reason to seek to postpone or to avoid certain developmental challenges.

Absolute and enduring avoidance of these tasks betokens a state of psychic foreclosure. In such a case a man's earlier development has left him significantly (pathologically) unprepared to embrace the normative enactments of adult development. Such a man chooses priesthood because it allows him to avoid certain roles and relationships (minus enactment) for which he is psychologically ill equipped (minus capacity). Priesthood is chosen because of its role restrictions, not despite them. The role restrictions serve as a screen for personal inhibitions. The juridical fact that a man may not pursue particular developmental enactments masks the existential reality that he can not. The man in psychic foreclosure avoids not only the observable roles and enactments but also defaults on the corresponding psychological work and growth. He flees both the specific enactment and the broader, deeper agenda of the developmental task itself.

Kennedy and his associates (1977) found 8% of their priest subjects to be psychologically "maldeveloped."

> Maldeveloped priests were seen as men who have life-long major psychological difficulties, typically related to their early familial relationships, which have interfered in a serious way with their adjustment and occupational effectiveness. In many cases a diagnostic label was warranted...Generally these priests are characterized by covert and underlying intense hostile feelings, extremely negative self-feelings, and disorganizing and disruptive sexual conflicts. (italics mine) (pp. 122, 126)

Certainly for such a man the choice of priesthood represents an avenue of psychic foreclosure. The obvious role

restrictions (e.g., celibacy) as well as the more subtle accretions to the role (e.g., unassertiveness) create an unusually enabling climate in which to "hide out" psychologically. The man in foreclosure is freed from the challenge of certain enactments. Because those enactments are not expected of priests, he is less likely to experience dissonance about their absence in his life and is thereby less pressured to face the related developmental work.

I suggest that the states of identity achieved and foreclosure apply to a minority of Catholic priests. More common, I suspect, is the status of moratorium. Here the role restrictions of priesthood are embraced because they allow a man to postpone particular developmental enactments for which he is not yet psychically prepared. The opportunity to defer the assumption of particular adult roles and commitments (minus enactment) gives a man sufficient time and space (a less demanding inner world and external environment) to grow at his own pace in the requisite psychic abilities (a growing capacity).

I suggest that the men for whom priesthood represents a psychosocial moratorium are the same priests whom Kennedy et al. (1977) found to be "underdeveloped" (57%) and "developing" (29%). His description of the underdeveloped priests underscores their need for a moratorium.

> Underdeveloped priests were described as emotionally immature. The chief evidence of growth problems was found in their interpersonal relationships, which are frequently distant, stylized, and unrewarding. They were conceptualized as

> dealing with adolescent conflicts at a much later age than appropriate. (italics mine) (p. 122)

Their underdevelopment thus created the need for a moratorium. They would not have been able to proceed with the normative tasks of adulthood.

What differentiates such men from their priestly colleagues who are in psychic foreclosure is the fact that these (moratorium) men are dealing with these adolescent conflicts. They are doing the psychological work, albeit belatedly. That work and progress, however modest, is what constitutes a moratorium (as opposed to foreclosure). As the work progresses, some of these men would qualify for Kennedy's designation of "developing" which, I suggest, represents a higher level of moratorium.

> Those in this group of men in the priesthood are intent on liberating themselves from an emotional and social insularism. These developing priests have had their personal growth suspended or delayed and now, through circumstances or personal decisions, find themselves challenged anew by the problems of growth. In these priests we see vitality, a sense of purpose, and a determination to move forward in personal development. (italics mine) (p. 126)

As such a man moves forward, "he begins to put aside the very controlling defenses with which he has restricted his life experience, and he moves into human realms that he can say truly he never knew existed before this kind of experience occurred." (p. 126)

Of the three possible meanings of the choice of the priestly vocation, I have chosen to focus on the state of

moratorium. I have made this determination for three reasons. The first is that I believe that the moratorium dynamic is the most prevalent in the experience of priests and of men who ultimately leave the priesthood. The findings by Kennedy et al. (1977) that a vast majority (86%) of American Catholic priests are either underdeveloped (57%) or developing (29%) would seem to support my contention that the seminary and priesthood represent a moratorium experience for many (if not most) Catholic priests. (If such is the case for priests, I suggest that the moratorium dynamic is likely to be over-represented among those men who ultimately leave the priesthood. Men who persevere in the priesthood are more likely to be those whose choice of priesthood was made in the identity achieved mode [who might have less of a need to leave priesthood] or those whose choice of priesthood represented a psychic foreclosure [who are presumably less able to leave].) The second reason for focusing on the moratorium category is that it is the most compelling, the most interesting and heuristic from a developmental point of view. Compared the the identity achieved status, moratorium is more intense and exciting--there being so much that needs to be accomplished. Compared to the situation of foreclosure, moratorium is more hopeful and open-ended--there's so much that can be done. Finally, I suggest that these considerations make the moratorium category the most clinically relevant and useful. Exploration of the moratorium dynamic promises to yield

insights which could be useful in the treatment of a population of priests and ex-priests who both are in need of and are able to benefit from therapeutic intervention.

In order to further develop this moratorium hypothesis I return to my six original orienting questions, using the case histories of Eric and Vinny to illustrate and explicate this theoretical notion. Considering the relevant literature and permitting myself to make some admittedly liberal generalizations from the histories of two men, I will suggest a provisional model of the the ways in which seminary and priesthood can serve as a necessary and useful moratorium experience. I believe that this is a paradigm which can help explain the experience of many men who enter and eventually leave the priestly life.

1. The Need for a Moratorium. The first issue concerns the extent to which the decision to enter seminary may reflect unresolved developmental issues and a consequent lack of preparedness for some of the more common enactments of the normative adult developmental tasks. The young man who decides to study for the priesthood is embarking upon a course which will make his adult experience idiosyncratic in that certain common enactments of adult development will not be available to him. To what extent is that idiosyncracy of experience a coincidental by-product of the wish to be a priest? To what extent does the need and wish for such idiosyncracy inspire the decision to become a priest?

Certainly for Eric and Vinny, the idiosyncratic nature of the priestly lifestyle, the role restrictions proper to priesthood, was a significant motivating factor in their decision to enter the seminary. Whatever the spiritual motivation, assuming the mantle of priesthood was also a way of avoiding developmental enactments for which their early years had left them sorely unprepared. Both experienced difficulties in the area of separation/individuation. Vinny was unable to experience normal separation because he had not yet allowed himself to become attached to anyone in any meaningful sense. His early decision to enter the seminary was itself a dramatic expression of his counter-dependent, pseudo-separated stance. Eric was unable to use anger and aggression as phase appropriate (adolescent) vehicles of separation. His physical separation from the family was not accompanied by an inner sense of self-direction or individuation. He was doing this (priesthood) to please somebody else; it was an attempt to finally forge some kind of alliance with his father, to live as the father's narcissistic extension. Psychologically he remained the good son, very involved in family of origin issues.

The need to go to such lengths of self-abnegation in order to please his father intensified his rage. The anger was denied, however, buried under a facade of complaince but finding intermittent expression in passive-aggressive behaviors. This posture kept Eric from directing confronting authority and interfered with the assumption of

his own authority. Vinny also had significant problems with authority. He was more likely to be openly rebellious, but he experienced significant guilt over such efforts at self-determination. In fact, his early rebelliousness was one of the main moral faults for which he sought atonement in priesthood.

The difficulties with authority and with developing their own sense of authority also relates to the task of working at advancement. The area of achievement and working at advancement was highly conflicted for Vinny. He quite consciously rejected the pursuit of a secular career, fearing the competitive and aggressive impulses which would be awakened by following such a course. Priesthood promised to be a refuge from these unacceptable drives and urges. Priesthood also offered an opportunity to surrender his sense of autonomy and self-direction. Fearful of his own rebelliousness and aggressive independence, Vinny sought safety in submission.

Eric was not as obviously conflicted about achievement. In fact, he was fairly aggressive in his pursuit of accolades and trophies. But these accomplishments were all narcissistically motivated, honors sought and experienced by the public or false self. Eric was not seeking or achieving advancement for his own sake but to experience acceptance and mirroring from his parents (especially his father). As such, he was not yet ready to choose and pursue his own goals, his own personal enterprise. His decision to become

a priest was an escape from that challenge. It was an act of submission, the willingness to sacrifice his own life goals in order to satisfy his father's dream.

The most dramatic lack of preparedness in both cases was in the areas of sexuality and intimacy. Each was intensely afraid of sexuality and felt little sense of entitlement to be a sexual person. They demonstrated their conflicts in different ways, Eric with chronic guilt and anxiety, Vinny in a somewhat hysterical conversion experience in which he embraced the goal of absolute asexuality. Each felt sexually unattractive during his youth and had had little in the way of sexual experience. Each lacked an attractive masculine figure with whom to identify, a male who could be both strong and caring. In Eric's case this deficit contributed to a shaky sense of maculinity and to strong homoerotic/identificatory yearnings. Vinny seems to have defended against such feelings, adopting a hypermasculine and rigidly homophobic stance. Eric was more open to interpersonal intimacy (his mother's legacy, I suspect) but could not integrate sexual feelings into those relationships. Vinny, owing to his pronounced counter-dependent tendencies, guarded against intimacy in all its forms. He cultivated acquaintances rather than friendships and avoided any relationships in which he might feel owned or controlled by the other's concern for him.

It is thus clear that neither man was prepared for the task of heterosexual intimacy and for the related enactments of genital intimacy, courtship and marriage. Each man needed a form of psychosexual moratorium, a reprieve from the demands of expressing sexuality and intimacy within his life structure. Each needed a time and a place within which to address unfinished developmental business. Priestly celibacy offered an ideal haven for each man. In fact, if there had not already been such a thing as celibate priesthood, I suspect that Eric and Vinny would have somehow invented it.

It is somewhat gratuitous to speculate about the ways in which the decision to enter the seminary may have been an expression of difficulties concerning the task of generativity or may have expressed an idiosyncratic pattern of individuation themes. There may have been on some very unconscious level a flight from the challenge of parenthood. Neither man's childhood experience and relationship with parents would have made the prospect of paternity particularly appealing. Also one could note in both cases the presence of traits which might make for an idiosyncratic balance of the polarities--their unwillingness to become fully engaged in the world (Eric's private self and Vinny's interpersonal reserve) and, in Eric's case, a deficient cathexis of the "masculine" way of engaging the world. But such considerations seem less compelling. It was primarily around the tasks of separation, intimacy and advancement

(including issues about authority, especially as these relate to separation and advancement) that each man demonstrated unreadiness to pursue the normative path of developmental enactments and, thus, needed a period of moratorium.

2. The Course of the Moratorium. The second question concerns the extent to which and the ways in which development was occurring during the moratorium years of seminary and priesthood. Was developmental work being accomplished even though particular developmental enactments were being deferred? Did these years prepare these men to more directly address developmental tasks and enactments for which they had been unprepared?

One initial impression is that there is a fairly striking difference between Eric's and Vinny's experience in this regard, at least during the seminary years. There seems to have been less happening during the first decade or more of Vinny's moratorium. In fact, his experience during these years suggests some aspects of psychic foreclosure, e.g., his absolute surrender to the authority structure (becoming a "party man"), the cessation of all sexual behavior and even sexual ideation, his retreat from competition. But even in these areas of apparent arrest or regression, subtle growth was, in fact, occurring, e.g., his growing ability to form attachments (albeit at the price of surrendering his own volition), his evolving capacity for

friendship, the displaced pursuit of competition in his quest for spiritual superiority.

Nevertheless, it does appear that Eric's moratorium experience was more compressed and proceeded at a more rapid pace. This, I suggest, was a function of at least two factors. First, Eric entered the seminary at a later age and had more pre-seminary experience, e.g., adolescent socialization, dating, work experience. Having had more pre-seminary life experience, he was less likely to become so totally "acculturated" by the seminary milieu. Secondly and more to the point, Eric and Vinny became Roman Catholic seminarians in vastly different eras. Vinny entered the seminary in 1942, more than two decades before the renewals wrought by the Vatican Council. The seminarians of those years were almost completely isolated from the outside world, especially from members of the opposite sex. The authority system was rigid and often punitive, demanding unquestioning obedience. Sexual morality was promulgated in absolute and fairly harsh terms, largely uninfluenced by psychological insights. (Psychology itself was still in many ways an infant and somewhat suspect science.) Given this climate, it's somewhat remarkable that Vinny was able to achieve the growth that he did during those early years of the seminary and priesthood--development which was preparing him for the quantum leap of growth he would experience during "the Big [19]66."

Eric, by contrast, entered the seminary eight years after the convening of Vaticn II. He experienced a seminary without walls where he could interact with and even date women, where sexual attraction (even towards fellow seminarians) could be discussed with a spiritual director in non-judgmental terms, where authority figures engaged in dialogue, where troubled seminarians were more likely to be sent to therapy than sent home. The seminary of the post-conciliar era permits a young man a moratorium while allowing him sufficient contact with that world whose challenges he is not yet ready to confront. There would seem to be greater opportunities for corrective experience, for exposures which contribute to preparedness.

Despite the grosser differences between Eric and Vinny's experience, there are many ways in which their experiences within the seminary and priesthood are quite similar. For each man the seminary and priesthood provided a context within which to address some unfinished business in the area of separation and moving from pre-adult status in the world. In each case attachment and separation issues were transferred from the family of origin to the wider community of the religious order/diocese and the church at large. Vinny's relationship with the idealized religious community was the first meaningful conscious attachment he had experienced in his life. This new found ability to develop attachments was transferred back to the original problematic mother-son dyad, and he was able to work through

many of his conflicts about that relationship. In both his relationship with the community and with his mother, he was finally able to experience attachment and could internalize some of the object's strength and goodness. When his mother died, and when he left the Holy Name community, there was finally something to miss, a loss to mourn.

Whereas Vinny's early lack of preparedness involved his inability to become attached, Eric had been unable to affirm his own separateness and individuation. Similarly, the change of venue enhanced his development in this regard. Within the seminary and clergy (especially as a priest) he was increasingly able to differentiate and to assert himself. The postponed process of adolescent rebellion--too threatening to have enacted during his actual teenage years--got played out in his relationships with religious superiors. In the process, he developed a growing sense of himself as a separate autonomous individual. Each man needed to do some corrective work in his relationship with father. Each was able to do so within the context of seminary and priesthood--Vinny in the analog relationship with Father Jerry ("making him work" as a transference figure), Eric in a more diffuse network of relationships with authority.

Each man made significant gains in negotiating the task of intimacy and in the associated work of coming to terms with his own sexuality. Eric's growth was more gradual and organic. Vinny's appeared to be more paroxysmal in nature.

Just as Eric had suppressed any expression of adolescent rebellion, he had also been unable to engage in the typical forms of adolescent sexual exploration. Ironically, the celibate environment provided a more enabling climate in this regard than had his family. A warm and tolerant confessor supplanted his stern natural father. During the college seminary years Eric gradually made peace with his sexuality, becoming more comfortable with and accepting of its various manifestations: his frequent masturbation, homosexual urges and interest in pornography.

This process of coming to terms with his own sexuality was a necessary prelude to the interpersonal sexual experiences of the major seminary years. Having become more at home with feelings and with his sexual nature, Eric was ready for the experience of affective and sexual intimacy. Initially he was able to integrate the emotional and the sexual only in relationships with men. In doing so, he was addressing a longstanding need to feel close to and identified with another male, a need which had been an unconscious determinant of his decision to enter religious life. This homosexual phase was a necessary detour of experience. In certain ways it represents a moratorium within a moratorium. The growth and healing experienced in these relationships made him feel more masculine, more physically attractive, more open to intimate relationships--in short, more prepared for enduring heterosexual intimacy. The moratorium had run its course, had brought him to a

state of preparedness for the task of heterosexual intimacy, a task previously deferred. As Eric himself expressed it, what others had experienced during adolescence he "got a chance to do...ten years later."

Vinny's period of sexual dormancy was more extended. The sexual aspect of experience was strongly repressed and denied for many years as part of the general psychological retrenchment of the first two decades of moratorium. He did, however, use those years to develop his capacity for friendship and for interpersonal dependence. (This development was closely related to his progress in the task of attachment and separation.) Although he was at the time unconscious of the fact that he was in love, his longstanding celibate relationship with Natalie helped prepare him for a more conscious commitment to loving relationships. It made the idea of intimacy less foreign so that he was more prepared for development in this area when the sensitivity movement of the 1960s touched his personal history. It took another decade for Vinny to become adequately prepared for a commitment to heterosexual intimacy. But from 1966 on, the direction of development was clear--slow but steady progress in accepting his sexuality, risking its expression in relationships, trusting that he could be both intimate and separate, committed but not owned. Such growth had not been possible during his early years. Paraphasing Eric's words, it seems that Vinny also got a chance to do it twenty to thirty years later.

There was significant, although less dramatic, progress in the area of working at advancement and BOOM during the moratorium years. Each man was able to attain some degree of mastery in his work, building self-esteem and enhancing a sense of adult standing in the world. These years afforded Vinny an important experience of mentorship. He submitted himself to the tutelage of Father Jerry and emerged from that relationship more confident in his own abilities. That sense of confidence and competence aided him in the transition to secular life. His issues about authority and competition, however, remained unresolved throughout the years of seminary and priesthood. His engagements around these issues tended to be repetitive and largely unproductive. As the general moratorium of priesthood ended, that particular aspect of his experience lingered in the moratorium mode.

Eric experienced more obvious development in this regard. Priesthood enhanced his sense of inner authority and provided him a sense of equal standing from which to approach authority figures. In the vicissitudes of his relationships with superiors he was able to work through some of the toxic issues evident in his earlier relationship with his father. As he felt less of a need to be the good son (the narcissistic extension of his father), he began to become more of his own man. Along the way he was able to sort out those aspects of the priestly role which had been chosen to please his father (the specifically religious

functions: the special sacramental powers, the superiority, the asexuality) and those which Eric himself experienced as personally rewarding and fulfilling (counseling people and generally working with them at deep levels of their lives). The former elements he abandoned; the latter, more ego-syntonic aspects he chose to embrace and incorporate into his post-priesthood life structure.

In terms of generativity, the moratorium provided each man an opportunity to exercise a broadly generative function of spiritual fatherhood. As each of them progressed in his ability to be intimate and to integrate the sexual aspects of his life, the notion of actual paternity began to emerge. This was a new development which represented growth for each man. Vinny had from an early age found the idea of marriage and parenthood unattractive; Eric, largely owing to his prevailing homoerotic inclinations, had considered the idea to be unthinkable. Had he considered becoming a father at that time in his life, it is likely that his painful relationship with his own father would have greatly influenced his attitude toward paternity, either discouraging him from the pursuit or inspiring the fantasy of becoming an ideal father in order to heal himself in the person of his child (Miller, 1981).

3. Moving Out of Moratorium. The third general consideration concerns the meaning of the decision to leave priesthood vis-a-vis the moratorium hypothesis. To what extent did the decision to leave priesthood represent a wish

to experience particular developmental enactments which the moratorium setting did not allow--he left because he no longer wanted to be celibate? To what extent did the decision to leave represent a climactic expression of readiness to negotiate these enactments, a readiness fostered by the period of moratorium--he was able to leave because he no longer needed to be celibate?

Each man identified the wish to be free to marry as the main determinant of his decision to leave ministry. Eric had progressed through limited sexual relationships with women and fully sexual but emotionally limited relationships with men to the discovery that he both wanted and needed an enduring and fully sexual love relationship with a woman. The vicarious enjoyment of other people's marriages would no longer suffice; he wanted a spousal relationship of his own. Without it he feared that he would become another loveless, joyless celibate. The particular enactment of heterosexual genital intimacy was fraught with power and meaning for him. He sensed that he had to postpone that experience until he knew that he was definitely on his way out of the priesthood. Vinny had also discovered that his emotional health and development depended on his being in a focused, loving and freely sexual relationship. Without such an anchor the strong centrifugal forces within his personality would propel him into a state of growing estrangement from self and from others.

In both cases the decision to leave priesthood reflected the ways in which the priestly (moratorium) lifestyle ultimately impeded their pursuit of the adult developmental task of intimacy. The normative enactment of this task involves the pursuit of heterosexual intimacy in a relationship which is reasonably enduring, exclusive and caring. The hunger for such an experience had become more and more urgent. Sublimated forms of this wish proved ultimately insufficient in each case, inadequate palliatives which failed to satisfy the basic need.

The determination to leave depended upon the freedom to leave, which suggests the extent to which each man had been able to work on the developmental task of intimacy during the years of moratorium. Community and rectory life no longer provided enough emotional sustenance--in large part because Eric's and Vinny's relational needs, abilities and expectations had changed and expanded over the years. Their growing discontent with celibacy was an expression of their growing ability to relate in an intimate way. They began to chafe at the ways in which the rules truncated their relational experience. They no longer needed to be curtailed in this way. If the decision to leave represented a crisis in their need for intimacy, it also expressed a climax in their growing ability to risk intimate engagement.

The inadequacy of subliminatory pursuits of the task of intimacy was paralleled by a similar discontent with sublimated forms of generativity. As the years of

priesthood progressed, each man experienced an explicit wish to be a father. Spiritual fatherhood would no longer satisfy the desire (what Eric called an "ache") to procreate. Eric and Vinny sought and felt ready for the developmental enactment of parenthood. Moving out of moratorium required that they move away from the more sublimated toward more direct expressions of paternity. As such, it required that they leave priesthood.

The ways in which the decision to leave priesthood related to the developmental task of working at advancement and becoming one's own man is unclear in the case of Vinny, largely because this was an area in which there was little development during the years of seminary and priesthood. There was, in this area, no tide of growth which somehow propelled him out of ministry (as there was, for example, in his experience of intimacy). For Eric, however, progress in this area was clearly related to his decision to foresake ministry. As he gained a sense of his own authority and entitlement to follow self-chosen interests and goals, it became more clear to him that the crucible of priesthood could not contain his personal aspirations. Being under obedience ultimately was inimical to the full assumption of his own authority. Achieving for others (either in the narcissistic sense of achieving for his father or in the altruistic sense of achieving of his flock) was no substitute for advancing in ways which were meaningful to him.

Priesthood "never felt like a real career." As the more neurotic reasons for having become a priest got worked through, there simply wasn't enough still there to capture his interest and devotion. The little projects upon which he had been able to put his personal mark were ultimately not enough. He decided that he would have to leave the ministry in order to create his own life's enterprise. Leaving was an important symbol of emancipation--the years of deferral had allowed him to grow from the dutiful good son to a man who could finally chart his own course. (Inasmuch as different developmental tasks often overlap and interact, this leavetaking was also a critical experience of separation for Eric, even as Vinny's negotiation of intimacy addressed separation issues as well.)

4. Recovering from Moratorium. The next question concerns the course of development after leaving the priesthood. What are the sequelae, both emotional and practical, of having deferred certain developmental enactments? To what extent is there a need to catch up after re-entering the mainstream from the moratorium? How does a man approach this challenge?

Certainly there were for each man concrete consequences of having spent part of his adulthood in a state of moratorium. In terms of finding a place to live, finding a job and building some financial equity, each man had to basically start from scratch, Eric at age thirty-one, Vinny at age forty-nine. Vinny was able to use the religious

order to help with the transition (getting his degree at their expense and living temporarily with a couple of ex-Holy Name priests). Eric was proud to have made it on his own. Concretely this meant working for two years as a cab driver and bartender to save money to pay for his masters program.

Each man feels that the years of priestly experience were not wasted but have served him well in the transition. Each was able to broker his priestly experience within the world of human services. Eric, for example, has used his divinity degree as a basis for his private practice as a pastoral counselor. Both faced a need to catch up but, by virtue of their previous life experience, they may have been somewhat ahead of (and probably more readily employable than) many of their fellow students in their new fields. They rose quickly from entry level to positions of more responsibility. Both Eric and Vinny are basically satisfied with the career progress they have made since leaving ministry.

Economically there has been a pronounced need to catch up. Both men have been very busy since leaving priesthood, trying to establish themselves and to maximize their income. Both are still very much in the throes of that process and probably will be for some time to come. Vinny feels a greater sense of urgency in this regard because he has fewer years within which to attempt to catch up. The process is taxing but exciting nonetheless. As Eric expressed it, it's

rewarding to do something which is clearly for his own welfare and that of his family, which is inspired by enlightened self-interest.

The more emotional legacy of the moratorium experience involves some leftover business around the issues which led to the moratorium in the first place. Each man made significant leaps of development in various areas during the seminary and priesthood years. The procees since leaving priesthood has entailed a progressive working through of some of those themes.

Having made the determination that he wanted and needed heterosexual intimacy in his life, each man has had to face the sometimes hard work of creating and sustaining that kind of intimacy. For Eric that has meant becoming more comfortable with the expression of affect, especially unpleasant feelings. In general the years since priesthood seem to have left him in a good position in terms of his capacity for intimacy and for sexual expression. He has largely caught up.

Development in this area has been somewhat more labored and uneven for Vinny. He has continued to make significant progress in his ability to be intimate, to trust that he can get what he wants and needs in relationships. He still must deal with his fear of losing autonomy in an intimate relationship. At times he seems to use work and his own extroverted style as a defense against being enveloped. His sense of entitlement to the experience of intimacy and

sexuality remains somewhat vulnerable. He still feels guilty that he needed to experience heterosexual intimacy in order to grow as a man, that he somehow didn't have 'the right stuff' to make it as a celibate. He is still more developing than developed in this area of experience.

Each man has continued the struggle to develop his own sense of authority and his right to seek achievement and advancement. They have been able to take many of the concrete steps of furthering their own advancement. Gaining an inner sense of entitlement and confidence in one's own voice has been at times more problematic. For Eric this has entailed the need to examine the ways in which he is still likely to play the role of the good son. For Vinny this area has represented on ongoing struggle. Only recently (seven years after leaving priesthood) has he been able to begin to assert his own authority and to pursue advancement --at least in those situations where the pursuit of advancement entails overt competition. (Vinny's ongoing difficulties in this area present a good example of how fluid the timing and boundaries of moratorium may be in particular cases. Emerging from priesthood was a sign that many aspects of the moratorium were ending for him. In some areas, however, the work of the moratorium had barely begun and those aspects of the moratorium agenda continued into the post-priesthood years.)

5. The Cost of Moratorium. Reducing these considerations to the psychological equivalent of the bottom

line, is there any final cost for having followed a non-normative road? Are there, finally, any inescapable consequences of having deferred or delayed particular enactments, either in terms of the limits to which a man can actually catch up or the price he must pay to do so? The experience of Eric and Vinny suggests that moratorium has some costs. A comparison of their lives also suggests that the longer the moratorium, the greater and more certain the cost is likely to be.

The most obvious consequence concerns their ability to have a family. The desire to have children was a significant (although secondary) motive of each man's decision to leave priesthood. Vinny and his wife decided that, while they could probably still have a child, they would not be able to integrate that experience into their present life structure. There is some suggestion that Lucille's reluctance to become a parent at this point in life was more pronounced than his and that Vinny acquiesced. In any event he regrets that he did not leave priesthood sooner when the prospect of paternity would have been more feasible. Eric, on the other hand, left priesthood at an early age but he married someone who had also followed a non-normative course through early adulthood (four years in the Peace Corps and another several years as a lay missionary in the South West). It is quite possible that Terry experienced a moratorium of her own. Regardless, she was thirty-seven when she and Eric married and thirty-nine

when their son was born. They have decided, considering Terry's career goals (she's a doctoral student in educational administration) as well as her age, that they will not be able to expand their family any further.

A second aspect of experience in which both Eric and Vinny are unlikely to completely recover is the area of financial security. Each man is working very hard to make up for lost time. Each is doing better than he had even hoped to do. Neither, however, has the equity and security enjoyed by most of his own age peers. It is less clear how this somewhat late start will ultimately affect Eric. He presumably has many years of earning ahead of him and does not appear to be too concerned about his ability to narrow the gap. In the meantime, however, there are practical consequences of the delay in earning. He and his wife, for example, would like to own their own home but are not yet ready to do so. It is clear to Eric that if he had gone into another profession when he graduated from college back in 1974, he would have become a homeowner some time ago. Because of the moratorium experience, that important financial step has been postponed for an indefinite period of time. In the case of Vinny the costs are more apparent. His earning and saving history began at age forty-eight. He and Lucille live comfortably for the present, but he faces a pensionless future and has few years in which to invest for his retirement. As a consequence, he suspects that he'll need to continue working for as long as his health allows.

This financial late start is a source of some regret and resentment.

It would be unwise to generalize from Eric and Vinny's experience of the costs of deferral, at least insofar as the specific contents are concerned. The consequences in particular cases are likely to be quite variable depending upon specific circumstances. For example if Vinny had married a twenty-five year old woman, he could have had any number of children (provided that he himself was willing to face the task of childrearing during his sixties and seventies). If Eric had chosen to study real estate rather than occupational therapy, he might already own any number of buildings. Although the actual contents are likely to differ, I suggest, nevertheless, that the concept of the costs of moratorium is sound and important. The experience of moratorium is likely to have some inescapable personal costs. The longer the moratorium, the more certain and formidable those costs will be.

6. The Fruits of Moratorium. The final point concerns the positive side of the ledger of experience. Does the idiosyncracy of a man's moratorium experience allow for developmental experiences which are less accessible to those who follow the more normative path? Are there aspects of development in which such a man might have a headstart relative to his age peers who have followed more travelled paths?

Sometimes a characteristic which is born of necessity can mature into a virtue. In this light there would seem to be aspects of Eric's and Vinny's personalities and experience which originated in a situation of deficit or handicap but which have nevertheless added a richness and depth to their life experience. This dynamic seems to apply to their experience of the intrapsychic polarities suggested by Jung (1960) and Levinson (1978). Eric's early difficulties in experiencing a sense of his own masculinity caused him considerable pain but also seem to have yielded an unusually developed appreciation of and comfort with the feminine dimension of experience. Recent years have brought a belated discovery and intensive development of masculine qualities so that there is currently a comfortable balance of masculine and feminine poles. He has been able to integrate these two aspects of experience to a greater extent than would be normatively expected of a thirty-four year old. Moratorium has seemingly given him a head start in this respect. As another example of how idiosyncratic life experience can affect this polarity, Levy (1979) suggested that middle-aged male homosexuals "reconciled this [masculine/feminine] polarity more effectively than heterosexual men." (p. 407) (Vinny's experience of the masculine/feminine polarity more closely conformed to the norm suggested by Jung and Levinson.)

The early adult experience of both Eric and Vinny reflected a greater familiarity and comfort with the

contemplative aspect of life than would normatively (Jung, 1960; Levinson 1978) be the case. The contemplative and interior dimension was not conflict-free. Each man's penchant for solitude and contemplation reflected conflicts about engaging more fully in the world of work and relationships. It was easier for Eric and Vinny to feel separate from the world (Eric's "private self" and Vinny's interpersonal reserve and refusal to compete) largely because each felt so different from the other young men around him. But while this disengagement from the world served defensive purposes, it also helped each man develop a capacity for reflection and contemplation. The searching of moratorium kept them open to questions about the meaning of their own lives. The person in moratorium (and this may apply to moratorium in any of its forms not just its particular manifestation in priesthood) is perhaps more likely to maintain a critical distance from his own experience and is somewhat less likely to lead an unexamined life. This experience should stand a man in good stead for the questioning processes which occur during the various transitional periods (Levinson, 1978), especially the intense and often agonizing questions which arise at midlife. The process should at least be familiar to them. The experience of moratorium has somehow prepared them for it.

The moratorium seems also to have added a depth and balance to their experience of certain developmental tasks.

Because Eric and Vinny were not allowed to experience the more common and concrete enactments of the developmental tasks of intimacy and generativity (sexual expression, marriage and paternity), each was challenged to explore more sublimated and universal ways of addressing these tasks. Each developed intensely intimate relationships (both sexual and platonic) with a number of persons, both male and female. While a marital relationship ultimately became central in each man's life, each needed and was able to experience intimacy in a number of relationships beyond their marriages. The experience of celibacy may have yielded a broader and richer capacity for intimacy than might have been the case had their intimacy needs been met earlier and more directly along the more normative route.

Similarly, the lack of a concrete outlet for their generative impulses challenged each man to seek broader, more sublimated opportunites for generativity . Barred from "the more elemental" (Levinson, 1978) expression of the parenting impulse, each man needed to be creative in seeking more abstract and universal ways of giving birth to others and fostering their growth. Ministry provided a ready outlet for this broader form of generativity. That experience, I suggest, may have given each of them a headstart in addressing the more universal aspects of the Eriksonian task of generativity, concerns which do not usually engage a man until midlife.

Summary of Priesthood and Moratorium. Some men, faced with the estimable challenges of adult development, unconsciously opt to delay the direct negotiation of certain normative adult developmental tasks. The Roman Catholic priesthood offers an opportunity for such deferral. Priesthood and moratorium are not tautological terms. Entering the seminary is but one of many possible avenues for moratorium. Graduate school, travel, joining the Peace Corps, working on a presidential campaign or joining a theatrical road company are some of the other more obvious possibilities for postponement available to young people. Indeed, any activity or relationship can be an expression of moratorium if its dynamic function is to defer the full assumption of adult status, to postpone particular development enactments until one has gained the psychic wherewithal to confront them.

I maintain, however, that priesthood by virtue of its social respectability and manifold role limitations (especially mandatory celibacy and the ideals of chastity, poverty and obedience) provides an unusually broad opportunity for socially approved deferral. This is not to say that all priests are in moratorium. Some men are prepared for the more common developmental enactments (identity achieved) but accept the role limitations of priesthood because of a personal desire to serve God and mankind as a priest. Other men, at the opposite pole of experience, are not capable of the search of moratorium;

their choice of priesthood represents psychic foreclosure. For many men, however (perhaps the majority of men inferring from Kennedy's (1977) findings about the prevalence of underdeveloped and developing priests), the years of seminary and priesthood represent a psychological moratorium. These men make an unconscious decision to postpone the experience of certain normative developmental enactments and to use the years of postponement to do the requisite psychological work which will prepare them to someday return to those specific challenges of adult living.

Prominent in the psychological profile of such men is an initial lack of preparedness to address some of the normative adult developmental tasks. Their early experience has left them less than ready to experience some of the developmental enactments which are common among their age peers. I hypothesize that these deficits in experience are most likely to reside in the areas of sexuality and intimacy, separation/individuation, dealing with authority and issues of one's own authority, and working at advancement. In some instances all of these areas are affected. Consider, for example, how difficulties in separating would be likely to cause conflict about sexual intimacy and achievement. In others cases there could be an uneveness of development among the various areas, e.g., a man who has no significant problems about separation or intimacy but has a very specific inhibition about seeking his own advancement. A man may thus be prepared for some

tasks of adult development yet still require a moratorium experience to addresss a lack of preparedness for others.

What distinquishes the experience of moratorium is the active process of searching for one's own truth and struggling to become ready to pursue it in the adult world. During the moratorium years of seminary and priesthood a man postpones particular enactments but he is actively engaged in the psychological work demanded by the developmental task itself. Within the context of moratorium that work is carried out in activities and relational investments which are parallel and analogous to the enactment which is being deferred. Experiences in deep and trusting celibate friendships, for example, may gradually build a capacity for intimacy and prepare a man for the challenge of heterosexual closeness and commitment. A growing ease with his priestly authority could prepare a man to speak with his own voice and become his own man in the outside world. Both of these developments would have been unthinkable before the experience of moratorium.

I propose that the pace of development within the moratorium can vary tremendously from man to man and from period to period within an individual's life. During some intervals there may actually be little going on, a situation barely distinguishable from psychic foreclosure. (In some cases, of course, moratorium can actually become foreclosure as a man finally tires of the seaching and the struggle; happy endings are not guaranteed.) At other times the

apparent somnolence of moratorium belies the slow but steady pursuit of developmental work and the gradual unfolding of growth and psychic preparedness. During some periods that growth unfurls at a dizzying pace as a man makes quantum leaps of development. Often these breakthroughs are in response to a specific environmental stimulus or crisis (the death of a parent, an exciting new relationship, a stunning success or failure in ministry). I suggest, however, that these moments of dramatic progress are made possible by the slow, gradual, sometimes imperceptible growth experienced during the previous months and years of moratorium.

As the experience of moratorium imparts psychic preparedness for specific enactments of developmental tasks, a man has some decisions to make. I suggest that in many cases a man will then leave the priesthood in order to pursue enactments of development which the priestly role does not allow. The moratorium has run its course; a man no longer needs nor can he tolerate the particular limitations of experience which the role of priest entails. I suggest that this dynamic most often involves the developmental task of intimacy; a man leaves the priesthood because he both desires and is prepared for the experience of sexual intimacy and marriage.

While I suspect that leaving priesthood is a common outcome of the moratorium experience, I acknowledge that it is not the only option. In some cases the man who is emerging from a personal moratorium may make a decision to

recommit himself to priestly life. As Sammon et al. (1985) have pointed out, "a life commitment made officially at one age may only later become a personal life commitment." (p. 678) It may be that a man's spiritual commitment to priesthood as well as the personal fulfillment he experiences in that role outweigh whatever benefits he might hope to derive from returning to those postponed enactments for which he is now prepared. While he may have decided to enter the priesthood for largely neurotic reasons (to remain tied to parents, to avoid sex or competition), he can make a later decision to remain a priest for more mature and psychologically adaptive reasons. Both his relationships and his work as a priest have been enriched by the experience of moratorium. The situation of such a post-moratorium priest is similar to that of the man who made an earlier largely conflict-free (identity achieved) decision to become a priest. The latter became a priest, the former decides to remain a priest <u>despite</u> the role limitations. He does not need those restrictions of experience but he has decided that he is willing to tolerate them for the sake of what he holds to be a higher good.

By logical extension, it would seem that the ranks of priesthood are populated by four types of men. One group consists of men who made a largely conflict-free (identity achieved) decision to become priests. These men will presumably remain in priesthood if it continues to satisfy their own personal needs and further their human growth,

i.e., if the role restrictions do not become intolerable. The second class is the group of post-moratorium/identity achieved priests who have recommitted themselves to priesthood. The third category (the largest I suspect) consists of priests in moratorium--some of whom will eventually leave, some of whom will become post-moratorium priests. The fourth group is populated by men in foreclosure.

It is likely that the man whose experience of moratorium leads him out of priesthood will face a need to catch up in certain areas of experience when he returns to the mainstream. First of all there is bound to be remedial psychological work still in progress. There is no absolute boundary which signifies the end of the moratorium. I suspect that there is, rather, a relative balance between the states of being in moratorium and emerging from it. Within this framework, a man is likely to leave priesthood when he is more emerging from moratorium and less in moratorium. There are still likely to be ragged edges of development, areas of unfinished psychological business. Some moratorium issues remain and need to be worked through in the post-priesthood life structure.

On a more concrete level there's a need to make up for certain lacunae of experience proper to the moratorium lifestyle. This may involve a wide variety of remedial steps: the need to date a number of women in order to learn more about one's particular needs in a relationship; the

need to experiment with different professional roles; the necessity of retraining to enter a new field; the challenge of establishing some financial standing. To the extent that a man was actually able to work on developmental tasks during moratorium, I suggest that he will ultimately be able to catch up in terms of the specific developmental enactments. Because he is returning to these challenges at a later stage in life, he does so with the aid of all the developmental work accomplished during the moratorium years of seminary and priesthood. In many cases a man may be able to accomplish particular enactments in an accelerated manner, having had many years in which to, as it were, rehearse these attainments during the moratorium.

Despite this optimistic outlook, there are also likely to be some final, irremediable costs of having spent time in a state of moratorium. Frost's reflections about roads not taken underscore the fact that choices have consequences. Sometimes a man can not return to where he stood before the path diverged: "yet knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back." The specific aspects of experience in which a man is unable to catch up will vary from case to case. (I have suggested two possible realms of experience in which reality may set some limits: having children and realizing financial security.) In general, it is likely that the costs of moratorium will increase in direct proportion to the length of the moratorium and, thus,

the age of the man when he emerges from the years of deferral.

A man is different by virtue of having experienced a moratorium and having successfully emerged from it. Balancing the costs of the moratorium are the benefits of having followed a road less taken during a period of adulthood. The post-moratorium priest, like "graduates" of other moratorium settings, will have benefited from some of the values and experiences proper to his particular subculture or counterculture. His experience has been different from that of his secular age peers. In some ways that difference has left deficits of experience. In some areas his experience may have been richer and better than the norm. The process of coming to terms with the feminine and contemplative aspects of experience has been suggested as one possible area of advantage. It is quite possible that such post-moratorium men could profit greatly from and contribute richly to relationships with their age peers who have followed the more travelled, normative path. There would seem to be the potential for richly complementary dialogue in the relationship between the ex-priest and his secular peer. Each man would presumably have much to teach the other about the particular road that he has followed so far, much to learn from the other about the unfamiliar pathways that lie ahead. Stated concretely and with admitted caricature, the ex-priest says to his secular age peer: "I'll tell you what I've learned about solitude and

ambiguity and dependence if you'll talk to me about climbing corporate ladders, tax shelters and natural childbirth classes."

Some Practical Implications of the Moratorium Hypothesis. The hypothesis that the experience of seminary and priesthood may be a psychosocial moratorium for many men has some practical implications of those who are involved in the selection and formation of candidates for the priesthood, for the superiors and spiritual directors of priests and for those who offer psychotherapy to seminarian or priest clients. Implicit in the following considerations is the assumption that all of these parties are interested in the psychological well-being of the individual seminarian and priest and not just the numerical strength of the priestly ranks. These recommendations are predicated on the belief that what is best for the individual is ultimately best for the institution too. This discussion presumes that the Church is willing to learn from the experience of her former priests, that the institution does not always function as what Seidler (1979) has called an ecclesiastical "lazy monopoly."

Most dioceses and religious orders have established some form of psychological screening of applicants to the seminary. Generally this screening takes the form of an interview and often a battery of tests conducted by a mental health consultant who makes a recommendation to the seminary's admissions committee as to the intellectual,

moral and emotional soundness of the applicant. Beyond the obvious need to rule out serious psychopathology, such a screening process should also attempt to assess the nature of a young man's motivation to become a priest and might even make guarded predictions about his ability to persevere and to grow as a seminarian and priest.

The categories of identity achieved, moratorium and foreclosure would seem to provide a useful nosological context within which to consider these issues. Particular attention should be paid, especially in analyzing the interview data, to the ways in which the candidate's life experience has left him prepared (or ill prepared) to engage in some of the common enactments of developmental tasks (e.g., to live autonomously, to be sexually expressive, to consider marriage, to advance one's own career). Cases in which there is sufficient preparedness (identity achieved) are not problematic. In cases where there is a significant lack of preparedness, however, an attempt should be made to assess the ego status which underlies these deficits--the state of foreclosure or moratorium. Where the picture is primarily one of avoidance of developmental tasks, of psychic defeat (e.g., a retreat to asexuality, a wish for merger, or flight from all forms of competitive striving) the diagnosis of foreclosure should be given and the applicant rejected (unless one envisions the priesthood as a shelter for the maldeveloped). It would seem that the pastoral duty in such a case would be the help the applicant

find the psychological help which might allow him someday to grow out of foreclosure.

In cases where the presenting profile suggests a state of moratorium (significant difficulties around one or more developmental tasks, a need to postpone particular enactments, but the suggestion of an active and somewhat hopeful struggle to come to terms with the required developmental work) some further questions need to be examined. Is the seminary the best place for such a young man to work on these issues? Will seminary life afford him sufficient exposures (e.g., to women) and experiences (e.g., of autonomy and achievement) to build the psychic readiness required to make an informed commitment to priesthood or to some other way of life? Would the needs of the applicant and of the community be better served if entrance into the seminary was postponed for a year or two so that the young person could benefit from more life experience and could also explore some of the moratorium issues in psychotherapy? Being a seminarian may not always be the best (or the quickest) way to work on these issues. Perhaps another form of moratorium is better tailored to an individual's needs.

The notion that the decision to enter the seminary may reflect a need for a psychosocial moratorium also suggests some recommendations for seminary training. The first is that seminary training should begin later, rather than earlier, in life. An 8th grader is not likely to make an identity achieved decision to study for priesthood. There's

just too little life experience upon which to base such a decision, too little realistic understanding of what the role limitations of priesthood will mean. Fortunately high school "prep" seminaries have become all but extinct over the past two decades. Where they continue to exist, they are generally regarded as pre-seminaries which offer an opportunity for discernment while affording adequate possibilites for experimenting with other definitions of the self.

A further implication of the moratorium hypothesis is that a similar sense of open-endedness should apply to the experience of college seminary and even theologate. These experiences should be regarded as opportunities to grow in a realistic sense of commitment through exploring the possibilities for adult growth afforded by the priestly vocation. The focus on priesthood should not insulate a seminarian from the normative developmental work proper to this period in life. Accordingly, candidates for the priesthood should be given sufficient exposure to their families to work on any separation issues, sufficient voice and autonomy to address any issues about authority, enough opportunites for relationships with both men and women to work through possible conflicts about intimacy, adequate freedom and encouragement to puruse their own advancement and to perhaps discover along the way any inhibitions in that regard. These experiences would maximize the growth potential of the moratorium experience. Without them the

work of moratorium becomes more difficult and lengthy than perhaps it needs to be; the danger of lapsing into foreclosure looms all the greater. The opportunity for psychotherapy with a qualified practicioner should be offered to any candidate who requests it or who seems to require it.

Whether a seminary would consider any of these measures is a question of policy which reflects an underlying philosophy of formation. If the mission of a seminary faculty is to instruct in priestly virtue, to discourage doubt, to safeguard against temptation and, in doing so, to ordain as many priests as possible, then these considerations will be perceived as threatening and will be scorned or ignored. If, on the other hand, the experience of seminary in meant to provide an opportunity to explore the meaning of God and of priestly service while promoting individual growth and the capacity for relationship, then these recommendations are not so farfetched. Such a seminary will help form and educate adult men, some of whom will make a mature commitment to priesthood, some of whom will hopefully use the experience of seminary as a preparation for challenges which had previously threatened to overwhelm them. In such cases the church has provided an important service to these men, to the persons whose lives they touch, and to the society to which they will be better able to make an adult contribution.

A final recommendation for priests and superiors concerns their manner of dealing with the man who announces his intention to leave priesthood. In some cases a man may be contemplating this step because of some transient discouragement in ministry or a crisis of faith. In these instances, fraternal support and spiritual direction are certainly appropriate and may be helpful. In other cases, however, the wish to leave ministry is an expression of a man's emergence from moratorium, reflecting a readiness and a need to return to specific developmental enactments long deferred. When such a man articulates the need to be sexually expressive or to achieve financial success or greater recognition within society, he is not necessarily succumbing to the Sirens' call of "worldly temptations" (as the more rigid and threatened of his peers are likely to suggest). Rather, he is responding to a call which emanates from the emerging tasks and demands of his unfolding adulthood. To think that such a developmental need will be stilled by another hour of daily prayer or by more intense spiritual direction is naive. The issue is primarily psychological, not spiritual. To try to stand in the way of this process of hatching from moratorium is both futile and unfair.

One of the fruits of adult developmental theory has been its contribution to clinical practice. Familiarity with some of the normative developmental crises and pitfalls of adulthood can help the clinician make a more informed

assessment of certain phenomena and to appreciate the normality of what might otherwise appear to be pathological processes. In a similar way, the idea of moratorium could be useful to those who do clinical work with seminarians and priests. First, it adds a dimension of prognostic optimism to what might at face value appear to be developmental failures; not engaging in particular developmental enactments may actually be a way of becoming better prepared to succeed at them. Moreover, an awareness of the dynamics of moratorium enhances a stance of therapeutic patience. Depending upon the degree to which a man is psychologically unprepared for various enactments of adult developmental tasks, the work of moratorium may be long and hard. Respect for the pace and timetable of the moratorium will keep a therapist from pushing a client, pressuring him into experiences for which he is not yet ready. Knowledge of the workings of moratorium help the therapist and the client to appreciate in the meantime the ways in which the client is addressing adult developmental tasks along parallel, metaphorical lines. Activities and involvements which may appear unrelated to a particular developmental task may actually be preparing a man to address it more fully and directly at a later date. Coaching and supporting a man through those experiences, gradually challenging him to confront experiences which more directly address the developmental task at hand, would seem to be important therapeutic stances.

As the work of moratorium becomes progressively achieved, the therapist should be available to help the client decide what implications this development has for his priestly vocation. Has his growth brought him to a point where he needs to experience particular developmental enactments and must leave the priesthood to do so (e.g., nothing short of getting married or having a child will satisfy the particular developmental mandate)? On the other hand, his moratorium experiences may have made him ready for particular developmental enactments but have nevertheless led him to make a renewed, post-moratorium commitment to priesthood ("I could get married and I'd probably enjoy that way of life too, but I'll be happier as a priest"). Obviously, therapists (especially those who are religiously oriented or those who are reflexively suspicious of any spiritual motivation) need be to careful of the ways in which their particular biases could influence the client's decision in this regard.

Finally, the concept of moratorium provides a context within which a man can assess the meaning of his seminary and priestly experience. I suspect that this need is particularly intense for the ex-priest. How is he to make sense of those years of his life? How do they relate to his current life structure and experience? The idea of moratorium provides a framework within which to examine the experiences of those years, to see that they were not lost or wasted but that they were adaptive and have prepared him

for his current commitments. Knowing the costs and benefits of the years of deferral, the ex-priest (and the post-moratorium priest as well) is better able to mourn what can't be recaptured and to celebrate what has been achieved.

Some Implications for Adult Developmental Theory. The notion of moratorium introduces nuances of experience which would tend to qualify the concept of a universal sequence of developmental stages, each with its distinctive tasks, inner preoccupations and order within the life course. The phenomenon of moratorium suggests that the order in which such tasks are negotiated is likely to be significantly affected by the vicissitudes of an individual's experience. The presence of conflict, inhibitions and certain deficits of experience may leave a man unprepared to address particular developmental tasks in the normative sequence. Some tasks may be largely "on hold" while the individual concentrates more psychic energy on areas of experience which are less threatening to him. For example, a man might work at and, in fact, attain a high level of generativity or career consolidation while his negotiation of the task of intimacy proceeds at a slower pace, in fits and starts, with periods of progress and intervals of regression or arrest. At a later date, after a period of gradual and often imperceptible progress, a man's modest gains in the area of intimacy might consolidate and allow him to return to specific enactments of the task of intimacy which have been long deferred. The idea that a man can defer direct

negotiation of certain developmental tasks and return to these challenges at a later date would argue against too monolithic an interpretation of the epigenetic sequence.

This idiosyncracy of experience in terms of external enactments is likely to be reflected in an uncharacteristic profile of intrapsychic qualities as well. The man in moratorium may be less likely, for example, to experience the full cathexis of the "masculine" and "attached" poles of experience during early adulthood. He may only experience an intensification of these dimensions of the self during the post-moratorium years, at a time in life when they may be better tempered by his previous integration of the feminine and separate/contemplative aspects of the personality. Hence while the Jungian and Levinsonian treatment of these polarities is theoretically interesting and clinically useful, I suggest that the pattern they describe is less universal and inclusive than has been proposed. A consideration of individual differences and idiosyncracy of experience would militate against too uniform or stereotyped a formulation. Reflection upon the idiosyncratic experience of those who have experienced a moratorium may offer a corrective balance to what Staude (1981) has criticized as the overvaluation of the stances of male ego mastery and extroverson in most models of early adult development.

The idea of moratorium also has implications for the notion of age linkage, tending to challenge the more radical

models of strict age linkage such as that proposed by Levinson. (1978) The experience of moratorium suggests that certain age appropriate tasks and can be deferred and addressed at a later age. The need for deferral reflects the vicissitudes of individual growth: the areas where development may be retarded, arrested or in some respects precocious and will not unfold according to a strict chronological timetable. Moreover, the priest's idiosyncratic experience of the intrapsychic polarities indicates that particular life events and aspects of one's role can affect the timing and directionality of these polar shifts--"events lived" is likely to prove at least as potent an influence as "life time elapsed" in this regard. The timing of development would thus appear to be somewhat flexible, the pace variable, reflecting what Neugarten (1979) has referred to as the "proliferation of timetables...within our age irrelevant society." (p. 889)

Furthermore, I suggest that the growth which occurs during the moratorium often lays the groundwork for an expedited negotiation of these postponed developmental tasks at a later date, making for a variable and somewhat elastic experience of time and age. For example, one of the most striking findings in the life history interview which first inspired this study was the accelerated rate at which this particular ex-priest approached some postponed developmental milestones. Within twenty-eight months of leaving the ministry, he had intensely explored relationships with a

number of women, had married, fathered a child, purchased two income producing properties and secured a vice-presidency at his job. He had accomplished in a condensed manner tasks which are proper to several different age periods. In sum, the phenomenon of moratorium challenges the notion of strict age linkage. With the expected diversity of preparedness for age appropriate tasks, with the infinite possibilities of uneven development--precocity in some areas (e.g., development of the feminine, contemplative aspects) and dormancy or arrest in others (e.g., sexuality, assertiveness)--with the possibility for the accelerated and condensed phenomenon of catching up, I question how hard and fast the linkage between age and adult development can be. As Gould (1972) has expressed it, changes during adulthood are "time-dominated, but not necessarily age specific for any one individual....[they] take place within the context of a total personality, life-style, and subculture and each man can be compared only with his own self at a former time." (p. 531)

The testimony of the moratorium experience also indicates the need for a broader, more nuanced and inclusive model of what constitutes work on a particular developmental task. The absence of the more common enactments of developmental tasks (e.g., attaining financial independence, experiencing sexual intimacy, parenting) does not necessarily mean that the actual developmental work is not occurring. The notion of moratorium suggests that stages

and tasks of development are being negotiated even when the average expectable enactments are not in evidence. Developmental tasks, it would seem, can at times be pursued in indirect, less obvious ways, along a parallel track of displaced or sublimated investments of the self.

To maintain that developmental tasks can be pursued along parallel paths or that particular enactments can often be deferred and successfully returned to at a later date, is not to say that the more common enactments are unimportant or readily dispensable. The experience of men who are emerging from a moratorium (the experience of many ex-priests) actually tends to affirm the importance of the more typical enactments of developmental challenges. While tasks such as intimacy and generativity can, indeed, be addressed in parallel, metaphorical activities during the moratorium period, it is interesting that most ex-priests finally return to the concrete tasks of genital intimacy, marriage and childrearing (and may even have left the priesthood in order to pursue these very activities). It seems that for some men, the indirect and subliminatory routes of addressing these developmental mandates are ultimately experienced as not good enough. For them the celibate goal of being "lovingly present to the community" (Lauder, 1981, p. 122) may eventually prove to be too sublimated and diffuse to satisfy their developmental needs. Their eventual renunciation of celibacy suggests that the experience of sexual pairing and procreation may ultimately

afford the most direct and satisfying manner of meeting the developmental challenges of intimacy and generativity. Moratorium is, after all, not a rejection or devaluation of these experiences but merely a postponement.

Finally, what does this variability and idiosyncracy of experience suggest about the utility of any general model of adult experience? Does the existence of exceptions vitiate the rule? It would seem that there are, in the final analysis, four more or less distinct ways of considering the idiosyncratic lives and experience of priests and ex-priests within the context of a model of normative stages of adult development. One route would be to ignore or dismiss altogether the notion of average expectable stages of adult development, to maintain that models such as those proposed by Erikson, Vaillant and Levinson, interesting though they might be, ultimately have little relevance to and predictive value for real life. According to such a point of view, it just doesn't matter what adult developmental events take place or when they occur. Each lived life is complex and unique; there can be no external referents or criteria for assessing development. Hence there are no particular implications or complications inherent in having lived for many years as a member of the priestly counterculture. I call this position the Naive Hypotheis. Stated colloquially, the Naive Hypothesis states "it just doesn't matter."

I believe that this first hypothesis is untenable. The notion that there are certain common experiences and motifs of adult development, and that the presence, timing and sequence of these events and issues have relevance for the life of the individual cannot be ignored. The findings of researchers such as Levinson, Vaillant and Gould are empirically based and, judging from their popularity, ring true with with experience of many people. With certain qualifications added (notably the idea of deferring particular enactments or pursuing tasks outside of the common enactments), these models do speak to the experience of ex-priests, particularly as these men pursue their post-priesthood roles and activities. These models are not to be ignored or casually dismissed.

The second position I call the Iron-clad Pessimistic Hypothesis, according to which there is a rigid, universal epigenetic sequence of developmental milestones to be traversed, with strictly age-linked "critical periods" for the attainment of each. Accordingly, if a man is only beginning at age forty to explore the possibilities for sexual intimacy, for marriage and family, for financial stability and expansion, he is in big trouble. He'll be unable to negotiate these crucial developmental tasks, or he will address them in a decidedly flawed and limited manner. Expressed colloquially, the Pessimistic Hypothesis states "it can't be done."

I believe that the Pessimistic Hypothesis both overstates and underestimates. On the one hand it overstates and overgeneralizes our current understanding of normative adult developmental stages. I believe that we are still at an early, exploratory stage of understanding and building theory about the ways in which adults develop. We need to keep testing our hypotheses against the experience of diverse populations. On the other hand, the iron-clad stance underestimates the adaptive capacity of the growing individual, the possibilities for catching up. As Levinson (1980) himself has stated, "rather than imposing a template for conformity, it [his theory of development] increases our sense of human potentialities and of the variousness of individual lives." (p. 289)

The third option is the Parallel or Equivalency Hypothesis. This position maintains that although there are on the surface level certain elements of the priestly, moratorium lifestyle which would seem to inhibit or even preclude the attainment of specific developmental tasks, there are possibilities within the priest's life structure for intrapsychic change and interpersonal development that is similar to and even equivalent to the growth experienced by his secular peers. The man who is a priest confronts within his life structure challenges to grow in intimacy, to be generative, to discover his own authority and speak with his own voice. To the "it can't be done" of the pessimistic position, the Parallel Hypothesis responds that "much of it

is already done--it has been happening in other ways," along analogous paths of experience.

To the extent that the years of living within the role-boundness of priesthood have eventuated in certain areas of developmental "unfinished business," the fourth hypothesis becomes relevant. This position, which I call the Hypothesis of Adaptive Return, suggests that neglected or postponed developmental tasks can be returned to and renegotiated at a later period in life from a different psychic stance. Formulated in everyday language, this hypothesis posits that "it's not too late." Such a return constitutes a second chance developmentally to experience and accomplish now what one, for any variety of reasons, was unable to experience and accomplish then. A man can to some extent "play catchup" with developmental tasks. Activities and investments in the present can provide the opportunity for belated mastery, for corrective and completing achievements. It would be less than accurate to regard such activity as "making up for lost time." As the Parallel Hypothesis suggests, the time was not really lost but was devoted to indirect and analogous experiences which prepared a man for a more direct negotiation of certain developmental enactments. Hence it would appear that the validity of the fourth hypothesis (that of adaptive return) depends in great measure on the validity of the Parallel Hypothesis. A man can successfully return to unfinished developmental business precisely to the extent that intervening experience has

disposed and prepared him for this second chance. Taken together, the two hypotheses support the notion of moratorium and relate the apparently idiosyncratic experience of the ex-priest to the prevailing notions of adult development.

Some Directions for Future Study. The case histories of Eric and Vinny have raised some interesting theoretical issues and have indicated some possible directions for further study. I have extrapolated from their experience to generate the hypothesis that the experience of priesthood may offer some men a psychosocial moratorium, a time and place within which to build readiness to pursue some of the normative adult developmental tasks. The hypothesis awaits empirical validation. It needs to be tested in a systematic way with a sufficiently large "n" to explore the extent to which it accurately describes the experience of the population of former Roman Catholic priests. This sample of ex-priests should be interviewed using the interview protocol developed for this study (see appendix) or an somewhat abridged form of that instrument. (The interview method is superior to the use of a questionnaire in research which attempts to explore such subtle variables.) The interview data would need to be analyzed in a more systematic, quantifiable way. Marcia (1964) has proposed a method of analyzing interview material which lends itself to inter-judge reliabity and which assesses the empirical validity of the moratorium hypothesis.

This sample of ex-priests could be stratified according to several parameters. The length of time spend within the seminary and priesthood appears to be a relevant variable, the presumption being that a longer period of moratorium would reflect a greater degree of initial unpreparedness for adult developmental enactments and might also result in more difficulty (and greater concrete costs) in the process of catching up. The experience of men who had been diocesan priests or had belonged to more active, ministry-oriented religious congregations could be compared to the experience of men who had belonged to more contemplative orders--the hypothesis being that the latter would be somewhat more likely to conform to the profile of moratorium (or even foreclosure) given their choice of such a restricted environment. Another variable to be considered is the ways in which the experience of psychotherapy might modify the course or pace of the moratorium. My supposition is that the process of therapy might accelerate a man's negotiation of moratorium issues and is likely to correlate with a briefer moratorium experience and a smoother process of recovery when a man re-enters the mainstream.

Another focus for further inquiry is a comparison of the experience of a sample of men who left the priesthood with a control group of men who are still priests. Such a study would assess the similarities and differences between the two groups in several areas including their early experience, their reasons for entering priesthood, their

ability to pursue the various developmental tasks as priests, and their general capacity for sublimation and investment in things spiritual. Such comparisons are clouded by the permeability of the boundary between the two groups. A unknown percentage of the members of one group (current priests) will ultimately become members of the other--they are future ex-priests who just may not realize it yet. Nevertheless, some interesting contrasts may emerge.

Finally the moratorium hypothesis might be fruitfully studied within two associated populations. The first study would consider the relevance of this hypothesis to men who are religious professionals within other sects. My presumption is that the moratorium dynamic will be somewhat less obvious in the experience of ministers and rabbis given the absence of the important variable of celibacy. Another focus for further inquiry would be to investigate the moratorium dynamic within the experience of Roman Catholic women religious, past and present. Here I suspect that moratorium phenomena will be much in evidence in view of the fact that becoming a nun has often entailed even more radical role restrictions than those associated with priesthood.

APPENDIX

Interview Protocol

I. Overview

1. To start off, let's put together some sort of overview of your life thus far. First of all, how old are you now?

2. What do you do for a living? How long have you been doing that?

3. Are you married? For how long?

4. Do you have any children? How old are they (he/she)?

5. How old were you when you entered the seminary? How old were you when you were ordained?

6. For how many years did you serve as a priest?

7. So you left when you were ___ years old and you've been out of the priesthood for ___ years.

II. Family of Origin

1. Let's go back to before you entered the seminary. I'd like to learn something about your life back then. Would you tell me something about the family you grew up in? How many people were in your family (enumerate the family members noting where subject fits in in terms of birth order)?

2. Were there any changes in the makeup of the family during the years you were living at home, for example, separations, illnesses, deaths, a grandparent moving in? (For each) How old were you at the time? How did it seem to affect you?

3. How would you describe the general emotional climate within your home when you were growing up?

4. How involved were family members with each other?

5. How demonstrative with affection?

6. What were some of the things that you remember the family doing together?

7. What were some areas of tension or disagreement? How were these dealt with?

8. Specifically, how was anger expressed or not expressed?

9. How would you describe your parents' relationship in terms of how well they communicated with each other, how they expressed affection and anger? Do you remember them spending much time with each other-- just the two of them apart from family activities?

10. To whom did you feel the closest in your family? How come?

11. To whom did you feel the least close? Why was that?

12. How would you describe the authority structure within the family? Who made the rules? Who enforced them, and how? How did you feel about and react to the exercise of authority and discipline in the family?

13. As you look back, what was the best thing about growing up in the _____ family?

14. What was the _____ family's greatest problem or weakness?

III. School, Early Social History

1. Moving on to your years in school, from what you remember or what you've been told, did you have any problems leaving home and adjusting to school?

2. What kind of experience did you have in elementary school? How did you like it? How did you do academically?

3. How involved were you with your peers?

4. In what activities were you involved?

5. How did you like you high school years? Again, how did you fare academically?

6. What sort of interests and activities did you pursue?

7. How involved were you socially with your peers?

IV. Issues Regarding Competition, Assertiveness

1. Were there any activities within those early years of your life which called for competition?

2. Were there any relationships, perhaps with siblings or peers, which you'd describe as competitive?

3. How did you feel about competing, about losing or winning during those years of your life?

4. How rebellious or compliant do you feel you were as a child and teenager? Were there struggles and arguments with your parents or older siblings? Over what issues? How were they usually resolved? Did you get into any trouble outside of the home?

V. Development of Religious Vocation

1. What's your earliest memory of wanting to be a priest? How old were you?

2. What do you think first attracted you to that vocation?

3. Were there any persons whom you would identify as active supporters of your vocational goal? How did they seek to nurture it?

4. (If not already mentioned) What were your parent's attitudes towards your interest in priesthood? Was there any difference between their responses?

5. Was there a particular priest (or more than one) whom you especially emulated? What did you admire or find attractive about him?

6. Were there any priests in your extended family? Tell me a little about him (them).

7. Were there things <u>you</u> did to somehow nurture your own vocation during the preseminary years?

8. How involved were you in religious activities? How did you feel about them?

9. Did the knowledge that you would someday study for the priesthood in any way affect your approach or attitude towards everyday activities, for example, work, study, friendship, dating? How?

10. Did it seem to affect the way other people treated you or reacted to you? How so?

11. Were there any times when it appeared less likely, or even unlikely, that you'd choose to pursue the priesthood? (If so) Tell me about those times. How were they worked through?

12. Was there any particular religious experience which inspired or finalized your determination to be a priest?

VI. Early Sexual History

1. How did you first learn about sex? How old were you at the time? How did you feel about and react to this new knowledge?

2. What sort of attitude towards sex existed within your family?

3. Besides your family, what other influences helped shape your ideas and feelings about sex during your childhood and adolescence?

4. What kind of physical shape were you in as a young person? How physically and sexually attractive did you consider yourself to be?

5. How did you feel about masturbation? To what extent was it an emotional or moral issue for you?

6. How actively did you date before entering the seminary?

7. How sexually intimate were these relationships? How did you feel about the level of your sexual involvement?

8. Did you fall in love with anyone during this period of your life, that is, before entering the seminary?

9. (If so) Could you tell me what that experience was like for you? How did you feel about that kind of emotional involvement? Did you consider marrying her? How did that relationship change or end?

10. How did you feel about the prospect of marriage? Was it something you could picture yourself doing?

11. (If there was no significant relationship with a female) To what extent was the lack of a relationship with a girl a problem for you? Why or why not?

VII. Summary of Pre-seminary

1. Considering the years of your life before you entered the seminary, how happy were you during that period of your life?

2. How interested were you in what you were doing?

3. How involved with or detached from other people and the outside world?

4. How similar or dissimilar to your age peers did you feel?

5. How ambitious and assertive did you feel?

6. How masculine did you feel?

VIII. Transition to Seminary

1. What finally led to your decision to actually enter the seminary at the point you did? Were there any particular precipitants?

2. (If entered after elementary school) Why then? How would you have felt about waiting until after high school, or later?

3. (If entered after high school) Had your considered entering earlier--going to a "prep" seminary? Why or why not? How would you have felt about going to college first?

4. (If entered after college or later) Why did you wait until that point to enter? Had you considered entering the seminary earlier? If so, why did you decide not to?

5. Was going to the seminary the first time you moved away from home? What was that like for you? For your family?

6. What were the goodbyes like with particular people?

7. How much contact were you expecting to have with your family and friends? How much did you actually have? What was that like for you?

8. How did you feel as the date for your departure to seminary approached? Were there any areas of doubt or misgiving? What were they and how did you deal with them?

9. As you recall your state of mind as you entered the seminary, what were your reasons for wanting to become a priest?

10. Why did you choose the particular form of priesthood that you did?

11. What did you think priesthood would be like? What would it allow you to do? What would it personally offer or provide you?

12. Were there things which you felt bad about giving up?

13. What were your thoughts and feelings at the time about the prospect of celibacy? About obedience? About whatever form of poverty you would be assuming?

14. Were there other vocational choices which you had seriously considered? (If so) What attracted you to that career? Why did you finally choose priesthood over this other option?

IX. Seminary: Friendship

1. Now I'd like to take a look at the seminary years. How would you describe the process of adjusting to seminary life--easy or difficult? (If difficult) In what respects?

2. How did you feel about living in a large community? What did you most like and dislike about community life?

3. Did you develop many friendships within the seminary setting?

4. How easy or difficult was that for you? Why?

5. How would you characterize these relationships, casual or intense, short-term or enduring?

6. How important were these relationships to you?

7. What was the official attitude towards close friendships in the seminary and how did you deal with that?

8. Were there other sources of friendship and support outside of the seminary?

X. Seminary: Sexual Issues and Relationships with Women

1. How would you describe the sexual climate within the seminary?

2. What was the apparent level of sexual tension? Was sex talked about, joked about, or was the topic more or less avoided?

3. How much sexual tension did you experience and how did you deal with it?

4. Generally speaking, how faithful were people to chastity? How much heterosexual or homosexual involvement were you aware of? What was your attitude towards those behaviors?

5. What kind of contact did you have with members of the opposite sex?

6. Were there any girls or women with whom you become emotionally or sexually involved while you were a seminarian?

7. (For each) How did that relationship develop?

8. To what extent was this relationship a source of tension in terms of your celibate commitment? How did you deal with that conflict?

9. Did you change in any way of a result of that relationship?

10. What was the final course of that relationship?

11. (If no such relationship occurred) Was the lack of emotional and/or sexual involvement a problem for you? Why or why not?

12. Did your feelings towards and beliefs about women change in any way over the course of the seminary years? How?

13. Did your thoughts and feelings about sex and about your own sexuality change in any way over these years? How?

14. Did your thoughts and feelings about a lifetime of celibacy change in any way during the seminary years? How?

XI. Seminary: Authority

1. How strict was the authority system within the seminary?

2. How much or how little authority and independence was allowed? How did you react to that?

3. Did you imagine that it would be the same or somehow different when you became a priest?

4. Did you ever express disagreement with policies and practices? What happened and how did you feel about it?

5. Were there any instances when you directly confronted or challenged an authority figure? What was that like for you?

XII. Summary of Seminary

1. How fulfilling or frustrating did you find the various elements of your seminary lifestyle to be: your studies? the community's prayer life? your personal prayer life? various ministerial activities? community living? relationships?

2. How happy were you during that period of your life?

3. How interested were you in what you were doing?

4. How involved with or detached from people and the outside world?

5. How similar or dissimilar to your age peers?

6. How assertive and ambitious did you feel?

7. How masculine did you feel?

8. Were there times when you considered leaving the seminary or perhaps even came close to actually leaving?

9. (If so) At what point along the way? What motivated the wish to leave at that time? How would you explain your decision to stay?

10. How did you react to the departure of others, especially any friends who may have left or who were asked to leave?

11. In retrospect, what did you like best about the seminary years? What did you find to be most difficult or painful?

XIII. Transition to and Overview of Priesthood

1. How did you feel as the goal of ordination finally approached?

2. What do you remember about your actual state of mind and feelings at the time of ordination and First Mass?

3. Did you believe at that time that you were making a lifetime commitment to this way of life?

4. Did being a priest in any way alter your image of yourself, your feelings about who you were? Did it affect how you related to people?

5. As you consider the ___ years you spent as a priest, are there any subdivisions of that time which make personal sense to you, which reflect any turning points or critical junctures or marker events--times when your experience of priesthood markedly changed for better or worse?

6. (If subject is unable to articulate any turning points) Let me suggest some to see if they make any personal sense to you. Time before and after a particular assignment? Time before and after a particular spiritual experience? Time before and after entering therapy? Time before and after a particular relationship. In general, can a distinction be made between a period of time when you were more invested in <u>being</u> a priest and a period when you were more involved with the remote and immediate preparations for leaving priesthood? When did the tide begin to change and why?

7. We'll be talking about your decision to leave in more detail as we proceed. But at this point, how would you summarize your reason or reasons for leaving priesthood?

XIV. Priesthood: Ministry

1. Let's take a look at the various aspects of your lifestyle as a priest. First, let's talk about the area of ministry itself. How did the reality of priestly activity compare with your expectations and fantasies?

2. Which activities of the priestly role did you find the most meaningful and personally rewarding? Why?

3. In what areas were you the most talented?

4. What aspects of your personality were most activated by the priestly role?

5. How important were the specifically sacramental activities--saying Mass, hearing confessions, etc?

6. What activities of the priestly role were the least satisfying? Why?

7. How would you characterize your relationship to the people you served?

8. How much responsibility did you feel for the lives of others? How did that feel?

9. How much of a link existed between your ministerial activities and your prayer life? How much of a contemplative or interior life did you pursue?

10. Tell me about your best experience as a minister? Your worst?

11. Did your thoughts and feelings about ministry change in any way over the years? In way ways?

12. To what extent, if any, was the decision to leave the priesthood related to feelings about ministry itself? Would you have chosen to remain in the priesthood if other aspects of the lifestyle and job description could have changed? If so, what areas?

13. Are there any activities or involvements at present which represent some sort of continuity with the priestly role?

14. Do you feel in retrospect that you were personally affected and changed by the experience of ministry? In what ways?

XV. Priesthood: Authority

1. What kinds of authority structures did you encounter during your priesthood years?

2. Were there variations between different assignments in this regard?

3. With what kind of authority relationships were you the

most comfortable? Could you give me an example?

4. With what kind of authority relationships were you the least comfortable? Do any particular persons or episodes come to mind? How did you handle those relationships?

5. How much or how little autonomy did you have regarding the selection of assignments?

6. How much or how little autonomy regarding other areas of your life, for example, undertaking particular duties or projects, regulating your own schedule and hours, the use of money, the use of car, phone calls and visits, extent of socialization, vacation plans? How did you feel about that?

7. Did your feelings towards and relationships with authority figures change in any ways over the years of priesthood? How?

8. How much authority did you experience yourself as possessing by virtue of being a priest? How did you feel about that?

9. Did the sense of your own authority and power change in any way over the years of priesthood? How?

10. Did feelings about authority, either being under authority of about the extent of your own authority in any way contribute to the decision to leave priesthood?

XVI. Priesthood: Competition and Advancement

1. How personally important was the idea of advancement, of getting ahead during your years as a priest?

2. What possibilities for advancement were available to you within the priesthood?

3. Did you receive any assignments which were promotions? How did you feel about them?

4. Were there any advancements or promotions which you wished for but did not receive? What was that like for you?

5. Besides actual promotions, were there other ways of succeeding, of "making good" as a priest? What were they? How did you fare in this regard?

6. Was there any direct or perhaps subtle competition with

other priests in this regard? How did you feel about that?

7. Did your feelings about pursuing success and advancement in any way change over the course of the years of priesthood? How?

8. Was the issue of advancement in any way related to your decision to leave the priesthood?

XVII. Priesthood: Friendship

1. What were your main sources of emotional support during the priesthood years?

2. How supportive did you find the environment of rectory (monastery) living to be?

3. Did you tend to become friends with the people with whom you lived, or worked or knew from other contexts?

4. How would you describe your closest relationships, e.g., in terms of spending time together, self revelation, mutual expression of feelings?

5. Were there any limits to the amount and kind of intimacy you could experience and enjoy in these friendships? How did you feel about that?

6. How frequently and distantly were you transferred? Did this factor affect either the intensity or longevity of friendships?

7. Do you feel that your own ability or desire to engage in friendship changed over the years of priesthood? What kind or change and what prompted it?

8. Did the existence or absence of close friendships affect your ministry in any way?

XVIII. Priesthood: Sexual Issues, Relationships with Women, Paternity

1. Were there women with whom you became emotionally involved during those years?

2. What form of expression did that involvement take: spending time together, self-revelation, physical closeness, sexual intimacy, emotional support and dependence?

3. What were your feelings about this (these)

relationship(s)?

4. (For each significant relationship) Could you tell me more about the relationship? How did it begin? Who initiated it? What attracted you to that person? How did the relationship develop? Were there any sources of conflict or tension? How were these dealt with? Was it a secret relationship, somewhat secret and discreet or a fairly public one? How did this relationship affect your ministry, other relationships and prayer life? Did the relationship end or change? In either event, how and why?

5. (If no relationships) Was the lack of emotional and/or sexual involvement a problem for you at the time? Why or why not?

6. Did your decision to leave priesthood occur within the context of a particular relationship with a woman?

7. Did your feelings about women change over the years of priesthood? In what ways and what accounts for that change?

8. Did your feelings about sexual expression change? How and why?

9. Did your feelings about celibacy change? How and why?

10. Did your feelings about your own sexuality change? How and why?

11. Did your feelings about women or sex or celibacy contribute in any way to your decision to leave priesthood? How?

12. Would you have left the priesthood if priests had been allowed to marry? Would you ever consider returning to ministry if the Church permitted a married clergy? Have you ever considered joining the ministry in another denomination where celibacy would not be an issue? (For all) why or why not?

13. What kind of interaction did you have as a priest with children, adolescents and young adults? How did you feel about these relationships? Was there any change in these feelings over the years?

14. Did you experience any desire to actually become a father?

15. (If so) Did the desire to have children in any way contribute to the decision to leave priesthood? How?

16. How much contact did you have with your own family during the priestly years? How important was this contact for you?

17. Were there any changes in the composition of your family during the seminary and priesthood years? (If so) What, and how did it affect you?

XIX. Summary of Priesthood

1. Looking back over the years of priesthood, how happy did you feel during that period of your life?

2. How interested were you in what you were doing?

3. How involved with or detached from people and the outside world?

4. How similar or dissimilar to your age peers?

5. How assertive or ambitious did you feel?

6. How masculine did you feel?

XX. Leaving Priesthood and the Transition to Lay Life

1. For how long a time had you seriously considered leaving the priesthood?

2. What were your reasons for considering this move?

3. Prior to actually leaving, had you ever come close to leaving before (or ever taken a trial leave of absence)? (If so) What kept you from leaving then (or led you to return)?

4. Were there persons who attempted to discourage your decision? Who and how did they do it?

5. Were there particular persons who supported your decision? Who and how?

6. Specifically, how did you imagine your priest and religious friends would react? How did they actually respond?

7. How did you imagine your family, especially your parents, would react? How did they?

8. Why did you decide to leave at the particular time you did? Were there any specific precipitants?

9. What were some of the feelings your experienced when you were finally actually leaving?

10. Did it seem possible at the time that you might decide to return to the priesthood? (If so) When and how did you finalize the decision to leave?

11. What was the process of re-entry like, finding your first job and place to live?

12. Did anyone help you in the process of transition?

13. What did it initially feel like to be out of the priesthood?

14. How did "lay life" measure up to your expectations? Did it seem to change your image of yourself in any way or how you presented yourself to and related to others?

XXI. Post-priesthood: Friendship

1. Have you found many opportunites for friendship during the period of time since you left ministry?

2. Are the friendships you have now in any way different from the friendships of the priesthood years?

3. How important are friendships within your current lifestyle?

4. Do you maintain friendships with anybody who is still in the priesthood? What are those relationships like?

5. Do you maintain friendships (or have formed new friendships) with other ex-priests? What are those relationships like?

XXII. Post-priesthood: Sexual Issues, Relationships with Women, Paternity

1. (If subject was in a particular relationship when he left) How did your relationship with _____ develop after you left? Did it change in any way by virtue of your having left the priesthood?

2. (Follow history of that relationship until the present or until it ended, covering issues around commitment, sexual expression, communication, expression of anger, crises or turning points in the relationship, ways in

which subject has changed as a result of that relationship. If ended, how and why?)

3. (If subject was not in a particular relationship when he left) Were you interested in meeting and dating women after you left?

4. How did you pursue this interest?

5. (Get general dating and relational history, exploring for each significant relationship) How did you meet her? What attracted you to her? How would you describe the relationship? How long did it last? Could you tell me about the extent of your sexual involvement, feelings about commitment, ability to communicate? How did that relationship end and why?

6. (If subject is married) When you left the priesthood did you have any particular feelings about wanting to marry or not?

7. Could you tell me about your decision to marry _____? How did it evolve? Did you experience any particular resistance to or doubts about getting married? What were they and how did you deal with them? What attracted you to marriage? Was your relationship with _____ different than other earlier relationships you had with women?

8. How have you felt about being married? In what ways has marriage been good for you? In what ways has marriage been difficult for you? How would you describe your relationship with _____? How committed do you feel to this relationship at this point in your life?

9. (If subject is not married) When you left the priesthood did you have any particular feelings about wanting to marry or not?

10. Have those feelings changed in any way since then? How and why?

11. Have you been in a relationship since leaving where you had to make a decision about marriage, or at least where marriage became an issue? What was that like for you?

12. Would you like to get married? When?

13. What attracts you to marriage?

14. Do you experience any particular resistance to or doubts about getting married? What are they?

15. (Whether married or not) Have your feelings towards and relationships with women changed in any way over the years since you left the priesthood? How, and what accounts for the change? Have your feelings about sex and your own sexuality changed in any way over these years? How and due to what influence?

XXIII. Post-priesthood: Paternity

1. Do (did) you and your wife plan to have a family? Why or why not?

2. (If has a child) How did you feel when you first became a father?

3. How would you describe your relationship with your child(ren)?

4. What does being a father mean to you? What's the best part of parenthood, the worst or hardest?

5. Are the experiences and feelings you have as a father in any way similar to those you had as a priest? If so, how?

6. Would you like to have any more children? If so, how many and why?

7. How do you imagine you would have felt if you had never had children?

8. (If subject does not have children) Would you like to have children someday? How come? How many?

9. What do you imagine being a father would be like, would mean to you?

10. What kind of relationship do you imagine you'd have with your children?

11. Were there any experiences of priesthood which were similar to what you imagine and hope fatherhood would be like?

XXIV. Post-priesthood: Competition, Advancement

1. When you left the priesthood, would you say you had a fairly clear career plan or were you more or less playing it by ear?

2. If there was a plan, what was it? How has it proceeded

or changed since then?

3. (Review career development thus far, tracing the number of jobs, the subject's feelings about each and why he left.) Have there been any notable advances or setbacks within your career?

4. To what extent have you been able to translate the skills you relied on as a priest to your new work settings?

5. Where do you see yourself now relative to your goals? How does that feel?

6. What have been the most rewarding aspects of your career history so far?

7. What aspects have been the most difficult for you?

8. How committed do you feel to your current career?

9. How much competitiveness and assertiveness have been called for in your work settings? How have you felt about that and dealt with it?

10. What kind of relationships have you had with bosses and supervisors in your work settings?

11. How much authority and expertise do you experience yourself as possessing at work? How has that felt?

12. Where do you see yourself going in the future, five years from now, ten years from now?

13. What are the strengths and assets that might assist you in reaching that goal?

14. What are the likely obstacles, both external and internal?

15. Are you in a position to serve as a guide or supporter to any other workers? Explain. How do you feel about that role?

16. Besides your workplace, is there any other setting where you find yourself able to provide guidance and assistance to other persons' development? How do you feel about that role?

17. How important a concern is money at this point in your life? Are your thoughts about and attitude towards money in any way different from when you were a priest? How? Are they in any way affected by your having spent time in the priesthood? How would you compare your

current financial status to that of your age peers who were never priests?

XXV. Post-priesthood: Summary

1. You're ____ years old, right? How old do you feel? Explain. How old is your wife (are the women you date)? How old are your associates at work or social contacts? Is age in any sense an issue in your life right now?

2. What's your current state of physical health? Do you exercise or in any other way intentionally take care of your body? How does that compare with your years in religious life and with before?

3. How often do you think about your own death? What are some of your thoughts about death? Do you have any particular fantasy of when you might die, and how? What experiences or influences have contributed to your current thoughts and feelings about death and dying? Is your attitude toward death influenced by your previous vocation? Is your attitude toward death different from what it was when you were a priest?

4. Are you involved in a church or other religious association? (If so) How important a part of your life is that involvement? (If not) When and why did you become uninvolved?

5. Do you engage in any private religious or contemplative practice--prayer, meditation, yoga, etc.? Could you describe it? How contemplative do you feel you were as a seminarian and priest? Has your image of God changed at all over the years? Specifically, how do you imagine God, as it were, "feels" about your having been a priest and having left ministry?

6. Does the experience of having been a priest in any way influence the way you think about life, about God, about the world? How?

7. Considering the years since you left the priesthood, how happy have you felt during this period of your life?

8. How interested in what you've been doing?

9. How involved with or detached from people and the outside world?

10. How similar or dissimilar to your age peers?

11. How assertive have you felt?

12. How masculine?

13. Do you have much contact with your family of origin? How do you feel about that? Have there been any changes within that family since you left priesthood? (If so) When and what was that like for you?

14. Have you been in therapy at any time in your life? When? What led to your entering therapy? What were the major themes of the treatment? How have you been affected by your experience of therapy? When and why did you terminate therapy?

15. Did you ever experience or feel that you could be close to experiencing a serious mental or emotional break? Could you tell me about it, when it occurred, what may have precipitated it, how you made it through?

16. In what ways is your present life different--for better or worse--than you imagine it would have been if you had never been a priest?

17. If you had it to do over again, would you choose the same route? Why or why not?

18. How would you feel and respond if someday your son expressed a desire to become a priest? Why?

19. What would you like to change about your present life structure, in any area? Is there anything missing you'd like to add?

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