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AN EXAMINATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE DIVERSITY OF
OPINION AMONG PRIESTS

By

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B.S., Wisconsin State University, Oshkosh, 1966

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
Department of Sociology
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
1971

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Sept 1, 1971
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am appreciative of the comments and assistance provided by Dr. Raymond L. Gold and Dr. William Evans. Most of all, I am deeply indebted to Dr. William H. McBroom, a friend, who provided inspriational untiring patience throughout the course of this thesis. Also, to Claudia who was only invaluable. Peace.

Lawrence L. Kielich

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Catholicism as a monolithic structure is disappearing. . . From a timid rebellion has grown a courageous confrontation.

James Kavanaugh

Although statistical evidence is limited, there is a general consensus among those knowledgeable in church affairs that dissent exists within the Catholic Church. In a recent study of one segment of the Catholic population, Fichter¹ demonstrated that diverse opinions toward certain church issues, such as celibacy and the priest-bishop relationship, existed among the 3,048 associate pastors sampled in the United States.

Unlike Fichter's study, the problem of this research is not only to describe diversity of opinion among priests toward three selected issues--the priest-bishop relationship, celibacy, and birth control--but also, to account for the existing diversity by variables descriptive of the priest himself and his parish setting.

Theoretical Orientation

From a sociological perspective, the church is both a multi-structured and multi-goaled organization. Structurally, it is possible

¹Joseph H. Fichter, America's Forgotten Priests (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968).

to view the church as a worldwide, monolithic bureaucracy under the control of a single individual, or as a federation of dioceses, or as a group of clergy and laity centered in a local parish. Its goals are both spiritually oriented and extremely secular, even businesslike, in nature. To understand this truly "complex" organization and to provide insight into the problem of this research, the social science literature on complex organizations becomes useful.

Whereas the church is a complex organization, it can be argued that a consensus of orientation should exist among members of this organization. Merton has observed that a ". . . high degree of reliability, an unusual degree of conformity with prescribed patterns of action. . ." ² is expected among members of a bureaucratic organization. Other bureaucratic features are implied by Etzioni, ³ who has suggested that an association exists between the power system of an organization and the orientation of the members to the organization. Three specific types of power are specified: coercive power resting on physical sanctions; remunerative power based on the control over material resources; normative power stemming from the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards and deprivation. ⁴ Likewise, Etzioni identifies three types of membership orientation: alienative, which

²Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 198.

³Amitai Etzioni, A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations (New York: The Free Press, 1961).

⁴Ibid., pp. 5-6.

is highly negative; calculative, which is either low negative or low positive; and moral, that is a high positive orientation.⁵ To provide the greatest degree of organizational efficiency, Etzioni proposes that for each type of power structure there is a concomitant membership orientation. Membership orientation differs depending on the power system, but one specific orientation will be dominant among the members of the organization.

According to Etzioni's scheme, all religious organizations are classified as normative power systems with its concomitant moral, or high positive membership orientation.⁶ For the problem under investigation here, this suggests that not only should priests have a consensus of orientation but that the orientation should be highly favorable. Theoretically, then, the priests should be largely in agreement with the directives, sanctions, and rules of the church.

While both Merton and Etzioni suggest that there should be consensus among organizational members, other literature suggests the existence of tensions, conflicts, and dilemmas within organizations, which necessarily affect the orientations of members in the organization. In this respect, Sjoberg's⁷ observations of bureaucratic organizations in Sweden and the United States seem cogent. Sjoberg proposes that bureaucratic systems can no longer be viewed as

⁵Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁶Ibid., p. 66.

⁷Gideon Sjoberg, M. Donald Hancock, and Orion White Jr., Politics in the Post-Welfare State: A Comparison of the United States and Sweden (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1967).

tension-free systems because of the existing contradictions ". . . between the goals or objectives of the bureaucracy and what it is actually able to accomplish."⁸ Therefore, it would seem plausible that the Catholic Church, as a bureaucratic system, is not immune to these contradictions and tensions. Reports of existing intra-church tensions would seem to be consistent with Sjoberg's observation.⁹

Additional comments by Sjoberg concerning other features of client-centered bureaucracies seem to be of particular relevance for the present problem. He contends that all client-centered bureaucracies have as their primary goal service to the clientele. But in such a bureaucracy it is the lower-level official who not only has principal contact with the client but also is confronted with the greatest restraints and responsibilities.¹⁰ This official is faced with a basic powerlessness stemming from his position in the organization. Whereas he is charged with the organizational goal of serving the client, the lower-level official is, at the same time, subject to the greatest bureaucratic restraints which limit what he can actually do for his client. Sjoberg contends that a basic dilemma confronts this official, since if he treats the client as an individual, he may be jeopardizing his position in the bureaucracy because he is the one blamed when

⁸Ibid., p. 17.

⁹For example, see Fichter, loc. cit.; James Kavanaugh, A Modern Priest Looks at His Outdated Church (New York: Pocket Books, 1968); David P. O'Neill, The Priest in Crisis (Dayton: Pflaum Press, 1968).

¹⁰Sjoberg, op. cit., p. 18.

problems arise. Sjoberg proposes that to alleviate this dilemma, the lower-level official passes his responsibility on to the client.¹¹ In effect, the official views his client in terms of organizational criteria. "Thus the poor are held responsible for being poor and deficient in knowledge. . . ."¹²

The above preempts Sjoberg's argument that the assumption of bureaucratic rationality must be reexamined. Sjoberg proposes that ". . . where hierarchy prevails, the leaders tend to impose what is thought to be rational upon those below without fully considering the experiences or world views of the persons who will actually put their policies into practice."¹³ In essence, Sjoberg argues that the rules which the lower-level officials must obey and implement may not be meaningful for them in light of their experiences. If this is the case, the confusion accompanying the position of the lower-level official may be evidenced by a dissension of orientations to the organization and its policies.

In viewing the Catholic Church as a client-centered bureaucracy, a similar situation should exist among its lower-level officials, notably the parish priest. He has the primary responsibility of dealing with the laity or clients of the church. There is reason to believe that Sjoberg's observations are applicable for the priest's situation. That

¹¹Ibid., p. 18.

¹²Ibid., p. 18.

¹³Ibid., p. 19.

is, the priest is faced with the same dilemma as described by Sjöberg, because of the hierarchical structure, that the lower-level officials in various client-centered bureaucracies face. The priest must obey and implement the rules of the church. These rules, because of their hierarchical origins, do not necessarily take into account the experience or situation of either the priest or his clients. In effect, the organizational dilemma, as presented by Sjöberg, may influence the orientation of the priest toward the church and in part contribute to a diversity of opinion among priests to the rules of that body.

There is, however, a factor descriptive of parish priests which may differentiate the church from other client-centered bureaucracies and, more importantly, serve as a potentially useful variable in accounting for differences in priests' orientations. This factor is status. On the local parish level, it is possible to distinguish a hierarchy of priests: associate pastor, pastor, and pastor with the honorific title of monsignor. In reference to Sjöberg's rationality argument, both the pastor and monsignor, by virtue of their rank, enjoy a more favorable position in the hierarchy than the associate and, possibly, identify more with the hierarchy than with their laity. This would then place greatest responsibility on the associate pastor who has the most contact with the laity but the least amount of power to influence the church directives he must obey and enforce. Thus, the associate pastors, because of the weaker position in the bureaucratic structure yet greater responsibility as the main implementors of the church's rules to the laity, may exhibit a less favorable opinion of

the official policies of the church than either the pastors or monsignors.

Possibly complicating the priest's position is the fact that, beginning with Vatican II, the church has been thought to be constantly changing. Rules which at one time had to be obeyed are no longer in existence. The spirit of Vatican II was one of reexamination of the church and its laws. The issues about which priest's opinions are sought in this research were all examined at the time of the council. This atmosphere of "questioning" may easily have spread to all ranks of catholics, including priests. In line with Sjoberg's statements, justification of the church's laws by the priest to the laymen may be more difficult in this time of change.

Also, in this context of organizational change, Becker's observation that the social structure creates conditions for both change and stability in adult life appears particularly useful in providing a further explanation for the existence of dissent among priests. In organizations undergoing change, Becker maintains that ". . . the situations they provide for their participants shift and necessitate development of new patterns of belief and actions."¹⁴ He also proposes, however, that organizational members may exhibit a consistent line of activity regardless of change or varied situations. But, Becker contends, commitment to a consistent line of activity evolves later in life suggesting that there may be a relationship between a member's age or tenure and

¹⁴Howard S. Becker, "Personal Change in Adult Life," Sociometry, 27: March, 1964, p. 45.

his specific orientation to the organization. That is, older organizational members should exhibit a more consistent line of belief and action than younger members, regardless of change or varied situations.

For the present problem, Becker's views not only provide the expectation that both persistence and change will be found in the belief patterns of priests, but also identify a specific factor which may account for diversity of priest's opinion. This factor is age. In the case of the church, then, it is expected, following Becker's argument, that the older priests will be more committed to a consistent line of belief and, therefore, should exhibit a more favorable opinion to the official policy of the church on the specific issues under investigation.

The Issues

The opinion of priests toward three selected issues--birth control, celibacy, and the priest-bishop relationship--were investigated in this research. Several criteria were used for selecting these three issues. First, all of the issues selected are known to be subjects of directives of the church. As members of a normative organization, priests should exhibit a favorable consensus of opinion toward these issues if Etzioni's idealization is to prove valid. Second, the extensive discussion of these issues in church and secular circles may be placing some pressure on priests as low-level officials. Last, Fichter's survey of priests dealt with the priest-bishop relationship and celibacy issues thereby supplying both evidence of a diversity of opinion among priests and a source for questions employed in this study.

Regarding the birth control issue,¹⁵ the church has traditionally maintained a position that the use of all forms of artificial contraception is against natural law and, therefore, immoral and sinful. The position was somewhat complicated at the time of Vatican II by the development of a special birth control commission charged with examining the church's position. Ultimately, the commission favored a change in the traditional policy; but their suggestions were overridden when the current pope reaffirmed the church's traditional position on contraception.¹⁶ A report of a survey of priests has shown that half of the priests in the United States disagreed with the pope's birth control encyclical.¹⁷

The celibacy issue¹⁸ also received some discussion at the Vatican council, although reports gave the impression that the church delegates were reluctant to discuss the topic of a married clergy¹⁹ and left no doubt they preferred a continuation of the traditional celibate priesthood.²⁰

¹⁵For a complete discussion of this issue, see John T. Noonan, Jr., Contraception (New York: A Mentor-Omega Book, 1967).

¹⁶Pope Paul VI, "Humanae Vitae," as reported in Donald R. Cutler (ed.), The Religious Situation: 1969 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 670-693.

¹⁷As reported in James F. Drane, "World Response to Humanae Vitae," in Cutler, op. cit., p. 710.

¹⁸For a discussion of celibacy see E. Schillebeeckx, Celibacy (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968).

¹⁹Michael Novak, The Open Church (New York: MacMillan Company, 1964), p. 213.

²⁰Walter M. Abbot (ed.), "On the Church," Article 42, The Documents of Vatican II (New York: Build, America, and Association Presses, 1966), p. 681.

In Fichter's survey of associate pastors, more than 90 percent discussed the issue of married clergy with each other and more than 60 percent favored some degree of freedom of choice regarding marriage for diocesan priests.²¹

The last issue selected for investigation, the priest-bishop relationship, does not involve the popular emotionalism of the other two issues. However, it is central to Sjoberg's observation in that it provides an insight into the nature of the communication network in this type of organization. As with the other two issues, Fichter's findings indicate a diversity of opinion among priests on this issue. More than 50 percent of the priests expressed an unfavorable opinion toward the existing communication between priests and bishops.²²

In light of these selected issues and the previously discussed theoretical research, a number of implications for the present research become apparent. The arguments of Merton and Etzioni suggest that a consensus of opinion favorable to the issues should exist among priests. Yet, both Sjoberg and Becker argue that a dissension of opinion can be expected by virtue of the nature of the organization itself and changing situations within the organization. Derived from the latter argument are two factors, parish status and commitment, which could possibly affect the priest's opinion of the issue. That is, associate pastors should be less favorably oriented to the official position of the church on

²¹Fichter, op. cit., Chapter 8.

²²Ibid., Chapter 3.

celibacy, birth control, and the priest-bishop relationship than either the pastors or Monsignors. Further, it is possible to expect that the highly committed priests will express a more favorable opinion of the discussed issues than the less committed.

The priest's opinion of an issue, particularly that of birth control, may also be influenced by another factor, the socioeconomic status (SES) of the parish in which he is situated. Sjoberg observes that the bureaucracy does not, in its decisions, take into account the situation of the lower-level official and in turn his client. Specifically, in a parish of low SES, the birth control issue may possibly be of great importance to the parishioners. A priest in such a situation, in contrast to a priest in a middle- or upper-class church, may thus exhibit a negative opinion to the birth control issue because of his awareness of the effects of the church's position on his laity.

From a theoretical perspective, it is difficult to choose whether the priests will exhibit a consensus or dissension of opinion to the issues. It is doubtful, especially in view of Fichter's findings, that either complete consensus or complete dissension will actually be the case. Thus, the basic expectation of this research is that a diversity of opinion will be found among priests and that this diversity may be accounted for by the previously discussed factors of commitment, status, and parish SES.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF STUDY

For the purposes of this study, only diocesan priests below the rank of bishop were included in the population. Religious priests were excluded since their primary duties are in non-parish work, a context not likely to be as sensitive to some of the factors under investigation here. A nation-wide simple random sample of 500 diocesan priests was drawn from Kennedy's The Official Catholic Directory. This sample represented 1.4 percent of the total population of diocesan priests within the United States.

To tap the information needed for this study, a questionnaire was designed, subjected to a feasibility pre-test, and then mailed to the selected priests (see Appendix A for the final version of the questionnaire). Accompanying each questionnaire was a cover letter briefly explaining the purpose of the study and requesting the cooperation of the priest. Two follow-up questionnaires were sent to the nonrespondents, each again accompanied by an appropriate cover letter (see Appendix B for cover letters).

A total of 294 (58.8 percent of the original sample) respondents completed the questionnaire after the two follow-ups. It was impossible to determine whether the original and completed samples were like the population along various demographic characteristics since this information was not available in the source used for sampling. However, on the basis of census geographical divisions, it was possible

to calculate the expected sample frequencies by using population proportions.

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF THE SAMPLE OF PRIESTS (ORIGINAL AND COMPLETED) TO THE
POPULATION OF DIOCESAN PRIESTS BY CENSUS DIVISION (PERCENT)

Census Division	Population (Percent)	Original Sample* (Percent)	Completed Sample** (Percent)
Middle Atlantic	27.6	27.4	27.5
New England States	12.1	11.6	9.9
South Atlantic	4.9	4.4	4.1
East South Central	2.8	3.0	3.7
West South Central	5.4	5.6	5.8
East North Central	23.6	23.8	23.1
West North Central	12.7	11.4	14.6
Mountain States	3.1	2.6	2.7
Pacific States	7.7	10.2	8.5
Total (no. cases)	(36,338)	(500)	(294)

*Original sample versus population, $\chi^2 = 5.6$, $df = 8$, $p > .50$

**Completed sample versus population, $\chi^2 = 3.9$, $df = 8$, $p > .90$

As shown in Table I, both the original sample and the completed sample were like the population as measured by the chi-squared goodness to fit test. The maximum difference is 3.2 percentage points for the West North Central Division.

Composition of the Questionnaire and Characteristics of the Sample

The questionnaire is divided into three major sections. Included in the first two sections are those questions which sought to measure the major independent variables of this study. The status variable, although easily represented in question form,²³ proved somewhat problematic in that 18.7 percent of the respondents reported having a non-parish status. These respondents are all included in a "non-parish" category and will be referred to as such in the rest of this research. Originally, it was not intended to include priests with non-parish assignments. However, due to the composition of the source used for sampling, it was impossible to discriminate among the diocesan priests.

An attempt was made by the investigator to derive objective indicators of Becker's concept of commitment by the inclusion of a wide variety of questions thought to be reflective of commitment.²⁴ Theoretically, the respondent's age was the most identifiable indicator of commitment. However, two other questions--time at which the respondent, if given another chance, would become a priest (referred to in the

²³See Appendix A, Part I, Question 1.

²⁴See Appendix A, Part I, Questions 2-7; Educational Information; Part II, Question 6.

remainder of the text as career commitment satisfaction); and the priest's involvement in interesting boys in a religious vocation (referred to as recruiting commitment)--were found to be related (though weakly) to age and also interrelated to one another. Table II represents the interrelationships among these indicators of commitment as measured by the contingency coefficient (C).

TABLE II
INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF COMMITMENT INDICATORS*

	Career Commitment Satisfaction	Recruiting Commitment
Present Age	.38	.16
Career Commitment Satisfaction	---	.59

*Data reported is the χ^2 based C coefficient.

It was assumed that priests who did not recruit (response of "not at all") would be less committed than priests who did recruit (response of "yes, frequently" or "yes, occasionally"). In Chapter I, it was theoretically argued that younger priests would be less committed than older priests. As indicated in Table II, there is a slight relationship ($C = .16$) between age and recruiting commitment in that younger priests were more likely than older priests to respond that they do not recruit. Likewise, for the career commitment satisfaction indicator,

a "not at all" response was assumed to be indicative of low commitment. As shown in Table II, there is a modest degree of association ($C = .38$) between age and career commitment satisfaction, since younger priests rather than older priests were more likely to respond that perhaps they would not become a priest again.

Even though recruiting commitment and career commitment satisfaction can be empirically identified as indicators of commitment, their use in statistical analysis is limited due to their distribution.

TABLE III
INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RECRUITING COMMITMENT AND
CAREER COMMITMENT SATISFACTION (PERCENT)

Career Commitment Satisfaction	Recruiting Commitment			Total
	Yes, Frequently	Yes, Occasionally	Not at All	
Earlier age	6.5	12.3	0.0	9.0
Same age	89.6	75.4	36.1	74.2
Later age	1.3	6.5	13.9	6.0
Perhaps not at all	2.6	5.8	50.0	10.8
Total (no. cases)	(77)	(155)	(36)	(268)

$$\chi^2 = 81.30, df = 6, p < .001, C = .59$$

As can be observed in Table III, only 10.8 percent of the priests responded "perhaps not at all," while 36 priests (13.4 percent) indicated that they never recruit. According to Davis,²⁵ the minimum acceptable distribution with which meaningful statistical analysis can be conducted is a 30-70 percent dichotomized break. This distribution was obviously not obtained for either variable.

In recalling that organizational status and age have theoretically been identified as factors affecting the opinions of priests, it is necessary to examine the empirical relationship between the factors.

TABLE IV
INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESPONDENT'S AGE AND
ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS (PERCENT)

Organizational Status	Respondent's Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and Older	
Associate Pastor	50.7	10.3	30.5
Pastor/Monsignor	21.9	79.4	50.7
Non-Parish	27.4	10.3	18.8
Total (no. cases)	(146)	(146)	(292)

$$\chi^2 = 98.15, df = 2, p < .001, C = .71$$

²⁵James A. Davis, Elementary Survey Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 25.

As can be seen in Table IV, there is a high degree of association ($C = .71$) between status and age. Slightly more than 50 percent of priests under 46 years of age are associate pastors, while close to 80 percent of the respondents over 46 are pastor/monsignors. This suggests that in the examination and interpretation of any relationship found to exist between a particular issue and these two variables, careful consideration must be given to the high degree of interrelationship between age and status.

The final major independent variable, parish SES, was sought by using not only the priest's evaluation of the overall status of his parish, but also by the development of objective SES indicators.²⁶ On the assumption that higher-class parishes will have a greater budget than lower-class parishes, two indicators of SES were derived. First, budget per family was derived by dividing the parish budget by the number of families in the parish. The second indicator, budget per person, was derived by dividing the parish budget by the number of parishioners in the parish. The use of these two indicators, along with the priest's subjective evaluation, represent alternative measures of parish SES. In Table V the degree of association (C) between the various measures of parish SES is presented. As can be seen, only a moderate degree of association exists between the subjective and objective indicators of parish SES (C s = approximately .3). However, between the objective indicators (budget per family and budget per

²⁶See Appendix A, Questions 1-5.

person) a high degree of association is present ($C = .78$). This indicates that parishes found to have a low budget per family are also likely to have a low budget per person.

TABLE V
INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEASURES OF
PARISH SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS*

	Budget Per Family	Budget Per Person
Priest's Subjective Evaluation	.34	.32
Budget Per Family	---	.78

*Data reported is the χ^2 based C coefficient.

The last section of the questionnaire contained the various questions referring to the major issues under examination. The questions for both the celibacy and the priest-bishop relationship issues were originally used in Fichter's study.²⁷ The response alternatives of his questions were altered in some cases to achieve uniformity and thereby increase the ease of response for the priests and aid in the analysis. An original set of questions was developed for the birth control issue. Generally, the questions sought the personal opinions of the priest on

²⁷See Fichter, op. cit., Appendix A.

the various dimensions of the issues. Also, an attempt was made to obtain the priest's opinion of the views held by his fellow priests and his parishioners on the issues of celibacy and birth control (see Appendix A for final version of questionnaire).

Although a number of dimensions were included for each issue, the interrelationships between dimensions as measured by C were highly satisfactory. For the priest-bishop relationship, the C coefficients ranged from .35 to .86. Majority of the interrelationships for the celibacy dimensions of the birth control issue ranged from .33 to .85. In other words, a consistent pattern was found to exist within the responses given by an individual priest. For example, a priest who was opposed to a change in the traditional birth control policy of the church was also likely to envision his fellow priests and parishioners as opposed to the issue. Similarly, a priest personally in favor of change in the birth control issue saw his colleagues and parishioners as favoring change also.

Summary

A nation-wide probability sample of 500 diocesan priests was mailed questionnaires to obtain the necessary information for this study. Two follow-up letters were sent to the nonrespondents and a final completion rate of 58.8 percent was obtained. The samples, original and completed, were found to be like the population on the basis of census divisions. The questionnaire was composed of questions gleaned from a previous study and others which were developed specifically for this research.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The central problem under consideration in this research is to systematically account for variation in priests' opinions on the three issues of birth control, celibacy, and the priest-bishop relationship by reference to their personal commitment and organizational position within the church. In recalling the major research questions, it was suggested that associate pastors, because of their weaker position in the hierarchy and greater responsibility, would be less likely than the pastors/monsignors to express favorable opinions to the issues. Further, it was proposed that the highly committed priests, because of their development of consistent patterns of belief and action, would express more favorable opinions to the issues than the less committed. Finally, priests from lower SES parishes, because of their awareness of the effect the church's birth control policy has on their parishioners, would be more likely than priests from higher SES parishes to express unfavorable opinions to the birth control issue. In this chapter, findings bearing on these matters are presented.

The Birth Control Issue

The first question examined here concerns the effect parish SES may have on priests' opinions on birth control. It was proposed that priests from lower SES parishes would be more likely than priests from higher SES parishes to express unfavorable opinions of the official

church position on the issue. Parish SES, as previously mentioned, was measured by the respondent's subjective evaluation of the character of his parish and the development of two objective indicators, budget per family and budget per person. For the objective indicators, the sample was divided into four SES categories. The respondents' personal opinions on the birth control issue were then distributed by SES. In Table VI, the relationship between budget per family and the respondents' opinions as to whether the church should liberalize its birth control policy is examined.

TABLE VI
BUDGET PER FAMILY AND RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON LIBERALIZATION
OF BIRTH CONTROL POLICY (PERCENT)

Liberalize Birth Control Policy	Budget Per Family				Total
	Less than \$100	\$100-\$149	\$150-\$244	\$255 and more	
Yes, without reservation	27.0	23.4	37.8	25.6	27.3
Yes, with reservation	40.6	44.1	40.6	41.8	42.3
No, with reservation	5.4	16.9	5.4	7.0	10.3
No, without reservation	27.0	15.6	16.2	25.6	20.1
Total (no. cases)	(37)	(77)	(37)	(43)	(194)

$\chi^2 = 10.11, df = 9, p < .50, C = .26$

As shown by the contingency coefficient, the degree of association between the two variables is slight ($C = .26$). Inspection of the percentages reveals that there is little difference in the opinions of priests by parish status level. Even the differences that exist do not meet the criteria of statistical significance ($p < .50$) and could have just as easily occurred by chance alone and not as a result of the influence of parish SES. Clearly then, parish SES, as measured by budget per family, does not affect the opinions of priests of the birth control issue. Similarly, no relationship was found between the other objective measure of parish SES, budget per person, and the priests' opinions of birth control ($C = .23, p < .70$). Also for the subjective measure, no relationship was found ($C = .12, p < .95$). Statistically, then, priests from lower SES parishes are no more likely than priests from higher SES to be in favor of the church liberalizing its present birth control policy. As a result, parish SES cannot be considered a factor accounting for differences in the opinions of priests on the birth control issue.

From the outset (see Chapter I) this study proposed that priests' opinions would likely be influenced by their status within the parish structure of the church. Of the three identifiable statuses--associate pastor, pastor, and monsignor--it was argued that the associate pastors would be most opposed to the traditional policies of the church and hence be more likely than the pastor/monsieurs to express unfavorable opinions under investigation here. Data bearing on the relationship between organizational status and the priests' views on the birth control issue are presented in Table VII.

TABLE VII

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS ON
LIBERALIZATION OF BIRTH CONTROL POLICY (PERCENT)

Liberalize Birth Control Policy	Organizational Status			Total
	*Associate Pastor	*Pastor/Monsignor	Non-Parish	
Yes, without reservation	32.6	20.1	23.5	24.6
Yes, with reservation	44.1	42.4	41.2	42.7
No, with reservation	11.7	10.4	11.8	11.0
No, without reservation	11.6	27.1	23.5	21.7
Total (no. cases)	(86)	(144)	(51)	(281)

$$\chi^2 = 9.61, df = 6, p < .20, C = .22$$

$$*\chi^2 = 9.49, df = 3, p < .05, C = .20$$

As mentioned in Chapter II, approximately 18 percent of the respondents reported having a non-parish assignment. Since, however, the original research question dealt specifically with priests in the parish situation, the non-parish priests will be excluded in the discussion to follow. Therefore, of primary interest in Table VII are those headings and findings indicated by an asterisk. As can be observed, the associates (32.6 percent) are more likely than the pastor/monsignors (20.1 percent) to have no reservations about liberalizing the church's traditional birth control policy. Also, the pastor/monsignors at 27.1 percent are more likely than

the associates at 11.6 percent to express the greatest opposition to any liberalization occurring. Although the degree of association is weak ($C = .20$), it is statistically significant ($p < .05$) and in the expected direction. Organizational status then, as originally proposed, is definitely a factor influencing the opinions of priests to the birth control issue.

Following Becker's observations, commitment was also conceived to be a factor of importance in accounting for the opinions of priests. As was argued, the highly committed priests would be more likely than the less committed to express favorable opinions of the stated position of the church on the issues discussed here. From Chapter II it can be recalled that an attempt was made to objectively measure commitment by the incorporation into the questionnaire of numerous factors inferred to be indicators of commitment. Ultimately, three factors--career commitment satisfaction, recruiting commitment, and respondent's age--were found to be interrelated and also related to the issues. However, both career commitment satisfaction and recruiting commitment were poorly distributed and therefore of little statistical use (see Table III). Of the four possible categories of career commitment satisfaction, approximately 74 percent of the respondents placed themselves in one category (same age). For the recruiting commitment indicator, over 85 percent of the respondents said that they, to some degree, actively attempt to recruit boys to the priesthood. Age did not prove problematic in its distribution since it was possible to dichotomize on the median age of the respondents (under 46 and 46 and older). As a result, extensive discussion of

commitment as it affects the opinions of priests will focus on the age indicator. The relationship between commitment (age) and the priests' opinions on the birth control issue is examined in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS ON LIBERALIZATION OF BIRTH CONTROL POLICY (PERCENT)

Liberalize Birth Control Policy	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Yes, without reservation	37.1	12.2	24.7
Yes, with reservation	42.9	42.5	42.7
No, with reservation	6.4	15.8	11.1
No, without reservation	13.6	29.5	21.5
Total (no. cases)	(140)	(139)	(279)

$\chi^2 = 31.28, df = 3, p < .001, C = .45$

As proposed, commitment does affect the opinions of priests. Whereas 37.1 percent of the younger priests are unequivocally in favor of liberalizing the present birth control policy of the church, only 12.2 percent of the older priests responded in a like manner. In fact, with the exception of a single response category (yes, with reservation), there are substantial percentage differences by age. Statistically, the

relationship is moderately strong ($C = .45$), in the expected direction, and significant ($p < .001$). Clearly, commitment is a factor influencing the priests' opinions on the birth control issue.

To this point, it has been established that both organizational status and commitment are related to the opinions of priests on the birth control issue. Of the two factors, commitment ($C = .45$) is more strongly related than status ($C = .20$). In Chapter II (Table IV), it was shown that a high interrelationship ($C = .71$) exists between status and age primarily because promotions and the priests' ages both increase with the passage of time. In order to clarify the empirical and theoretical import these variables have in influencing the priests' opinions on birth control, an empirical control was introduced. In this instance, the relationship between organizational status and the priests' opinions was reexamined by holding age constant. The aim of the analysis was to determine whether the relationship between status and priests' opinions is due to age. Table IX indicates the nature of the relationships following the introduction of the test factor.

As can be observed, regardless of status, younger priests at 39.8 percent are more likely than older priests at 12.1 percent to be unequivocally in favor of liberalizing the birth control policy. Noticeable differences by age can be seen within status categories. In the original relationship between status and opinion (see Table VII), approximately 20 percent of the pastor/monsignors were, without reservation, in favor of liberalization. By age, however, 45.2 percent of the pastor/monsignors under 46 as compared to only 13.4 percent of the older

TABLE IX

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND THE RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS ON LIBERALIZATION
OF BIRTH CONTROL POLICY BY RESPONDENTS' AGES (PERCENT)

Liberalize Birth Control	A G E					
	Under 46			46 and Older		
	Status			Status		
	Associates	Pastor/Monsignors	Total	Associates	Pastor/Monsignors	Total
Yes, without reservation	37.5	45.2	39.8	[7.7]	13.4	12.1
Yes, with reservation	44.4	38.7	42.7	[38.5]	43.8	43.2
No, with reservation	8.3	0.0	5.9	[30.7]	13.4	15.9
No, without reservation	9.7	16.1	11.6	[23.1]	29.5	28.8
Total (no. cases)	(72)	(31)	(103)	(13)	(112)	(125)
	$\chi^2 = 3.84, df = 3, p < .30, C = .19$			$\chi^2 = 2.84, df = 3, p < .50, C = .15$		

Note: Percentages in brackets based on N smaller than 25.

pastor/monsignors expressed this opinion. The same trend is evident among the associates after the introduction of the control on age. Although 32.6 percent of the total sample of associate pastors were unequivocally in favor of a change in policy, only 7.7 percent of the older associates as compared to 37.5 percent of the younger associates favor change. Further, it can also be observed that the older priests are more likely than the younger priests to be totally opposed to any changes taking place. This relationship is also maintained regardless of status.

Yet the factor of status, although lessened in importance, cannot be discounted. The associate pastors had previously been identified as more in favor of change than the pastor/monsignors (see Table VII). Among the younger priests, however, the pastor/monsignors at 45.2 percent are more in favor of change, without reservation, than the associates at 37.5 percent. For the older priests, it is also the pastor/monsignors (13.4 percent) rather than the associates (7.7 percent) who express this opinion. When controlled on age, the original relationship between status and the priests' opinions is reversed among those priests favoring liberalization. Yet, the percentage differences are slight, especially when compared to those based on age. Whereas the greatest difference between statuses is approximately 8 percentage points (younger priests), there is almost 27 percentage points difference by age among those priests who unequivocally favor change. Therefore, of the two variables, there is a greater statistical likelihood that commitment (age) rather than status is the more important variable influencing the opinions of priests on the birth control issue.

Since this study is also concerned with probing the dimensions of the birth control issue, a variety of questions were asked of the respondents. In Table X, data is presented on the relationship between age (commitment) and whether the priest would advise his parishioners to let their consciences guide them in deciding to use birth control techniques.

TABLE X
PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS ON ADVISING
PARISHIONERS TO USE CONSCIENCE (PERCENT)

Advise Parishioners to Use Conscience	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Yes, without reservation	29.5	12.2	20.9
Yes, with reservation	56.1	40.3	48.2
No, with reservation	8.6	19.4	14.0
No, without reservation	5.8	28.1	16.9
Total (no. cases)	(139)	(139)	(278)

$$\chi^2 = 39.76, df = 3, p < .001, C = .50$$

As shown by the C coefficient, there is a moderately strong degree of association between the variables ($C = .50$). Inspection of the percentages reveals that approximately 86 percent of the younger priests

as compared to about 52 percent of the older priests would advise their parishioners. This relationship is statistically significant ($p < .001$).

In further exploring the issue, the respondents were asked whether they had discussed the issue with their fellow priests and parishioners. When distributed by age, it can be observed in Table XI that overwhelming majority of respondents (95.9 percent) had discussed the issue with their fellow priests.

TABLE XI
PRESENT AGE AND DISCUSSED BIRTH CONTROL WITH FELLOW
PRIESTS AND PARISHIONERS (PERCENT)

Discussed Birth Control	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
<u>With Fellow Priests</u>			
Yes	95.2	96.6	95.9
No	4.8	3.4	4.1
Total (no. cases)	(145)	(146)	(291)
$\chi^2 = .36, df = 1, p < .70, C = .05$			
<u>With Parishioners</u>			
Yes	96.2	76.1	85.8
No	3.8	23.9	14.2
Total (no. cases)	(130)	(138)	(268)
$\chi^2 = 22.15, df = 1, p < .001, C = .39$			

As for discussing the birth control issue with their parishioners, the commitment of priests does make a statistically significant difference ($p < .001$). Whereas 96.2 percent of the younger priests have discussed the issue with their parishioners, only 76.1 percent of the older priests have likewise done so. In view of the fact that the issue directly affects parishioners more than it does priests, it is somewhat surprising that the older priests are more willing to discuss birth control with the colleagues than with parishioners.

Respondents were also queried as to how they viewed the opinions of their fellow priests and parishioners on the birth control issue. That is, they were asked approximately what percent of their fellow priests and parishioners are in favor of the church liberalizing its birth control policy. As can be seen in Table XII, when distributed by age, there are statistically significant differences ($p < .001$ for both relationships) in how the respondents viewed the position of their fellow priests and parishioners on the issue.

When the response alternatives are collapsed (less than 51 percent and more than 51 percent), it is the younger priests rather than the older priests who not only feel that more than 50 percent of their colleagues favor liberalization (50.4 percent of the younger versus 19.7 of the older priests) but also see majority of their parishioners (approximately 70 percent of the younger compared to about 35 percent of the older priests) as likewise favoring change. It appears, from these findings, that the respondents tended to impart their own views of the issue to others. Younger priests who personally were in favor of change also saw their

TABLE XII

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' VIEWS OF FELLOW PRIESTS' AND PARISHIONERS' OPINIONS ON LIBERALIZATION OF BIRTH CONTROL (PERCENT)

Respondents' Views	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
<u>Percentage of Fellow Priests Favoring Liberalization</u>			
0 percent	1.5	7.6	4.5
1-25 percent	16.3	40.9	28.5
26-50 percent	31.8	31.8	31.8
51-75 percent	33.4	12.9	23.2
76-100 percent	17.0	6.8	12.0
Total (no. cases)	(135)	(132)	(267)
$\chi^2 = 37.56, df = 4, p < .001, C = .50$			
<u>Percentage of Parishioners Favoring Liberalization</u>			
0 percent	0.8	5.3	3.1
1-25 percent	9.7	28.3	19.2
26-50 percent	20.1	32.0	26.3
51-75 percent	39.5	21.4	30.2
76-100 percent	29.9	13.0	21.2
Total (no. cases)	(124)	(131)	(255)
$\chi^2 = 34.54, df = 4, p < .001, C = .49$			

parishioners and colleagues favoring change. Older priests who personally opposed change saw a majority of their parishioners and colleagues as also opposed to liberalization.

The relationships between organizational status and the previously discussed dimensions of the birth control issue followed a similar pattern. The responses of the associate pastors were in the same direction as those of the younger priests while the responses of the pastor/monsignors corresponded to those of the older respondents. However, the relationships between status and these dimensions were considerably weaker (as measured by C) and seldom attained significance levels as high as those previously reported by age.

In summary, both commitment (age) and organizational status were found to be statistically related to the birth control issue in the expected direction. Younger priests were more likely than their older colleagues to be in favor of liberalizing the birth control policy. Also the associates were more likely than the pastor/monsignors to favor change. When a control was introduced (age), the impact of status on the priests' opinions was lessened but did not completely disappear. Yet of the two variables, commitment appears to be empirically and theoretically more important in affecting the opinions of priests on the birth control issue.

Although parish SES was also thought to be of possible importance in accounting for the priests' opinions, no statistically significant differences were found.

In further exploring the birth control issue, a variety of dimensions were distributed by commitment (age). It was found that for a

majority of dimensions commitment did make a difference in how the priests' responded. The younger priests were more willing than older priests to advise their parishioners to use their conscience in deciding whether to use birth control techniques. Further, the younger priests were more willing than the older respondents to discuss the issue with their parishioners. Finally, while younger priests saw a majority of their fellow priests and parishioners as favoring birth control liberalization, the older priests saw most of their colleagues and parishioners as being opposed to change. There is an implication in these last findings that the respondents tend to see their parishioners and fellow priests supporting their personal position on the issue.

Relationships were also found between status and the various dimensions of the birth control issue but these tended to be less significant statistically than those found by age (commitment).

The Celibacy Issue

Since organizational status was theoretically identified as a factor influencing the opinions of priests, it was proposed that, for the celibacy issue, the associate pastors would express greater opposition to the traditional position of the church than the pastor/monsignors. In Table XIII the relationship between organizational status and the respondents' personal opinions as to whether priests should have the freedom of choice to marry is examined.

As can be seen, the associates at 46.5 percent are more likely than the pastor/monsignors at 26.9 percent to be unreservedly in favor of

TABLE XIII

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND THE RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS CONCERNING
PRIESTS' FREEDOM OF CHOICE TO MARRY (PERCENT)

Priests' Freedom of Choice to Marry	Organizational Status			Total
	*Associate Pastor	*Pastor/Monsignor	Non-Parish	
Yes, without reservation	46.5	26.9	36.0	34.5
Yes, with reservation	29.1	25.5	30.0	27.4
No, with reservation	12.8	10.3	12.0	11.4
No, without reservation	11.6	37.3	22.0	26.7
Total (no. cases)	(86)	(145)	(50)	(281)

$$\chi^2 = 20.53, df = 6, p < .01, C = .32$$

$$*\chi^2 = 19.35, df = 3, p < .001, C = .28$$

letting priests have the freedom of choice to marry. Further, approximately 37 percent of the pastor/monsignors compared to only about 12 percent of the associates expressed complete opposition to changing the celibacy rule. The relationship is statistically significant ($p < .001$) although the degree of relationship is quite modest ($C = .28$). Clearly, there is a relationship, as predicted, between organizational status and the priests' opinions concerning the celibacy issue. As suggested, status is an identifiable factor affecting the opinions of priests.

Commitment was also suggested as a factor which could be influencing the priests' opinions on the celibacy issue. As proposed, the highly committed priests would be more likely than the less-committed priests to stand opposed to any change in the traditional celibacy rule. In order to test the question, the possible responses to the celibacy dimension were distributed by age (commitment) as indicated in Table XIV.

TABLE XIV
PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS CONCERNING PRIESTS'
FREEDOM OF CHOICE TO MARRY (PERCENT)

Priests' Freedom of Choice to Marry	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Yes, without reservation	48.6	20.6	34.4
Yes, with reservation	29.7	25.5	27.6
No, with reservation	10.8	11.3	11.1
No, without reservation	10.9	42.6	26.9
Total (no. cases)	(138)	(141)	(279)

$$\chi^2 = 42.37, df = 3, p < .001, C = .51$$

As shown by the contingency coefficient (C), there is a moderately strong association between the two variables (C = .51). As measured by chi-squared, this relationship is also statistically significant (p < .001). Whereas almost 49 percent of the younger priests (low

commitment) are, without reservation, in favor of priests being given the freedom of choice to marry, less than one-half the number (20.6 percent) of older priests (high commitment) responded in a similar fashion. Further the older priests (42.6 percent) are clearly more opposed than the younger priests (10.9 percent) to the establishment of this policy. Commitment is definitely related to the opinions of priests on the celibacy issue and must be considered of importance in affecting the priests' opinions.

As was done for the birth control issue, a control (age) was introduced in order to better understand the theoretical and empirical relationships among organizational status, commitment, and the priests' opinions to the celibacy issue. Table XV contains the results of the control.

When age is held constant, there is still a relationship between status and the priests' opinions. Among the younger respondents, the associates at 53.5 percent are still more likely than the pastor/monsignors at 43.2 percent to favor priests having the freedom of choice to marry. The trend is reversed for the older priests in that the pastor/monsignors (22.8 percent) rather than the associates (7.1 percent) are more likely to favor this type of policy. But further inspection of the percentages reveals that the differences by status are relatively small when compared to the difference by age. Whereas the greatest percentage difference by status is approximately 15 percent (older respondents), the percentage difference by age for the same response category (yes, without reservation) is greater than 30 percent. The impact of age is also evident within statuses. Although 26.9 percent of the total

TABLE XV

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' PERSONAL OPINIONS CONCERNING PRIESTS HAVING
THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE TO MARRY BY RESPONDENTS' AGE (PERCENT)

Priests' Freedom of Choice to Marry	A G E					
	Under 46			46 and Older		
	Status		Total	Status		Total
Associates	Pastor/Monsignors	Associates		Pastor/Monsignors		
Yes, without reservation	53.5	43.2	50.5	[7.1]	22.8	21.1
Yes, with reservation	29.6	30.0	29.7	[28.6]	24.6	25.0
No, with reservation	9.8	10.0	9.9	[28.6]	9.6	11.7
No, without reservation	7.1	16.7	9.9	[35.7]	43.0	42.2
Total (no. cases)	(71)	(30)	(101)	(14)	(114)	(128)
	$\chi^2 = 2.36, df = 3, p < .70, C = .15$			$\chi^2 = 5.76, df = 3, p < .10, C = .21$		

Note: Percentages in brackets based on N smaller than 25.

sample of pastor/monsignors (see Table XIII) expressed, unequivocally, the opinion that priests should have the freedom of choice to marry, it is clear that the younger pastor/monsignors at 43.2 percent are more likely than the older pastor/monsignors at 22.8 percent to have responded in this fashion. The same trend exists among the associate pastors. As a result of the control, the statistical importance of status as it affects the opinions of priests has decreased while support has been garnished for the increased empirical importance of commitment (age) as a major factor influencing priests' opinions on the celibacy issue.

Because of this established importance of commitment, extensive discussion of the remaining question on celibacy asked of the respondents will focus on their relationships to the age indicator of commitment. From Table XVI, it is evident that a majority of priests (53.7 percent) are willing to let married ex-priests return to the sacraments.

Indeed, very few of the older priests (9.2 percent) were completely opposed to this. Yet commitment does make a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in affecting the priests' opinions. Younger priests at 61.0 percent are more likely than older priests at 46.5 percent to be unequivocally in favor of this policy.

Although the respondents are willing to let their married ex-colleagues return to the sacraments, they are more reluctant to see them return as married priests. As seen in Table XVII, even 30.7 percent of the younger priests expressed some opposition to letting married ex-priests return to the priesthood and remain married.

TABLE XVI
PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON LETTING MARRIED EX-PRIESTS
RETURN TO THE SACRAMENTS (PERCENT)

Married Priests Return to Sacraments	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Yes, without reservation	61.0	46.5	53.7
Yes, with reservation	34.0	40.1	37.1
No, with reservation	2.2	4.2	3.2
No, without reservation	2.8	9.2	6.0
Total (no. cases)	(141)	(142)	(283)

$$\chi^2 = 9.16, df = 3, p < .05, C = .25$$

Yet there is a moderately strong ($C = .47$) and statistically significant ($p < .001$) association between commitment (age) and this dimension. Almost half of the older respondents (48.2 percent) as compared to 19.0 percent of the younger priests are unequivocally opposed to letting married ex-priests return to the active priesthood.

Respondents were also asked whether they thought married priests would be as competent as celibate priests. When distributed by age, as shown in Table XVIII, there are statistically significant differences in the responses of the priests ($p < .001$). Whereas almost 80 percent of the younger priests responded in the affirmative, only about 46 percent of the older priests expressed a similar opinion.

TABLE XVII

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON LETTING MARRIED
EX-PRIESTS RETURN AS MARRIED PRIESTS (PERCENT)

Married Return as Married Priests	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Yes, without reservation	30.7	12.2	21.4
Yes, with reservation	38.6	24.5	31.5
No, with reservation	11.7	15.1	13.4
No, without reservation	19.0	48.2	33.7
Total (no. cases)	(137)	(139)	(276)

$$\chi^2 = 33.48, df = 3, p < .001, C = .47$$

TABLE XVIII

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS AS TO WHETHER MARRIED PRIESTS
WOULD BE AS COMPETENT AS CELIBATE PRIESTS (PERCENT)

Married Priests as Competent as Celibates	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Yes, without reservation	37.6	14.8	26.4
Yes, with reservation	40.4	31.9	36.3
No, with reservation	12.8	21.4	17.0
No, without reservation	9.2	31.9	20.3
Total (no. cases)	(141)	(135)	(276)

$$\chi^2 = 35.41, df = 3, p < .001, C = .48$$

As for the birth control issue, respondents were questioned as to whether they had discussed the celibacy issue with their fellow priests and parishioners. As seen in Table XIX, a majority of priests (95.8 percent) have discussed the issue with their colleagues. There is virtually no difference by age.

TABLE XIX
 PRESENT AGE AND DISCUSSED CELIBACY ISSUE WITH
 FELLOW PRIESTS AND PARISHIONERS (PERCENT)

Discussed Celibacy	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
<u>With Fellow Priests</u>			
Yes	95.8	95.9	95.8
No	4.2	4.1	4.2
Total (no. cases)	(144)	(145)	(289)

$$\chi^2 = .00, df = 1, p < .98, C = .00$$

With Parishioners

Yes	83.1	59.9	71.2
No	16.9	40.1	28.8
Total (no. cases)	(130)	(137)	(267)

$$\chi^2 = 17.53, df = 1, p < .001, C = .35$$

As for discussion with parishioners, there is a statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) due to the commitment (age) of the priests. Whereas 83.1 percent of the younger priests have discussed the issue, only 59.9 percent of the older priests did similarly. Yet even the younger priests showed a greater reluctance to discuss the issue with their parishioners than with colleagues.

In reference to their fellow priests and parishioners, respondents were also asked what percentage of these groups they saw as in favor of offering the priest the freedom of choice to marry. This data, as distributed by age (commitment) is presented in Table XX.

When the response categories are collapsed (less than 51 percent and 51 percent or more), it can be observed that the younger priests at 36.6 percent are more likely than the older priests at 11.8 percent to see a majority (51 percent or more) of their colleagues as being in favor of offering the priest the freedom of choice to marry. The younger priests (24.6 percent) were also more likely than the older priests (11.3 percent) to see a majority of their parishioners in favor of this policy. Overall, however, a majority of respondents, regardless of age, felt that less than 50 percent of their fellow priests and parishioners would be willing to let priests marry. Even among the younger priests, who personally are in favor of having the freedom of choice, this view was dominant.

Where the referent is parishioner acceptance of married associate pastors and married pastors, the same trend, as displayed in Table XXI, is evident.

TABLE XX

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' VIEWS OF FELLOW PRIESTS' AND PARISHIONERS' OPINIONS TO LIBERALIZATION OF CELIBACY (PERCENT)

Respondents' Views	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
<u>Percentage of Fellow Priests Favoring Liberalization</u>			
0 percent	0.0	5.1	2.6
1-25 percent	23.9	50.8	37.4
26-50 percent	39.5	32.3	35.9
51-75 percent	30.6	6.6	18.5
76-100 percent	6.0	5.2	5.6
Total (no. cases)	(134)	(136)	(270)
$\chi^2 = 41.92, df = 4, p < .001, C = .52$			
<u>Percentage of Parishioners Favoring Liberalization</u>			
0 percent	3.4	21.0	12.4
1-25 percent	47.4	54.8	51.2
26-50 percent	24.6	12.9	18.6
51-75 percent	16.9	4.0	10.3
76-100 percent	7.7	7.3	7.5
Total (no. cases)	(118)	(124)	(242)
$\chi^2 = 29.92, df = 4, p < .001, C = .47$			

TABLE XXI

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' VIEWS OF PARISHIONERS' ACCEPTANCE OF MARRIED ASSOCIATE PASTORS AND PASTORS (PERCENT)

Respondents' Views	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
<u>Percentage of Parishioners Accepting Married Associates</u>			
0 percent	7.2	32.0	19.4
1-25 percent	41.6	43.4	42.5
26-50 percent	23.2	14.8	19.1
51-75 percent	15.2	3.2	9.3
76-100 percent	12.8	6.6	9.7
Total (no. cases)	(125)	(122)	(247)
$\chi^2 = 33.75, df = 4, p < .001, C = .49$			
<u>Percentage of Parishioners Accepting Married Pastors</u>			
0 percent	10.3	41.9	26.0
1-25 percent	41.3	38.7	40.0
26-50 percent	22.2	12.9	17.6
51-75 percent	14.3	2.4	8.4
76-100 percent	11.9	4.1	8.0
Total (no. cases)	(126)	(124)	(250)
$\chi^2 = 42.53, df = 4, p < .001, C = .54$			

Although younger priests (28.5 percent) are more likely than older priests (9.8 percent) to see 51 percent or more of their parishioners as accepting a married associate pastor, there is a general feeling among the respondents that less than 50 percent of their parishioners would do so (71.0 percent of the total sample). Further, over 50 percent of both the younger and older respondents saw less than 25 percent of their parishioners accepting a married pastor.

In view of the fact that the older respondents were personally opposed to priests having the freedom of choice to marry, it is not surprising to find that they tended to also see their colleagues and parishioners as opposed to a change in the celibacy rule. Yet the younger priests, who personally favored an end to mandatory celibacy, were reluctant to project this view onto their fellow priests and parishioners and, in fact, saw a majority opposition to a married priesthood.

Organizational status was also found to be related to the previously discussed dimensions of the celibacy issue. The responses of the pastor/monsignors followed a pattern similar to the older priests, while the associate pastors' responses were in the same direction as those in the younger respondents. The relationships between status and these dimensions were seldom as significant as those reported by commitment.

In summary, both status and commitment were initially shown to be related to the celibacy issue. However, the introduction of a control (age) indicated that status, as a factor influencing the opinions of priests, is relatively unimportant when compared to the affect commitment (age) has on the priests' opinions.

In probing other dimensions of the celibacy issue, commitment was found to make a difference in how the priests responded. Younger priests were more likely than older priests to favor letting married ex-priests return to the sacraments and return to the active priesthood. Also the younger priests were more likely than their older colleagues to feel that married priests would be just as competent as celibate priests. Perhaps the most surprising finding was that a majority of the younger priests, although personally in favor of a married priesthood, saw less than 50 percent of their fellow priests and parishioners as being willing to offer the priest the option to marry.

The Priest-Bishop Relationship Issue

It can be recalled from Chapter I that the organizational status of the priest was identified as a factor which may influence the opinions of priests to the priest-bishop relationship. It was suggested that the associate pastors would be less likely than the pastors and monsignors to express favorable opinions of the relationship. Table XXII presents data on the nature of the association between status and the respondents' perceptions of the degree of open and two-way communication between themselves and the bishop.

Although reported, the respondents having non-parish assignments will be excluded from the following discussion since, as previously mentioned, the original research question only dealt with priests in parish settings. Even though the degree of association is not strong ($C = .22$), inspection of the percentages reveals that, as expected, the

TABLE XXII

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE DEGREE OF OPEN AND TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION WITH THE BISHOP (PERCENT)

Degree of Communication	Organizational Status			Total
	*Associate Pastor	*Pastor/Monsignor	Non-Parish	
Very much	25.4	41.7	40.0	36.9
Quite a bit	30.9	35.3	36.0	34.3
Hardly any	25.4	15.1	16.0	18.0
None	18.3	7.9	8.0	10.8
Total (no. cases)	(17)	(139)	(50)	(260)

$$\chi^2 = 11.91, df = 6, p < .10, C = .26$$

$$*\chi^2 = 10.85, df = 3, p < .02, C = .25$$

associates are more likely to express unfavorable opinions of the relationship. Not only are the associates, at 25.4 percent, less likely than the pastor/monsignors, at 41.7 percent, to feel that there is very much communication but also more likely to express the opinion that there is absolutely no open and two-way communication with the bishop (18.3 percent of the associates as compared to only 7.9 percent of the pastor/monsignors). From this data, it can be suggested that the status of the respondents is influencing their opinions of the priest-bishop relationship.

TABLE XXIII

PRESENT AGE AND RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE DEGREE OF OPEN
AND TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION WITH THE BISHOP (PERCENT)

Degree of Communication	Present Age		Total
	Under 46	46 and older	
Very much	32.2	40.9	36.8
Quite a bit	30.6	37.9	34.5
Hardly any	24.8	11.7	17.8
None	12.4	9.5	10.9
Total (no. cases)	(121)	(137)	(258)

$$\chi^2 = 9.02, df = 3, p < .05, C = .26$$

Since commitment was also thought to be of importance in influencing the opinions of priests to the relationship, it was necessary to examine the effect of distributing the communication dimension by age.

As shown in Table XXIII, only 32.2 percent of the younger respondents as compared to 40.9 percent of the older priests felt there was very much communication between themselves and the bishop. Younger priests at 12.4 percent were also more likely than older priests (9.5 percent) to feel that there was absolutely no communication. Clearly, then, age affects the opinions of priests to the priest-bishop relationship although the degree of association is slight ($C = .26$).

TABLE XXIV

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE DEGREE OF OPEN AND TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION WITH THE BISHOP BY AGE (PERCENT)

Degree of Communication	A G E					
	Under 46			46 and Older		
	Status		Total	Status		Total
Associate	Pastor/Monsignor	Associate		Pastor/Monsignor		
Very much	26.8	40.0	31.4	[21.4]	41.7	39.3
Quite a bit	28.6	26.7	27.9	[42.8]	38.0	38.5
Hardly any	26.8	23.3	25.6	[14.3]	13.0	13.1
None	17.8	10.0	15.1	[21.4]	7.3	9.1
Total (no. cases)	(56)	(30)	(86)	(14)	(108)	(122)
	$\chi^2 = 1.99, df = 3, p < .70, C = .15$			$\chi^2 = 3.90, df = 3, p < .30, C = .18$		

Note: Percentages in brackets based on N smaller than 25.

Since both commitment and organizational status have been found to be empirically related to the priest-bishop relationship issue, an attempt was made to clarify the findings by the introduction of a control on age. In Table XXIV the nature of the relationship between status and the degree of open and two-way communication is examined when age is held constant.

As can be seen, status is still related to the opinions of priests and in the expected direction. For the younger respondents, the associates at 26.8 percent are less likely than the pastor/monsignors at 40.0 percent to feel that there is very much communication between themselves and the bishop. The same trend is apparent for the older priests where only 21.4 percent of the associates as compared to 41.7 percent of the pastor/monsignors expressed similar opinions. Further, and again regardless of age, the associates were more likely than the pastor/monsignors to express the opinion that absolutely no communication exists. Closer inspection of this response category (None) reveals that among the associates, 21.4 percent of the older as compared to 17.8 percent of the younger felt this way. This finding is in the direction opposite of that originally found between age and the communication dimension (see Table XXIII) in which younger priests expressed the opinion of no communication to a greater degree than the older priests. Besides indicating that age (commitment) may be less important than status in accounting for differences in priests' opinions, there is also the implication that as the priests get older and do not receive an advancement they tend to become bitter towards the bishop.

The results of the above analysis have shown that status, even when controlled by age, still affects the opinions of priests to the priest-bishop relationship issue. Further, there is evidence that of the two variables found to be related to the opinions of priests, commitment (age) is only of secondary importance to status in affecting priests' opinions. Because of these findings, the remaining questions concerning other aspects of the priest-bishop relationship asked of the respondents will be distributed by organizational status.

Table XXV presents data on the relationship between organizational status and the priests' satisfaction with the committee structure in their dioceses.

Although not statistically significant, it can be observed from the reported percentages that some relationship exists between organizational status and the respondents' satisfaction with the various committees. Clearly the most satisfied are the pastor/monsignors. The least satisfied are the non-parish priests with the only exception being for the priest senate where the associates (by only 1.7 percentage points) are the most dissatisfied.

The respondents also were queried as to their opinions to the establishment of a fixed retirement age for bishops and a policy whereby priests would have some voice in the selection of the bishop. Table XXVI presents data on the relationships when these dimensions are distributed by status.

As shown, the associate pastors are overwhelmingly in favor of a fixed retirement age being established for bishops. The percentage

TABLE XXV

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH DIOCESAN
COMMITTEE STRUCTURES (PERCENT)

Satisfaction With	Organizational Status			Total
	Associate Pastor	Pastor/Monsignor	Non-Parish	
<u>Priest Senate</u>				
Satisfied	56.3	63.2	58.0	60.0
Not satisfied	43.7	36.8	42.0	39.8
Total (no. cases)	(80)	(136)	(50)	(266)
$\chi^2 = 1.14, df = 2, p < .70, C = .09$				
<u>Grievance Committee</u>				
Satisfied	61.0	76.0	58.8	68.3
Not satisfied	39.0	24.0	41.2	31.7
Total (no. cases)	(59)	(96)	(34)	(189)
$\chi^2 = 5.5, df = 2, p < .10, C = .24$				
<u>Personnel Committee</u>				
Satisfied	67.2	71.7	54.3	67.0
Not satisfied	32.8	28.3	45.7	33.0
Total (no. cases)	(67)	(92)	(35)	(194)
$\chi^2 = 3.5, df = 2, p < .20, C = .19$				

TABLE XXVI

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS OF FIXED BISHOP
RETIREMENT AND PRIESTS' SELECTION OF BISHOP (PERCENT)

Opinions Of	Organizational Status			Total
	Associate Pastor	Pastor/Monsignor	Non-Parish	
<u>Fixed Retirement of Bishop</u>				
Yes	90.7	76.1	78.7	81.2
No	9.3	23.9	21.3	18.8
Total (no. cases)	(86)	(138)	(47)	(271)
$\chi^2 = 7.6, df = 2, p < .05, C = .23$				
<u>Priests' Selecting Bishops</u>				
Yes	90.8	72.5	84.6	82.6
No	9.2	27.5	15.4	17.4
Total (no. cases)	(87)	(138)	(52)	(277)
$\chi^2 = 12.13, df = 2, p < .01, C = .29$				

differences between the associates and the other status categories is greater than 15 points. Further, the associates are more likely than the non-parish priests (difference of 5.2 percentage points) and the pastor/monsignors (a difference of 18.3 percentage points) to be in favor of selecting the bishop.

Finally, respondents were asked what degree of open and two-way communication they thought existed between their fellow priests and the bishop. When distributed by status, as shown in Table XXVII, the associates are less likely than priests with other statuses to feel that their fellow priests have very much communication while also more often seeing their colleagues as not having any communication with the bishop.

TABLE XXVII

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS AND RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE
DEGREE OF OPEN AND TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN
FELLOW PRIESTS AND BISHOP (PERCENT)

Degree of Communication	Organizational Status			Total
	Associate Pastor	Pastor/Monsignor	Non-Parish	
Very much	17.9	26.2	29.2	24.2
Quite a bit	41.6	50.4	37.5	45.4
Hardly any	32.2	16.3	27.0	23.1
None	8.3	7.1	6.3	7.3
Total (no. cases)	(84)	(141)	(48)	(273)

$$\chi^2 = 10.13, df = 6, p < .20, C = .23$$

In comparing the responses in Table XXVII to those in Table XXII, it is of interest to note that respondents, regardless of status, saw themselves as more likely than their fellow priests to have very much communication with the bishop. The greatest differences within status exist among the pastor/monsignors and non-parish priests who both see themselves as having a substantially (difference is greater than 10 percentage points) greater amount of communication than their colleagues.

Commitment, to approximately the same degree, was also found to be related to the previously discussed dimensions. The less-committed priests (younger) responded in the same direction as the associates while the highly committed (older priests) responded in a manner similar to the pastor/monsignors.

In summary, both commitment (age) and organizational status were found to be statistically related to the priest-bishop relationship issue. When a control (age) was introduced to better clarify the relationship, it became apparent that age, although still related to the priests' opinions, was of less importance than status in affecting the opinions of priests.

In further probing other dimensions of the priest-bishop relationship, status was shown to be influencing the opinions of priests. In reference to existing diocesan committees, the pastor/monsignors were more likely than the associates and non-parish priests to express opinions of satisfaction. Further, the associates, in contrast to the other categories, were overwhelmingly in favor of the establishment of a fixed retirement age for bishops and having some voice in the selection

of bishops. Finally, the associates were more likely than the pastor/monsignors or the non-parish priests to see their fellow priests as having no open and two-way communication with the bishop.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This report has dealt with the nature of opinions held by Catholic priests to the three issues of birth control, celibacy, and the priest-bishop relationship. Along with describing the opinions of priests, an attempt was made to account for variations in opinion with variables descriptive of the priests themselves and their parish setting.

A questionnaire was mailed to 500 diocesan priests selected at random. After two follow-up requests, a total of 294 priests had completed the questionnaire. The data centering on the issues were then distributed by parish SES, organizational status, and commitment.

For the birth control issue, the socioeconomic status (SES) of the parish in which the priest is stationed was identified, from Sjoberg's comments, as a factor which may be affecting the opinions of priests. Priests from lower SES parishes should be more likely than their colleagues in higher SES parishes to be opposed to the present position of the church to the birth control issue because of their awareness of the effects this policy has on their laity. In the course of the analysis, this argument was not confirmed. Priests from lower SES parishes were no more likely than priests from higher SES parishes to be opposed to the church's position on birth control. Parish SES was, therefore, discounted as a factor influencing the priests' opinions on birth control. Perhaps priests in lower SES parishes are aware that the lower class has a high birthrate regardless of religious affiliation. A priest in such a situation may concede that a change in the church's

birth control policy would not have an impact on his parishioners since they have children not because they are forbidden to use birth control techniques but because it is part of the life style of their social class.

Also derived from Sjoberg's observations on client-centered bureaucracies (1967), it was argued that the organizational status of the priest may be influencing his opinions. Specifically, it was proposed that the associate pastors because of their weaker position in the hierarchy but greater responsibilities to the laity would be more likely than pastors and monsignors to express opposition to the traditional position of the church on the birth control, celibacy, and priest-bishop relationship issues. Data presented in Chapter III confirmed the proposed relationship. The associates were more likely than the pastor/monsignors to express unfavorable opinions on the church's stand on the issues. For the birth control issue, the associates were more likely than the pastor/monsignors to favor liberalization of the church's present policy. On celibacy, the associates were more in favor of offering priests the freedom of choice to marry than the pastor/monsignors. It was also the associates rather than the pastor/monsignors who expressed dissatisfaction with the degree of open and two-way communication between themselves and the bishop.

It was also proposed that commitment could be affecting the opinions of priests to the issues. From Becker's arguments (1964), it was suggested that the highly committed priests, because of their development of consistent patterns of belief and action, would be more likely than the less-committed priests to express favorable opinions on

the traditional stance of the church. The analysis of the preceding chapter confirmed the research question. That is, the highly committed priests were opposed to any change in the existing birth control and celibacy policies and expressed satisfaction in the communication with the bishop. On the other hand, the less-committed priests favored liberalization of the church's birth control and celibacy policies while also expressing dissatisfaction with the priest-bishop relationship.

When this research was proposed it was thought to be difficult to distinguish between status and commitment. The research presented above does not make the task unequivocally easier. Clearly, both status and commitment were identified as factors influencing the opinions of priests to the birth control, celibacy, and priest-bishop relationship issues. Since both status and commitment had been shown to be highly related to each other, an attempt was made to clarify the impact this interrelationship had on the findings by the introduction of controls.

As a result of these controls, status was shown to be of less importance than commitment in accounting for differences in the priests' opinions of the birth control and celibacy issues. However, for the priest-bishop relationship issue, status, as a factor affecting the opinions of priests, was enhanced. Yet, this should not imply that the effect of the other factor could be completely discounted. For example, status still did produce differences in opinions on the birth control and celibacy issues. Similarly, commitment accounted for differences in priests' opinions on the priest-bishop relationship issue. Thus,

even with the introduction of a control, it was still impossible to completely differentiate between the variables. It can be argued that commitment is a social psychological dimension of status. With advancement in an organization, one would expect a corresponding increase in commitment to the organization; or commitment to the organization may account for an increase in status. Problematic in this venture is the fact that both status and commitment increase with the passage of time. With increasing age, one would expect both an increased commitment to a consistent line of activity and an increase in organizational status. In any future research, an awareness of the interrelationship between these variables must be maintained and other attempts should be made to clarify the roles they play in affecting the opinions of priests.

Of further interest to anyone wishing to pursue the type of research presented above would be an examination and classification of a "with reservation" response. The use of a mailed questionnaire in this research prevented a thorough exploration of exactly what this type of response meant to a priest. To enhance the understanding of priests' opinions, the use of a different research instrument, especially one employing depth interviewing, would be highly recommended.

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APPENDIX A

May 1970

Confidential

Survey of Priests: Current Issues in the Catholic Church

Part I - Background Information

1. Please check your current status.
 - Associate pastor
 - Pastor
 - Pastor, with the title of monsignor
 - Other (please specify) _____
2. What is your present age? _____
3. At what age did you decide to become a priest? _____
4. How old were you when you entered the seminary? _____
5. How old were you at the time of your ordination? _____
6. If you could do it again, would you become a priest
 - At the same age as before.
 - At an earlier age
 - At a later age
 - Perhaps not at all.
7. Do you have any relatives who are also members of a clerical order?
 - No
 - Yes

If yes, would you please list, in the space below, their relationship to you and the religious order to which they belong?

Educational Information - Here some information is desired about the schools you attended.

1. Did you receive your elementary school training at a
 - Public School
 - Parochial school
 - Combination of both public and parochial school
 - Other (please specify) _____
2. Did you receive your secondary school training at a
 - Public school
 - Parochial school
 - Combination of both public and parochial school
 - Other (please specify) _____

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In the space below please fill in the information which applies to you.

<u>Schools (Name)</u>	<u>Area of Specialization</u>	<u>Degree and Date</u>
Technical/Trade		

 College/University

 Seminary

 Post-Seminary

 Other

Part II - Parish Assignment

1. How long have you been at your present parish?
 _____ Years _____ Months
2. How many transfers have you had since ordination?

3. (a) What is the approximate number of families in your parish? _____
- (b) Altogether how many parishioners of all ages is this? _____
4. (a) What was the approximate budget of your parish for the last fiscal year? _____
- (b) Does your total budget include the maintenance of a school?
 No
 Yes
 If yes, how much of your budget went to the school? _____

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5. (a) To the best of your knowledge, what social class category is most representative of your parishioners?
- Lower class
 Middle class
 Upper class
- (b) What category is second most representative of your parishioners?
- Lower class
 Middle class
 Upper class
- (c) What category is least representative of your parishioners?
- Lower class
 Middle class
 Upper class
6. Are you personally involved in attempting to interest boys in the priestly vocation?
- Yes, frequently
 Yes, occasionally
 Not at all

Part III - Church Issues

Part III is divided into three sections, each section dealing with a specific issue presently under discussion within the church. All questions ask that you check a response, but feel free to add comments amplifying your responses. If you do make any comments please identify the question to which they are addressed.

Section A - Organizational Issues

1. Do you have in your diocese a priest's senate composed of elected representatives of the presbytery who assist the Bishop in governing the diocese?
- Yes, and I am satisfied with it
 Yes, but I am not satisfied with it
 No, but I would be in favor of a senate
 No, and I would not be in favor of a senate
2. Does your diocese have an intermediary grievance committee, elected by the priests themselves, to which priests can bring their complaints?
- Yes, and I am satisfied with it
 Yes, but I am not satisfied with it
 No, but I would be in favor of such a committee
 No, and I would not be in favor of such a committee

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3. Does your diocese have a full-time personnel committee made up of experienced and qualified priests who work with priests who have problems?
- Yes, and I am satisfied with it
 - Yes, but I am not satisfied with it
 - No, but I would be in favor of such a committee
 - No, and I would not be in favor of such a committee
4. Would you be in favor of a fixed retirement age for bishops?
- Yes, (at what age) _____
 - No
 - Don't know
5. Would you be in favor of a system whereby priests would have some voice in the selection of the bishop of their diocese?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
6. How would you describe the communication between the bishop and most of the priests in your diocese?
- Very much free and open two-way communication
 - Quite a bit of free and open two-way communication
 - Hardly any free and open two-way communication
 - No free and open two-way communication
 - Other (please specify) _____
7. How would you describe the communication between you personally and the bishop?
- Very much free and open two-way communication
 - Quite a bit of free and open two-way communication
 - Hardly any free and open two-way communication
 - No free and open two-way communication
 - Other (please specify) _____

ConfidentialSection B - The Celibacy Issue

1. (a) Have you in the past year discussed the celibacy issue with your fellow priests?

Yes
 No

- (b) With your parishioners?

Yes
 No

2. In your opinion, approximately what percent of your fellow diocesan priests are in favor of offering the priest freedom of choice to marry?

None
 Less than 25 percent
 26-50 percent
 51-75 percent
 76-100 percent

3. In your opinion, approximately what percent of your parishioners are in favor of offering the priest freedom of choice to marry?

None
 Less than 25 percent
 26-50 percent
 51-75 percent
 76-100 percent

4. In general, would you personally be in favor of giving the priest freedom of choice to marry?

Yes, without reservation
 Yes, with reservation
 No, with reservation
 No, without reservation
 Don't know

5. In your opinion, should priests who have left the ministry and married be allowed to return to the sacraments and remain married?

Yes, without reservation
 Yes, with reservation
 No, with reservation
 No, without reservation
 Don't know

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6. In your opinion, should priests who have left the ministry and married be allowed to return as married priests?
- Yes, without reservation
- Yes, with reservation
- No, with reservation
- No, without reservation
- Don't know
7. In your opinion, approximately what percent of your parishioners would accept, as an associate pastor, a priest who was married?
- None
- Less than 25 percent
- 26-50 percent
- 51-75 percent
- 76-100 percent
8. In your opinion, approximately what percent of your parishioners would accept, as a pastor, a priest who was married?
- None
- Less than 25 percent
- 26-50 percent
- 51-75 percent
- 76-100 percent
9. Do you personally think that married priests would be as competent in their duties as celibate priests?
- Yes, without reservation
- Yes, with reservation
- No, with reservation
- No, without reservation
- Don't know

Section C - Birth Control Issue

1. Have you in the past year discussed the birth control issue with:
- (a) Your fellow priests?
- Yes
- No
- (b) Your parishioners?
- Yes
- No

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2. In your opinion, approximately what percent of your fellow diocesan priests are in favor of the church taking a more liberal position towards birth control?
- None
 - Less than 25 percent
 - 26-50 percent
 - 51-75 percent
 - 76-100 percent
3. In your opinion, approximately what percent of your parishioners are in favor of the church taking a more liberal position towards birth control?
- None
 - Less than 25 percent
 - 26-50 percent
 - 51-75 percent
 - 76-100 percent
4. In general, would you personally be in favor of the church taking a more liberal position towards birth control?
- Yes, without reservation
 - Yes, with reservation
 - No, with reservation
 - No, without reservation
 - Don't know
5. Would you advise your parishioners to let their conscience guide them in regards to birth control during this period of controversy?
- Yes, without reservation
 - Yes, with reservation
 - No, with reservation
 - No, without reservation
 - Don't know

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6. Here you are asked to rank the three issues in terms of how important they are to you personally. Next to each issue listed below, please indicate which is most important to you (rank "1"), next most important (rank "2"), and least important (rank "3").

_____ Celibacy Issue
_____ Organizational Issue
_____ Birth Control Issue

In addition, if you feel that there are issues more important than those which have been considered, please use the space below to state them.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Lawrence Kielich

APPENDIX B

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59801

Dear Father:

As a graduate student and a Catholic, I have become personally and professionally interested in the changes and discussion of changes presently occurring within the Catholic Church. In order to better understand the nature of the opinion on these issues, I am sending questionnaires, like the one enclosed, to a number of priests throughout the United States. Your name was one of the several hundred randomly selected in a way to obtain a group which is truly representative of all opinion. Thus, your answers are very important to me.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections concerning your own background, your present assignment, and your views on some of the current issues. Please be assured that your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. The number at the upper right of the questionnaire is to identify your views for the purpose of statistical analysis. This questionnaire should take only about 20 minutes to complete. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation in taking the time to respond to the questionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

Lawrence Kielich
Graduate Student

May 18, 1970

Dear Father:

Several weeks ago I requested your participation in a survey of priests. In this survey, I am attempting to understand the nature of opinion among priests to certain issues which have received considerable attention in church circles.

I realize that there are many demands upon your time and that you may have attended to more pressing demands or misplaced the original questionnaire. Enclosed is another questionnaire and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope for your convenience.

The information you provide will be most useful. A partially completed questionnaire is preferred to no information at all. Your time and effort are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Kielich
Department of Sociology
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59801