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A COMPARISON OF DIOCESAN PRIESTS
WHO LEAVE THE ACTIVE MINISTRY
WITH PRIESTS WHO REMAIN
IN THE ACTIVE MINISTRY

JOHN J. ECHLIN

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Loyola University of
Chicago in partial fulfillment of the re-
quirements for the Degree of Master of
Arts, August, 1968.

LIFE

Rev. John Echlin was born in Detroit, Michigan, on March 19, 1928. He was graduated from Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit, in June, 1950, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy.

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He was assigned to graduate work in psychology by Archbishop Dearden in the Fall of 1963.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The injunction of the Second Vatican Council that candidates for the priesthood are to be carefully examined to determine that they have the mental health and suitability for the priestly life was more explicitly and emphatically spelled out by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical letter Sacerdotalis Caelibatus in June, 1967. Pope Paul wrote of the necessity of a psychological assessment by a competent psychologist. This papal directive makes it clear that psychological testing has become an official requirement in all seminary training programs.

The current state of personality assessment programs for religious and sacerdotal life is summed up by Coville (1967). He writes:

The psychological assessment of candidates for the religious and sacerdotal life, evolving gradually over the past fifteen years, is at a point where we are confident today of its validity and effectiveness. The fact is that we no longer need to prove the merit of our aims and procedures nor plead the cause of psychological assessment. Authoritative sources that include papal statements, scientific findings of professional psychologists, and the experience of religious administrators support and approve the use of modern psychological methods of investigation of candidates for the religious life. More and more of these administrators are convinced that psychological assessment is indispensable to an effective program of selection and are engaging professional services to this end.

There is no doubt that Coville's observations are accurate. Unfortunately most of this sizable quantity of data has been collected for the sake of pragmatic needs of individual screening and counseling, and with little concern for long range research.

Much of the research investigation uses data collected in the seminary

only in a search for the differences that might exist between those who leave the seminary and those who stay in a given year. In general this research has not been very productive, one of the reasons being the rather consistent finding that many of the "better adjusted" according to test norms leave and many of the "poorer adjusted" stay.

There is a great need for longitudinal studies of those in religious life and such studies may throw considerable light on some of the questions and problems on which so much effort and time has been spent.

It may also be important that psychologists address more attention to data other than test scores and profiles. The McAllister and VanderVelt (1961) study referred to in the next chapter, for example, cited some significant findings which were related to family background and academic achievement.

The National Association of Pastoral Renewal has compiled a list of 463 U.S. priests who have resigned from the active ministry during the first eight months of 1968. This compares with a total of 480 priests who resigned in the entire year of 1967. This represents, according to the report, an increase of 31 per cent in the monthly rate of resignations. The report states that 1,183 priests have resigned since January 1, 1966.

The critical need to compare those who leave the active ministry with those who remain active is obvious. The present study is a preliminary attempt to make such a comparison.

The present study will examine the college seminary records of twenty-five men who most recently left the active ministry in one mid-Western diocese and compare them with the records of twenty-five of their peers who

are engaged in the active ministry.

Nine variables were selected for purposes of comparison: religion of parents, stability of the home, birth order, number of years in the seminary, I.Q., rank in class, faculty rating, summer occupation and health record.

Within the two groups, twelve subjects in each group have in common three psychological tests. Thus the raw scores on twenty-three test variables were available for comparison in the sub groups.

It was hypothesized that:

1) Priests who leave the active ministry would be likely to come from mixed marriages because the meaning and value of active ministry would be less understood by the parents and therefore less supportive to the priest.

2) Priests who leave the active ministry would be likely to come from less stable homes which might foster some vocational instability in those who change vocations after an investment of several years.

3) Those who leave the active ministry would be more likely to be the oldest child who according to Adler, would be more likely to be concerned with attitudes of authority toward him.

4) Priests who leave the active ministry would be more likely to have spent less time in the seminary and be less accommodated to an authoritarian structure.

5) Priests who leave the active ministry would be more likely to have higher I.Q. scores and hence would be more frustrated and unfulfilled in performing some of the menial tasks involved in the work of the active ministry.

6) Priests who leave the active ministry would be likely to be lower in class rank because they would be less motivated and less committed to

their future profession.

7) Priests who leave the active ministry would receive lower faculty ratings because their instructors would be less confident that they would be emotionally comfortable in the active ministry.

8) Priests who leave the active ministry would be less likely to choose the work of camp counselors during the summers because they would be less comfortable in the authoritarian atmosphere and less motivated toward social service occupations.

9) Priests who leave the active ministry would be more concerned about their health needs and would have more somatic complaints which would suggest cynicism and less capacity for emotional relationships.

10) Priests who leave the active ministry would be less well adjusted according to psychological test scores; they would be more anxious, tense, and less comfortable with themselves.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Even though psychological testing and screening procedures for candidates for the priesthood have intensified in recent years (Dunn, 1965, and Coville, 1967), the number of priests who leave the active ministry has been greatly accelerated. The statistics published by the National Association for Pastoral Renewal indicate a 31 per cent increase of resignations each month as compared to last year in the United States. In the diocese to be studied resignations from the active ministry were 81 per cent higher in 1966 and 1967 as compared to the years 1964 and 1965.

There have been numerous studies of candidates for the priesthood but relatively few studies of these men after ordination. We do not know whether priests who leave the active ministry have characteristics which significantly distinguish them from those who remain in the active ministry.

Moore (1936) studied the incidence and nature of personality disorders of priests and religious hospitalized in mental institutions. He found the overall incidence was 446 in 100,000 as opposed to 595 in the general population. However, he found that when those hospitalized for organic diseases such as brain syndrome due to syphilitic infection were excluded in the general population, the incidence of functional disorders was higher among the religious patients. Schizophrenic disorders and paranoia had a higher rate of occurrence among both men and women religious. Alcoholism and manic depressives were more frequent among male religious than in the general population. The higher incidence of functional disorders among priests and religious, Moore concluded, resulted either from the fact that

the stress and tension of religious life causes a greater amount of maladjustment, or that certain prepsychotic personalities are drawn to the quiet and seclusion of the religious life. Moore suggested that these prepsychotic applicants could be screened out at the time of admission.

McAllister and VanderVelt (1961) presented a similar study of 100 priests who had been hospitalized in a private psychiatric hospital and 100 lay male patients discharged from the same hospital; an additional sample of 100 seminarians approaching ordination was also included in this study. They found that 48% of the hospitalized priests were "A" students and 16% more were "B" students. Among the priest subjects 91% came from homes wherein the mother was described as the dominant figure. The authors suggest that this maternal dominance "may create some distortion in the priestly role or in the relationship to authority figures..."

The authors investigated family constellation and family size, but, since these results were not significant, the data were not published; nor was any information about ethnic origin reported.

McAllister and VanderVelt also found a significantly higher incidence of clergy patients who had parents with psychiatric symptoms; the clergy more frequently had alcoholic fathers. The authors state that the findings:

Suggest that the psychological importance and the psychic impact of parental figures is greater among the clergy man than among a comparable non-clergy patient group. Moore and Sullivan might say that the parataxic distortion created by parental figures remains more effective in the clergy group. This seems a reasonable conclusion, because these early meaningful relationships are not as easily displaced or modified as in the non-clergy group. Laymen have new, deep and close interpersonal relationships with associates in love affairs and courtship, in marriage,

and with their own children. These interpersonal experiences tend to modify and frequently to mollify their earlier experiences with parents so that the effect of parental influence is diminished.

In this study of 1961, 77% of the clergy admitted to having experienced serious emotional problems while in the seminary; there were more sociopathic personality disorders among the clergy, and 46 of the 100 priests studied were diagnosed as personality disorders, suggesting the presence of lifelong patterns of maladjustment. In the author's words:

These patterns of maladjustment must, therefore, in most cases have preceded the clerical state.

In the light of current discussions of celibacy it is interesting to note that McAllister and VanderVelt found ten priests who displayed symptoms in the sexual sphere as opposed to two in the lay group. Of these ten priests, nine had problems in the sexual sphere before ordination, which suggested to the authors:

that neither the vow of celibacy nor the priestly function created this psychic conflict. It was present prior to ordination and probably represents a psychosexual fixation rather than a regressive phenomenon.

The comparison of the clergy with lay patients and with the seminarians indicated that the priest group came from the lower economic and lower social backgrounds. The authors suggest that this may indicate a more difficult adjustment in a vocation that places them in a higher stratum of society.

From the study of Moore and that of McAllister and VanderVelt, there seems to be emerging a personality profile of the priest who is likely to have a mental breakdown. With further study and the ever increasing

refinements in seminary screening programs there is hope that the potential mental cases can be detected and these subjects can be guided into a different type of life that will be less stressful for them.

Some authors contend that many who leave the active ministry have personality patterns that are similar to those who are hospitalized for psychiatric problems. D'Arcy and Kennedy (1965) in discussing the study of McAllister and VanderVelt, write:

In other words, serious psychiatric illness, often the outcome of defective familial relationships, removes the priest from his pastoral relationship and makes it difficult to resume it.

Defections from the priesthood are frequently associated with the patterns of illness just described. Very frequently the priest who attempts marriage is seeking, through this action, to solve one or the other deep personality difficulty. He is frequently dependent, underdeveloped emotionally, and it is a relief of the misery these conditions engender that he seeks in marriage.

Frequently it is difficult to see that the person involved in the situation is actually suffering deep personal conflicts. This is because the illness is often subtle and because a life of withdrawal tends to protect someone with deep personal shortcomings...Sexual satisfactions are only a small part of this pitfall into which the stunted person can fall and from which he hardly ever wants to emerge. This relationship in attempted marriage is an expression of their psychological impoverishment and a sign of how poorly they had related to themselves during their seminary years.

D'Arcy and Kennedy present no data to substantiate their observations but they write as priest-psychologist who have worked for a number of years teaching, testing, and counseling seminarians, priests, and religious Brothers and Sisters. At an earlier date Kennedy (1965) wrote:

In my own clinical experience I cannot recall a defecting priest who came from anything but an abnormal family background. Whether it was divorce, alcoholism, or family strife, the experience clearly weakened him for the burdens of priestly life.

In this rapidly changing climate, wherein celibacy is widely debated and a priest may leave the active ministry with honor, it seems no longer appropriate to refer to the change of profession as "defection". Nor do we know whether a change in the decision to be engaged in the active ministry is indicative of personality problems. Oraison (1967), noted priest-psychiatrist, seems to think that it does. He writes:

Reactions to this changed climate have been very diverse among priests and seminarians. Among them have been: a categorical rejection of any kind of psychology -- this represents an easily explained defense against unbearable questioning; an eager grasp of arguments culled from a few books to justify leaving the Church by marrying; the sudden uncovering of deep unrest. This last reaction is the most common. Men already committed, or on their way toward commitment, have turned to modern psychology to find help in resolving their uneasiness.

Oraison writes of some of the priests in conflict as the angry men for whom belligerence against the Church becomes a psychological alibi. In referring to priests who are having difficulties in adjusting to celibacy, he writes:

In the back of their minds they may have the confused and unformulated hope that some day they will be able to marry and still remain priests. This seems scarcely possible at this time. This kind of confused and illusory hope is no help to them. It only feeds their uneasiness and intensifies their rejection of celibacy. For some of them the problem could perhaps be solved by consultations with the right persons and by more enlightened understanding on the part of ecclesiastical authorities.

If the question of why men leave the active ministry were to be approached from the point of view of occupational stability, then the Interest inventories might come back into prominence. It would be interesting to know what kind of changes would take place on Lhota's (1948) Diocesan Priest Scale on the Strong Vocational Interest Blank. D'Arcy's (1954) research indicates that changes do occur, but he found them changing toward greater homogeneity. Would those who seek occupational change have interests that would make them more dissimilar to their peers?

At least some of the studies that compare seminarians who stay with seminarians who leave could be viewed as occupational stability or change of interests studies, e.g. the studies of Friedl, Wauck, Kenney and Murtaugh.

Friedl (1952) took a sample of 178 foreign missionary seminarians who left the seminary and matched them for age with 356 seminarians still in the seminary. His subjects ranged in age from 14 to 31 and were from eleven different seminaries. He computed the mean Interest Maturity (IM) score on the Strong Vocational Interest Test for the entire sample and then divided the departures and the persisters into groups above and below the mean. He also divided the departures into two groups: 118 who left because of lack of interest, and 60 who left for other reasons.

For comparison he used the eleven group scales plus the IM, Diocesan Priest Scale and D'Arcy's Missionary Priest scale. Between those low in IM he found no significant differences.

He found four significant differences between the high IM groups. The persisters were higher on Group I: Biological Sciences and the Missionary Priest scale. Those who left were higher on Group VIII: Business Detail and

Group IX: Business Contact (Sales).

He found no value in distinguishing reasons for departure. He developed a system of successive hurdles using the Missionary Priest scale and scales I, VIII and IX, and using one standard deviation from the mean as a cutoff point, he was able to predict the persisters 72 per cent of the time and departures 47 per cent of the time.

Wauck (1957) attempted to predict perseverance in the seminary by using a battery of tests: the Kuder Preference Record, the Ohio State Psychological Examination, the MMPI, and the Group Rorschach with peer ratings on McCarthy's faculty rating scale (1952).

His subjects were 207 diocesan major seminarians. He found that a multiple correlation based on adjustment measures from the test battery were positively related to the evaluations made by peers on the faculty rating scale. He did not find the MMPI scores very helpful in predicting perseverance.

Murtaugh (1965) was able to utilize the data of Wauck to make a longitudinal study. He found ninety of Wauck's subjects who were ordained from five to ten years who were willing to be re-tested with the MMPI and the Kuder. There were 146 of Wauck's sample of 207 seminarians who were ordained; therefore fifty six did not respond to the invitation to participate in Murtaugh's study.

Consequently, Murtaugh was able to compare three groups, namely, 55 students who were not ordained, 90 priests who did respond and 56 who did not respond. The usefulness of the MMPI and the Kuder as predictors of performance was not supported in the longitudinal study.

Murtaugh found that some significant changes in interests and personality do occur after ordination and these seem to reflect the method of adaptation to the very different environment of the seminary as compared to parochial life. After ordination subjects display more maturity, self expression and social freedom, but also an increased preoccupation with bodily complaints.

Kenney (1959) employed the Strong and the Kuder in a study of 125 matched pairs of persisting and departing seminarians. The subjects were matched on the basis of language score on the California Test of Mental Maturity, on age, collegiate year, and number of years in the seminary at the time of testing.

He found only five significant differences in mean scores on 43 occupational scales, 6 group scales, 3 non-occupational scales of the Strong and the 10 Kuder scales. The persisting seminarians were higher on Veterinarian and Farmer and lower on C.P.A., Lawyer, and Occupational Level.

He conducted a pattern analysis on the Strong and also on the Kuder and he concluded:

The candidates who have actually entered a foreign mission seminary on the college level are characterized by a pattern of high interest of the social service and technical types, by moderate interests of the musical, biological sciences, literary, outdoor and artistic types, and by very low reject interest in the Kuder clerical and computational types, and the Strong verbal-linguistic and business contact data interest types. Both successful and unsuccessful seminarian groups have rather high scores in the Kuder literary interest type and rather low scores in the Strong verbal-linguistic interest group, indicating perhaps that these two scales are not measuring the same fundamental interest.

The successful seminarian group does not differ much from the unsuccessful group in the kinds or groups of interests but rather in the intensity of the interests

that they both hold in common. The successful are higher in technical interests and lower in literary interests than the unsuccessful but both groups would definitely have these interests. The unsuccessful is higher in the social service interest type and lower in the technical interest type.

Up to the present time it has not been feasible to attempt to administer psychological tests to men who leave the active ministry; often the chancery has been notified only after the change has taken place, at times there is misunderstanding or ill will which would indicate an unwillingness to cooperate. Even now when dispensations are more easily obtained the implications of undergoing psychological testing might be resented.

The fact that changes in the MMPI profile do take place after ordination or over time after entrance into religious life has been well established in the study and review by Hakenewerth (1966). However, at the present time, it does not seem practicable to hope for this kind of data from those who leave the active ministry.

Hakenewerth reported a longitudinal study of the MMPI scores of 80 Brothers in a teaching order. The test retest comparison indicated a rise in the F, Hy, Pt, Mf and the Sc scales (the last two at .0 level); the L scale tended to be lower and the Ma remained virtually the same. However, a continuing rise as a function of time in religious life was not verified.

Hakenewerth concluded that the elevation in MMPI scores is not an indication of personality breakdown but is situational resulting from added stress caused by taking on a higher goal of self-perfection, compliance to a detailed rule of life, and greater concern for others.

Almost all the research to date can be classified as normative studies, descriptive studies, effect of training studies, and predictive studies

(Dunn, 1965). Very little formal attention has been given to why subjects enter religious life and later leave. One such study has been made by Lee (1968).

Lee compared sixty seminarians who left the seminary with sixty who persevered. He found that those who remain, as a group, are significantly more submissive and possess significantly higher musical and social and lower literary and scientific interest scores than do those who leave. A combination of eight variables significantly predicted persevering or leaving the seminary. These eight variables were social interest, submissiveness vs. dominance, musical, literary and scientific interests; high vs. low self-esteem, IQ, and mechanical reasoning. However, because of wide within-sample distributions, the accuracy of the statistics was not great enough for individual prediction.

In order to provide some explanation as to why some subjects leave seminary training when, as measured by objective tests, there appear to be no essential difference between the majority of those who leave and the majority of those who stay, Lee proposed a cognitive model based on balance and dissonance theory.

He presents some propositions to provide the basis for understanding the manner in which the seminarian achieves and maintains cognitive balance, those areas of cognition most likely to become unbalanced and the reference groups that are used to achieve balance within the seminary environment.

He writes:

There are three primary relevant groups for the seminarian: the Church as represented by the priests, teachers, and the authorities in the seminary; his classmates and fellow seminarians; and his family.

Lee concludes that the degree with which the seminarian can or cannot balance his cognitive system with these primary relevant groups determines whether he will remain or leave the seminary.

In summarizing this part of the literature we can conclude that we do have data that indicate that those religious who suffer serious mental disturbance during their religious life can be differentiated from their peers and from the general population; we have some conjecture, albeit based on professional experience, that those in religious life who make an occupational change after the investment of many years may have characteristics that would differentiate them from their peers; we have data to indicate that those who enter religious life have specific interest patterns; we have data to indicate that some personality change does occur in religious life; we have not been very successful in prediction of who will stay and who will leave after entrance into religious life; and finally, we have some attempt to provide a theoretical explanation of why some leave and some stay.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS

The Bernreuter Personality Inventory Scale Construction. To determine item weights for the first four scales (neurotic tendency, self-sufficiency, introversion-extroversion and dominance-submission), four tests were used to isolate high and low scoring subjects: (a) Thurstone's Personality Schedule, (b) Bernreuter's Self Sufficiency Test, (c) Laird's C2 Introversion Test

and (d) the Allports' A-S Reaction Study. The latter also served as the source for the items of the dominance scale. The last two scales (confidence, sociability) are the result of a factor analysis conducted by Flanagan (1935). The manual reports a .95 correlation between the first and third scales and a .80 correlation between scales and one to four. According to D.J. Veldman (1965) this fact strongly suggests that little more than one construct is being measured. Veldman writes:

The fact that 78 percent of the total extracted variance of the original scales is accounted for by the first factor confirms this conclusion. To what extent these items might be "untied" through separation of item sets remains an unanswered question. Although attempts have been made to factor items from the instrument, and various authors have advocated simplified weighting systems, no extensive attempts to reorganize the scoring of the item pool have been attempted in the last ten years.

Reliability. Split-half coefficients ranging from .85 to .92 based on samples of college students are reported in the manual, and coefficients of .86 and .78 obtained from a sample of high school boys are given for the two factor scales. Reports of test-re-test reliability have been between .52 and .69.

Normative Data. Percentile equivalents dated 1938 are provided for high school boys and girls, college men and women, and adult men and women.

Validity. Veldman reports correlations from - .07 to .54 with different varieties of groups. Anastasi (1963) reports: "The test has some empirical validity in certain situations." She concludes that it is more effective with normals or near normals and in situations not conducive to faking.

McCarthy (1942) used the Bernreuter along with the Bell Adjustment Inventory and the Allport-Vernon Study of values in a study of 85 major and

144 minor seminarians. He constructed the Faculty Rating scale (referred to above) on which three faculty members rated each of the 229 seminarians. He attempted to find a "g" factor in the personalities of seminarians. One "g" factor was derived from the Bernreuter and the Bell which he regarded as a schizoid factor. He found that the seminarian showed greater "neurotic tendency," a greater degree of self consciousness and a more unsatisfactory total adjustment than the average high school student.

Peters(1942) used the same battery as McCarthy in a study of religious women candidates. She isolated three factors: 1. sulkiness, anxiety, depression and irritability; 2. sense of judgment, capacity to adjust, emotional control and punctuality, and 3. leadership sociability, dominance and social adjustment. Factor one correlated low and negatively with two and three. Factors two and three correlated high and positively.

The Personal Audit

The Personal Audit was designed by Clifford R. Adams and William M. Lepley as a self-administering test to measure emotional adjustment in nine areas (seriousness, firmness, frankness, tranquility, stability, tolerance, steadiness, persistence and contentment).

Reliability. The odd-even reliability is stated as .90 or above and the test-re-test reliability ranges from .90 to .97. The authors state that the consensus of judgments of thirty psychologists coincide with the descriptions which have been prepared for the various traits (Face validity).

Seeman (1955), in his review, is critical of the correlations in the manual in the section on validation and asks for more adequate empirical or

experimental definitions of the criteria for the various scales. He writes:

It seems probable, on the basis of the item analysis, that high scores and low scores on the inventory differentiate individuals on the basis of something, but one may have serious misgivings about what useful information is revealed by such differences and by profile differences.

Thompson (1947) included the Personal Audit in a battery of tests given to fifteen superior and ten average executives of a firm of consulting management engineers. The firmness and stability scales were found to be significant at or above the 5% scale.

The Manson Evaluation

The Manson Evaluation test was introduced in 1948 by Morse P. Manson to be used to identify alcoholics, potential alcoholics and severely maladjusted adults. There are eight scores: Anxiety, Depressive Fluctuations, Emotional Sensitivity, Resentfulness, Incompleteness, Aloneness, Interpersonal Relations and Total Test.

This questionnaire of 72 yes-no questions was selected from a series of 470 questions administered to 126 alcoholics and 157 non-alcoholics. An attempt was made to match groups for age, education and social status; one set of scoring keys is offered with separate norms for men and women. The shorter approximation of the Kuder-Richardson formula yielded a reliability of .94 for both male and female groups.

The percentages of correct predictions given by the author are: male alcoholics 79%; female alcoholics 80%; male non-alcoholics 79%; and female non-alcoholics 85%.

An interesting and potentially valuable feature of the test for clinical purposes is the provision of scores which indicate the extent of an alcoholic's psychopathic and psychoneurotic traits, that is, how closely he resembles the neurctic or the psychotic subject. The traits of anxiety, depressive fluctuations and emotional sensitivity for which differentiating scores may be obtained, are designated psychoneurotic; feelings of resentment, failure to complete social objectives, feelings of aloneness and poor interpersonal relationships are designated as psychotic traits.

Unfortunately these three tests were more popular two decades ago when fewer inventories were available and less supporting evidence of their usefulness was demanded; recent literature has not enhanced their value. They are not chosen in the present study by preference; it just happens, in fact, that they are the only test data available that are common to a number of the subjects under study.

III. EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

All the data in the present investigation was taken from the records of the Seminary College files. The records of the twenty-five men who most recently left the active ministry in the diocese under the study were pulled for study.

All of the remaining files of men ordained the same year and in the active ministry were assigned numbers. Using the table of random numbers, twenty-five additional subjects were obtained for purposes of comparison.

The twenty-five men in the active ministry were assigned to Group I and the twenty-five who have left the active ministry were assigned to Group II.

The following nine variables were selected for purposes of comparison: religion of parents, stability of the home, birth order, number of years in the seminary, I.Q., rank in class, faculty rating, summer occupation, and health record.

The chi square was used to test the significance of the differences. In comparing I.Q.'s and grade point averages, students were employed.

The seminary records are not consistent from year to year. There is much information about some students and little information about other students. In some years a great deal of information was recorded, while in other years little information was accumulated. In some cases there was no record of I.Q. and in other cases not even a transcript of credits was available.

Twelve subjects in each of these two groups had in common three psychological tests which could be used for comparison.

Available were raw scores on the Bernreuter (Neurotic-tendency, Self-sufficiency, Introversion-extroversion, Dominance-submission, Self-confidence, and Sociability); on the Personal Audit (Seriousness, Firmness, Frankness, Tranquillity, Stability, Tolerance, Steadiness, Persistence, and Contentment), and on the Manson Evaluation (Anxiety, Depressive fluctuation, Emotional sensitivity, Resentfulness, Incompleteness, Aloneness, Interpersonal relations, and Total Test.) Student's test for small samples was used to determine the significance between the means on these twenty-three variables.

A search program based on all data was employed to determine patterns, clusters or trends which might differentiate the groups.

Bishops and seminary rectors, when asked what is the most important qualification for a candidate for the priesthood, almost invariably answer that he must come from a stable home.

This is the result of their experience with "problem" priests and numerous directives from Rome in regard to the selection of candidates for the priesthood.

The research of Moore (1936) and McAllister and Vander Velt (1961), cited in chapter two, gives empirical evidence which corroborates the experience of the seminary administrators and provides justification for the papal directives. D'Arcy and Kennedy (1965), also cited in chapter two, write:

Probably the best prognosis of future growth can be made on the basis of the home environment, and it is here, as well, that the main barriers lie. A healthy candidate for

religious life comes from a family setting within which growth is possible. The most important source of mature growth is exposure to mature people. The mother and the father should themselves have attained a level of maturity appropriate to their years. They need to be sure enough of themselves and close enough to their children to provide an environment in which their children can develop. Some of the ingredients of such a home are a spirit of trust and mutual affection, consistent discipline without undue severity and a democratic rather than an authoritarian approach. These enable the children to grow in ego strength and to form healthy identifications with the parent of the same sex. Parents play such a fundamental role in a child's development that when they themselves have not been able to mature, their interaction with the children is bound to leave scars which inhibit the child's capacity for growth. Typical signs of immaturity in the parents are a history of mental disorder, alcoholism, instability in work, separation, divorce, illegitimacy, non practice of the faith, chronic family strife and the like.

Without any inference that those who leave the active ministry are to be equated with "problem" priests, home environment has received sufficient emphasis in the selection of candidates for the priesthood to provide the rationale for examining stability of the home and the religion of the parents to see if there are significant differences in these variables between the two groups studied.

It would be interesting to know whether, when a student enters the seminary, i.e. at the high school or college level, is positively or negatively related to leaving the active ministry or remaining active in it.

It would also help to know whether the faculty with their experience in the priesthood would be better in rating these groups than they have been in rating those who leave or remain in the seminary.

There exists considerable theoretical and empirical dispute about the

influence of birth order on personality.

In view of the findings of McAllister and VanderVelt (1961) that academic performance was differentiating, it seems promising to compare IQ, Grade Point Average, and rank in class in the two groups in this study.

In examining summer occupation, the writer is primarily interested in whether the subjects spent one or more summers as camp counselors rather than in more gainful employment. If there are some significant differences here it would at least allow some speculation about the possible psychological implications of this initiative.

In examining health records it might be interesting to know whether one group has more somatic complaints and whether this would have psychological implications.

IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

In the following presentation, Group I refers to those subjects who are engaged in the active ministry and Group II refers to those who have left the active ministry. The presentation is divided into two parts. In the first part there are twenty-five subjects in each group; in the second part there are two groups of twelve subjects drawn from the primary groups.

Part One - The Primary Groups

Religion of Parents: In forty-six cases both parents were Catholics. Even though the four mixed marriages were found in group two, the difference does not approach significance.

The only observation warranted is that in this sample of fifty priests, 92% came from Catholic marriages and 8% came from mixed marriages.

Stability of the Home: Before an applicant can be accepted for admission, he must produce a number of documents including a copy of his parents' marriage certificate and a letter of recommendation from his pastor which should include some appraisal of the stability of the home. In the diocese under study, either prior to admission or shortly after admission, one of the seminary faculty members visits the home and rates the stability of the home as excellent, good or poor; on the basis of his impression. These visits are usually by appointment so that a family is likely to be on their best behavior. Hence we do not have a good objective measurement; each home visitor has his own subjective method of giving a rating and impressions are likely to be superficial. The recorded ratings were, however, examined, and a numerical value of one was given to homes rated poor, a value of two was

given to homes rated good, and a value of three was given to homes rated excellent. The results indicated a very slight and insignificant difference: home stability in Group I was 2.86 and in Group II it was 2.75.

The only conclusion seems to be that because of the lack of an objective measure, we cannot say which group, if either, was in fact from a more stable home.

Number of Years in the Seminary: There were no significant differences between those who entered the seminary at the high school level or at the college level. In Group I there were eight subjects who spent less than twelve years in the seminary and in Group II there were twelve subjects who spent less than twelve years in the seminary. A larger sample would be required to determine whether there is a greater tendency for those who entered in the first year of high school to remain in the active ministry after ordination.

Intelligence Quotient: The result of the comparison's of IQ's are presented in Table I on page 26. The mean IQ of Group I was 118.071 and the mean IQ of Group II was 108.071. The Student's test was significant at the .01 level. The IQ test employed is the California Test of Mental Maturity. This was not an expected result. It might have been expected that those less gifted intellectually would be less likely to seek a vocational change, or the lower score might also reflect former overall integration.

Grade Point Average: The results of comparison of grade point averages is presented in Table II on page 26. The mean grade point average of Group I was 3, and the mean grade point average of Group II was 2.89. The Student's test indicated the differences between the groups was not significant. The

TABLE I
A Comparison of IQ's

	Group I	Group II
Mean	118.071	108.071
Standard deviation	7.056	6.386
Degrees of freedom	13	113 (total 26)
t value	3.7888	
Significance	.01	

TABLE II
A Comparison of Grade Point Averages

	Group I	Group II
Mean	3.00	2.89
Standard deviation	.50	.53
Degrees of freedom	16	20 (total 36)
t value	.68	
Significance	not significant	

slightly higher average in Group I is quite understandable in view of the significant difference in IQ. In fact, it raises the question of why the grade point average is not significantly higher in Group I. We cannot say whether this is a function of the grading system or of motivation.

Class Rank: In Group I 50% of the subjects were in the upper third, 35% were in the middle third, and 15% were in the lower third. In Group II 38.5% were in the upper third and 28.5% were in the middle third and 33% were in the lower third. A chi square test yielded a chi square value of 1.73 with two degrees of freedom. This was not significant. The slight tendency for subjects in Group II to rank lower could be explained by differences in IQ or motivation and general integration.

Faculty Rating: A search of the records revealed no systematic or consistent effort on the part of the faculty to provide any rating or evaluation of the suitability or qualifications of the students. There were too many subjects in both groups for whom neither positive nor negative evaluations of the faculty were recorded to provide any basis for comparison. Given the fact that the students are evaluated each year by the faculty it is regrettable that this information was not recorded.

Summer Occupations: In the diocese under study seminarians are free to choose how they wish to spend their summers. Many take jobs in a variety of occupations, e.g. clerical work, factory work, construction, mail delivery, building trades, etc.; some take extended vacations; a good many work as counselors at various summer camps in the diocese. Those who work at summer camps receive a salary which is only a fraction of what they might obtain in other work; they live a community life not unlike the

seminary, and they are away from their own families except for a short interval, while those in other employment are usually living at home throughout the summer.

In Group I seventeen subjects spent one or more of their four college year summers as camp counselors, and in Group II nine subjects spent one or more summers in such employment. A chi square test of the differences yielded a chi square value of 5.12 which is significant at the .05 level.

Speculation about the meaning of the differences between a seminarian who spends his summers as a camp counselor and one who chooses another occupation presents many possibilities. It might suggest that the camp counselors are more generous and less interested in financial gain. We cannot, however, draw this conclusion without knowing whether financial needs in the home are equal. It might suggest that the camp counselor is more comfortable in community life and less attached to his family. It might suggest a need to identify with or to exercise authority; very probably it reflects higher social service motivation.

Since the significance of the difference in this study is only marginal (.05), it is pointless to speculate any further; but the significance of such a difference could be explored in a separate study for which a much larger sample is available.

Health Record: The health records of Group I indicated that four subjects had frequent health complaints, (frequent colds, frequent headaches, frequent nosebleeds, or ulcers), and seven subjects in Group II had similar complaints. A chi square test of significance yielded a chi square value of 1.06 which was not significant.

Whether health records in this study could be used as an index of hypochondriacal tendencies is doubtful because data are so sparse. If we had data that would include the number of trips to the infirmary, number of days sick, amount and kinds of medication consumed, we would have had more useful data for research purposes.

Part Two - The Sub-Groups

Presented here are the results of the comparison of twelve subjects from Group I and twelve subjects from Group II for which raw scores were available for the six variables on the Bernreuter Personality Inventory, the nine variables on the Personal Audit, and the eight variables on the Manson Evaluation.

In comparing the differences between the two groups the Student's *t* test of the difference between means was employed. The assumptions underlying the use of the distribution involving a difference between means are that the populations are normal⁽¹⁾ and the population variances are homogeneous⁽²⁾. The test for homogeneity of variances is printed in the Appendix.

The Bernreuter Scores

The Bernreuter Personality Inventory scores are summarized in the Table 3, following. Neurotic tendency and Self-confidence were found to be significant at the .01 level; Self-sufficiency and Introversion-extroversion were found to be significant at the .05 level; Dominance-submission approaches marginal significance; Sociability is not differentiating at all.

Neurotic tendency: Group II scored significantly lower (.01) on the Neurotic Scale. According to Bernreuter's norms this means they tend to be emotionally unstable as opposed to the emotionally well-adjusted; they

day dream frequently as opposed to enjoying the world of reality; they feel miserable, self-conscious, shy, lonesome, nervous, sensitive, tense and anxious as opposed to those who feel self-confident, adequate, competent, well and strong; their feelings are easily hurt, they worry, get stage fright, lack self-confidence, have feelings of inferiority and spells of dizziness as opposed to those who are free from fears, worries anxiety, and tension, and whose feelings and moods are stable.

Self-confidence: Group II scored significantly lower (.01) in Self-confidence, and according to Bernreuter, this means they lack self-confidence as opposed to those who are wholesomely self-confident; they have excessive worries and feelings of self-consciousness, inferiority, shyness, loneliness and miserableness, as opposed to those who like to work things out and do things for themselves, who like responsibilities and are decisive; their feelings are easily hurt, they are easily discouraged, upset and moved to tears as opposed to those who are at ease, poised, adequate in social situations, and can stand criticism without feeling hurt; they feel inadequate in social situations, often avoid people, their minds wander and they frequently day dream as opposed to those who are free from vague fears, worries, tensions, anxieties, feel well and strong and have stable moods and feelings.

Self-sufficiency: Group II scored higher in Self-sufficiency. (.05). According to Bernreuter this indicates that they are self-sufficient, self-reliant, independent as opposed to those who depend upon others for advice, encouragement and sympathy; they prefer to bear responsibilities, make decisions, face troubles or problems and work alone and enjoy spending an evening alone as opposed to those who seek help in meeting problems, facing troubles and

making decisions, who like to talk things over with others and need reassurance and support.

Introversion-extroversion: Group II scored lower on the Introversion-extroversion scale (.05). According to Bernreuter this means they are withdrawn and shut-in emotionally as opposed to those who are wholesome with a healthy outward emotional expression; they day dream frequently as opposed to those who enjoy the world of reality; their feelings are easily hurt and they blush very often as opposed to those who can stand criticism without feeling hurt; they worry and are easily upset emotionally as opposed to those who are not easily upset emotionally; their moods and feelings fluctuate as opposed to those who have stable feelings and moods.

Dominance-submission: Group II showed a slight tendency to score higher on the Dominance-submission scale, which did not, however, reach marginal significance. Consequently we can only discuss a slight tendency which could either be established or disproved in a larger sample. According to Bernreuter those who score high on this scale are dominant and self-confident in face-to-face situations, they defend themselves, stand up for their rights, take the lead in organizing groups, volunteer ideas and start discussions, are leaders and take an active part in social situations as opposed to those who are submissive, shy, and self-conscious, have feelings of inferiority, find it difficult to meet or speak to people, keep in the background at social functions, are followers, and play passive roles in social situations.

Sociability: This scale does not differentiate the groups or indicate any trend or tendency, which is particularly difficult to explain since it

TABLE 3

The Bernreuter Personality Inventory Results

	Group I		Group II		t value	Constant Added (a)
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation		
Neurotic tendency	159.17	52.80	83.75	63.35	3.03**	210
Self- sufficiency	58.67	23.40	87.92	32.85	2.40*	56
Introversion Extroversion	93.42	27.38	56.00	46.71	2.29*	120
Dominance- Submission	69.42	40.76	108.75	52.29	1.97	.40
Self- confidence	186.92	56.23	108.67	58.76	3.19**	200
Sociability	146.08	40.10	154.50	40.10	.39	200

Number of Degrees of Freedom = 22

* Significant at the .05 level

**Significant at the .01 level

(a) Since the Bernreuter raw scores are frequently high negative numbers a constant was added sufficient to make all scores positive for computer computation.

"only further confounds the overlap" according to Anastasi (1963), It should, according to the Bernreuter manual, describe the solitary, non-social, independent individual as opposed to the sociable, gregarious one who likes social contacts.

The Personal Audit

The Personal Audit scores are summarized in Table 4. The test of significance between the means of the two groups did not reach significance on any of the nine variables (Impulsiveness-seriousness, Indecision-firmness, Irritability-tranquility, Evasion-frankness, Instability-stability, Intolerance-tolerance, Emotionality-steadiness, Fluctuation-persistence, and Worry-contentment).

Group II showed a slight, but not even marginally significant, tendency to score lower in Fluctuation-persistence; all the other scales were non-differentiating. A larger sample could either support or disprove any significant difference on this scale. No inferences about the obtained results, therefore, are made herein, and it is described merely as a point of interest. According to the authors, those who score low on this scale have interests and attitudes that are in a state of flux, they display bewilderment, uncertainty, restlessness, unsteadiness, mobility, and immaturity; Those who score high on this scale have stable attitudes and interests, tend to be mature and satisfied with their environment and are persistent and persevering.

The Manson Evaluation

The Manson Evaluation scores are summarized in Table 5. The test of significance of the differences between the means of the two groups did not

reach even marginal significance on any of the eight variables (Anxiety, Depressive fluctuations, Emotional sensitivity, Resentfulness, Inccmpleteness, Aloneness, Interpersonal relations, and Total Test).

Again without any attempt to make inferences about the present samples, The Resentfulness and Total Test scales, which show slight, but not significant tendencies, are described merely as points of interest.

Group I shows a slight tendency to score higher on Resentfulness and Total Test. According to the author, those who score high on the Resentfulness scale have wholesome feelings toward individuals and society, feel that people treat them fairly and justly, are calm, tranquil and even in temperament, are objective and thick-skinned, and face unpleasant experiences realistically. Those who score low are described as possessing strong and bitter feelings of resentment toward society and individuals, are easily annoyed and irritated, carry chips on their shoulders, have paranoid ideas, feel neglected, held back and misunderstood, think that people take advantage of them and tell them how to live their lives, and brood over unpleasant experiences.

According to Manson, the Total Test score indicates psychoneurotic and psychopathic tendencies when scores are low, and freedom from psychoneurotic and psychopathic tendencies when scores are high.

TABLE 4
The Personal Audit Results

	Group I		Group II		t value
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	
Impulsiveness- seriousness	82.75	12.54	86.83	16.90	.64
Indecision- firmness	36.83	5.67	40.58	16.03	.73
Irritability- tranquility	80.58	17.25	79.67	16.53	.13
Evasion- frankness	49.25	11.70	52.75	7.27	.84
Instability- stability	46.50	52.80	43.83	17.32	.41
Intolerance- tolerance	78.50	23.41	87.92	21.85	.18
Emotionality- steadiness	30.83	12.79	27.50	9.42	.70
Fluctuation- persistence	35.92	9.40	30.08	12.64	1.22
Worry- contentment	60.75	13.95	108.67	58.76	.76

Degrees of freedom = 22

TABLE 5

The Manson Evaluation Scores

	Group I		Mean	Standard deviation	t value
	Mean	Standard deviation			
Anxiety	12.58	6.65	10.92	5.56	.64
Depressive fluctuations	3.67	3.12	3.77	2.67	.40
Emotional Sensitivity	1.58	.64	1.92	1.66	.62
Resentfulness	2.33	1.18	1.42	1.71	1.47
Incomplete- ness	1.25	1.16	1.33	1.02	.18
Aloneness	3.00	2.35	3.25	1.42	.30
Interperson- al Relations	.83	1.34	.50	.98	.67
Total test	1.67	1.18	1.00	1.00	1.43

Degrees of freedom = 22

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A study of a mid-Western diocese was made comparing twenty-five priests who most recently left the active ministry with a random sample of their peers who are engaged in the active ministry. The following ten variables were compared: religion of parents, stability of the home, birth order, number of years in the seminary, I.Q., grade point average, rank in class, summer occupation, and health record.

I.Q. was found to differentiate the groups at the .01 level, with those who are still active having the higher mean I.Q. The fact of choosing to serve as a camp counselor during the summer for one or more of the four college vacation periods, rather than seek more gainful employment, yielded marginal significance (.05) with the group still active more likely to make this choice.

The writer observed that inconsistent and poorly recorded data may have prevented some of the other variables from reaching significance.

Within the two primary groups there were two groups of twelve for which common psychological test data were available, viz. raw scores on the Bernreuter Personality Inventory (six scales), The Personal Audit (nine scales) and the Manson Evaluation (eight scales).

The active group scored significantly as better adjusted (at the .01 level) on Neurotic tendency and Self-confidence on the Bernreuter.

The non-active group were better adjusted on the Self-sufficiency scale of the Bernreuter, but the significance was marginal (.05) level. Marginal significance (.05 level) indicated that the active group were better ad-

justed on the Introversion-extroversion scale on the Bernreuter. Some slight trends, not significant, were noted on some of the other test variables. Due to the smallness of sample sizes, conclusions were guarded.

The writer observed that since psychological testing is now an official part of the seminary screening and training program, psychologists involved in this work need to come to some agreement about what kind of data are to be collected and to assume some responsibility in the accurate recording and reserving of data for the purposes of future research.

This study suggests that there may be significant differences between those who leave the active ministry and those who do not make a vocational change after ordination. Further study seems warranted.

In the two groups compared the group that left the active ministry performed more poorly on mental abilities test than their peers who remained active. Those who left the active ministry were less likely to volunteer to spend their college summers as camp counselors. The psychological implications of the choice of summer occupation needs to be explored in a separate study.

In the two sub-groups, those who left tended to be more emotionally unstable and more lacking in self-confidence; they tended to be more self-sufficient and more introversive or withdrawn; they seem to be more sensitive and anxious men who prefer to face troubles or problems alone and feel inadequate in social situations, at least according to the norms provided by Bernreuter.

Perhaps the most important conclusion of the present study is that it points up the need for coordinated testing programs and the responsible

collection and preservation of data with an awareness of the value and needs of research which can make individual assessment and training programs more effective in seminars.

Footnotes

- (1) The validity of the first assumption seems apparent. At any rate, according to Hays (1963):

So long as the sample size is even moderate for each group, quite severe departures from normality seem to make little practical difference in the conclusions reached.

- (2) The homogeneity of variances was tested, but according to Hays (1963):

In older work it was often suggested that a separate test for homogeneity of variance be carried out before the test itself in order to see if this assumption were at all reasonable. However, the most modern authorities suggest that this is not really worth the trouble involved. In circumstances where they are needed most (small samples), the tests for homogeneity are the poorest. Furthermore, for samples of equal size relatively big differences in the population variances seem to have relatively small consequences for the conclusions derived from a test. On the other hand, when the variances are quite unequal, the use of different sample sizes can have serious effects on the conclusions. The moral should be plain: given the usual freedom about sample size in experimental work, when in doubt use samples of the same size.

APPENDIX

Test for Homogeneity of Variances in the Sub-Groups

Variable	Number of Degrees of Freedom - Group I	Number of Degrees of Freedom - Group II	F Ratio
1	11	11	1.44
2	11	11	1.97
3	11	11	2.91*
4	11	11	1.65
5	11	11	1.09
6	11	11	2.14
7	11	11	1.82
8	11	11	8.00*
9	11	11	1.09
10	11	11	2.59*
11	11	11	1.80
12	11	11	1.86
13	11	11	1.84
14	11	11	1.81
15	11	11	1.14
16	11	11	1.43
17	11	11	1.36
18	11	11	6.69**
19	11	11	2.09
20	11	11	1.28
21	11	11	2.72
22	11	11	1.97
23	11	11	1.39

* Significant at the .05 level

** Significant at the .01 level

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Reverend John J. Echlin has been read and approved by the director of the thesis. Furthermore, the final copies have been examined by the director and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

October 21, 1968
Date

Francis J. Keller
Signature of Adviser