A Descriptive Survey of the Council of Catholic Women of the Archdiocese of Chicago

John H. Kuhlmey
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A DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY OF THE COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMAN
OF THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

BY

REVEREND JOHN H. KUHLMY

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION IN LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

JUNE 1948
VITA

John Howard Kuhlmeier was born in Chicago, Illinois, January 18, 1912. After attending St. Sebastian's Parochial School, he enrolled in Quigley Preparatory Seminary from which he graduated in 1931.

After six years in St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois, he was ordained to the priesthood on April 3, 1937. From St. Mary's he received the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts.

The first six years of his priesthood was spent as a curate in St. William's Parish, Chicago, Illinois. In June, 1943, he began a tour of active duty with the United States' Army. After 35 months of service he returned to parochial duty as a curate in St. John the Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois.

He enrolled in the graduate school of Loyola University in June, 1946, and is a candidate for the degree of Master of Social Administration in June, 1948.

Presently, he is serving as a curate in St. Bartholomew's Parish, Chicago, Illinois.

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PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF MATERIAL

Since there is no direct and immediate source for material on this subject in books, the primary sources of information are: the minutes of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women of Chicago, the files of the Family Consultation Service of the Council, the personal interviews with the Director of the Council and his staff, the files of THE NEW WORLD, the official press organ of the Council, interviews with the personnel of the Social Service Department, Municipal Court, Chicago, Illinois, and with the personnel of the Family Service of the Cook County Department of Public Welfare, Chicago, Illinois.

There is, however, much relative matter and the bibliography indicates the applicability of this matter to our subject.

* * *
Problems regarding marriage and the family have disturbed the body of society; and the breakdown of marital relationships and family ties is the symptom of a grave, underlying social illness. The wave of marital incompatibility, separation and divorce that is prevalent today is a nausea, indicative of a violent internal disturbance in society. Many moderns, some of them seriously, some of them fatuously; some deserving recognition because of their reputations, others seeking recognition because this is a glamorous subject wherein they might be pompous and apodictic, without assuming any responsibility, have proposed solutions to the marital snarl that run the gamut from the ridiculous, because the proposed solution is without any foundation in principle, to be plausible, whereby conditions can be ameliorated, the proper human cooperation being at hand.

The background of our modern marital difficulties is the lack of any regard for the basic principles of right living. "This lack of a coherent system of ideas is one of the great misfortunes of our age. To escape it, thanks to the intellectual balance afforded by a sure body of doctrine, is an incomparable benefit."\(^1\) So wrote Fr. Sertillanges when he diagnosed one of the evils of our day. Readily can these words be applied to the marital and familial upheaval that now prevails. People, in general, have abandoned Christian principles as guides for right living; a kind of greedy individualism has been substituted. Catholics, in particular, have not

remained uncontaminated by this selfishness. They have found it hard to be in the world and yet not a part of it, so, too often they have surrendered principle to expediency.

The Catholic Church, however, is very much aware of the social illness of people. Like an old family doctor, it depends upon right principles for a solution to the condition. Certain and valid diagnosis can be made only when man is considered in his entirety. Of late, the tendency has been to consider the economic man, or the social man, or the psychological man, while an escape has been sought—and found—from considering him as a moral man and, still more, from considering him as the complexity that he is. The Church reverts to the fundamental concept of man's creation and purpose and, building on this, established the modus vivendi for man that is according to the principles of Christ. So far apart has man drifted from these principles that it is hard today to imagine that our present society was to assimilate those principles and live by them.

A recall to them is necessary if the ailments and illnesses of our society is to be corrected. By preaching "in season and out of season" much can be accomplished from the pulpit. But the call has gone forth for a greater distribution and propagation of the Christian principle. Catholic Action is its title; participation of the laity in the work of the episcopacy is its field of labor; the Catholic men and women are its participants.

In this paper, the primary intention is to give a picture of the work of the Chicago Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women in one phase of its 2. 2 TITUS 4, 1-2.
activity, namely, its Family Service, which it renders to its clients needing guidance, direction and assistance in marital or family difficulties. There is no great library of literature from which to draw since such a Family Service is comparatively recent in origin and its counterpart is not found in many dioceses in the United States. A description of the history and scope of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, together with a survey of some of its case work and a view of what is being done in other dioceses of the United States, and a list of recommendations - not in the form of criticism but, rather, suggestion, will be of interest to those who are eager to promote the welfare of Christian marriage by providing a casework service for people who need outside assistance for the solution of their marital or family difficulties.
CHAPTER I.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN
IN CHICAGO - ITS CONNECTION WITH THE NATIONAL
COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

The Council of Catholic Women is not a title of a particular organization, rather, it is a phase of activity in the Church that comes under the generic heading "Catholic Action". To attempt to describe part of the work of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women of Chicago without a proper orientation of that part to the whole, would be fruitless since it would present a picture barren of the motive, the spirit, the soul of activity. The result would be a truncated, distorted image of a social work that is vital, energetic and spiritual and all the time personal and human. The manner of procedure must be to see the wide, all-embracing scope of Catholic Action, then its restriction to the national level, which is the National Catholic Welfare Conference, next the local representation among women, the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women and, finally, a phase of the work of the local Council, the Family Service it provides.

Catholic Action is not something new in the Church. Its definition "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the Church's hierarchy"¹ was true when St. Paul preached and spread the Christian message with the aid of the lay people² and it is true today when the laity is

¹. POPE PIUS XI: in his Discourse to the Young Women's Section of The Catholic Action of Italy, March 19, 1927.

called to assist the successors of the apostles in their mission. But in our modern day the tempo of living has been accelerated with a consequent diminution of reflection on things eternal and on relationships within the corporate body of Christianity. A conversion is necessary if the welfare and balance of society is to be restored. "Catholic Action sets before itself the diffusion of Christ's Kingdom among individuals, in the family and throughout society."³

To convert the world to Christ, the laity of the world is called upon to aid the bishops. But in defining it, Pius XI states: "Catholic Action consists not merely of the pursuit of personal Christian perfection, which is however before all others its first and greatest end, but it also consists of a true apostolate in which Catholics of every social class participate, coming thus to be united in thought and mind around those centers of sound doctrine and multiple social activity, legitimately instituted and, as a result, aided and sustained by the authority of the bishops."⁴

Implied in the Pope's definition is the active association of the laity in the activities that the hierarchy deem necessary for the welfare of the Church. The National Catholic Welfare Conference has interpreted this definition by indicating the five component points: "The first and greatest pursuit of Catholic Action is the pursuit of personal Christian perfection. Second: it is an apostolate in which all should participate. Third: such participation should be one of unit in thought and action. Fourth: this unified activity must look for its sanction and guidance to duly authorized centers of sound doctrine and multiple social activity. ³ POPE PIUS XI: in his letter to Cardinal Segura, November 6, 1929. ⁴ Letter to Cardinal Bertam, Primate of Belgium, printed in the NCWC Review, 1929, Washington, D. C."
Fifth: such centers must be duly constituted, aided and sustained by the authority of the bishops."5

In 1919 the hierarchy of the United States associated themselves in a union to discuss and decide upon policies with regard to those common questions which effect the well-being of the Church and of our country. In establishing the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the bishops were concerned with the existing needs or trends of our American Society which were common to all sections of the country; which were, in short, national and which could only be met by a national or united effort. In their study of the national social life, the bishops recognized that the democratic institutions of the United States offered unusual opportunities to the Church for carrying out her social mission and in reconstructing a Christian Society. To bring their decisions to the Catholic laity and to secure the cooperation of the laity in the bishops' program for reconstruction in society, the Department of Lay Organizations, composed of the National Council of Catholic Men and the National Council of Catholic Women was established. The work of both of these groups is essentially the same, although different methods of attainment might be perceptible so, for the purpose of this paper, only the Council of Catholic Women is considered.

The National Council of Catholic Women is a federation of (a) the national organizations of Catholic women, (b) the Diocesan Councils composed of Catholic women's organizations within the diocese federated according to the plan of the local bishops and (c) state and local organizations of Catholic women approved by their bishops to unite the

Catholic women of the United States in organized effort in all useful fields of educational, social, religious and economic work for the betterment of the people.

As the unit of ecclesiastical administration is the diocese, so the logical unit of organization is the diocese. In many dioceses the cooperating medium for united national action on the part of Catholic women in the Diocesan Council, intent upon maintaining Catholic principles and ideals. In the Archdiocese of Chicago the various women's organizations have been united and they fulfill the mandate of the Pope for the laity to assist the bishops in the apostolate and the purpose of the National Council of Catholic Women to maintain Catholic ideals and principles by presenting the organization known as the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women.
CHAPTER II.

AN HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN IN CHICAGO

Chicago is a large city with a large metropolitan area that encompasses many surrounding suburbs. The Archdiocese of Chicago is large too, there being 1,687,202 Catholics within its boundaries, and 433 parishes serving them. Among this great Catholic population there are many Catholic organizations, some social in nature, some benevolent, all Catholic in perspective. These organizations run the gamut from the purely parochial Altar and Rosary Society to the national union, such as the Ladies of Isabella and the Catholic Order of Foresters.

While these various societies had their own individuality and objectives, and while they had their own individual projects, about which they were fervent and energetic, they did not present an organized interest to Catholics on a national or a general scale. Their interest and support was never lacking; they cooperated in their individual ways as isolated groups. But the Ordinary of Chicago did not have the women of Chicago as an amalgamated voice backing his activities and consonant with his plans.

Under the aegis of the Right Reverend Auxiliary, Bernard J. Sheil, the tremendous task of welding all the women's organizations into one federation was undertaken. To draw all existing societies, guilds, auxiliaries, clubs and groups into a federation wherein they would retain 1. Catholic Directory, 1946.
their individuality and yet be part of a unified alliance was the initial step. Invitations to an organizational meeting were addressed to all existing Catholic women's societies in the Chicago area. With the executive work in the hands of the Reverend Timothy J. Rowan, then the editor of the New World, the Archdiocesan paper, the first meeting on August 22, 1930, launched the campaign for the establishment in the diocese of the Council of Catholic Women.

The New World carried a press item explaining "that the Council of Catholic Women was established in Chicago by Bishop Sheil in response to a three-fold appeal. First came the appeal of His Holiness, Pius XI, for Catholic Action, or for a greater and more intimate participation by our laity in the various activities of the Catholic Church. Speaking of Catholic Action, His Holiness, Pius XI, said: 'Catholic Action consists not merely of the pursuit of personal Christian perfection, which is, however, before all others its first and greatest end, but it also consists of a true apostolate in which Catholics of every social class participate, coming thus to be united in thought and action around those centers of sound doctrine and multiple social activity, legitimately constituted and, as a result, aided and sustained by the authority of the bishops.' The second appeal for a federation of Catholic women of the Archdiocese of Chicago was only an echo of the appeal of Catholic women. The third and last appeal came from the women of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The leaders of our Catholic Clubs and Societies for Catholic women wished to be more than Catholic in name, they wished to answer the appeal of Pius XI. They wished to place themselves and their efforts
under the direction of the spiritual head of the Archdiocese of Chicago so that great things could be accomplished and so that waste and duplication of effort might be, so far as possible, eliminated."

Previous to this declaration by the New World, Cardinal Mundelein described the potentialities of the Federation when, in giving his approval to the organization, he stated: "Were there harmony and solidarity in the 400,000 Catholic women in this diocese, a unit like an army in battle, they could be invincible, they could accomplish anything, they could carry any cause to victory." By these words the Cardinal inspired the women of Chicago to press forward in their efforts to complete their organization. It is clear from his words that he would demand much from this new association - and expect even more.

To understand the Cardinal's intense interest in this new Federation, it will serve our purpose to recall the days of its inception and actuality. The Cardinal, as head of one of the largest dioceses in the country, was sorely pressed by the difficulties of the times and was much concerned with the problems that confronted his people. Not only were there economic difficulties present because of the depression, but from these stemmed moral and religious problems that perturbed the Catholic population in the city. False teachings, such as contraception as a means of avoiding the responsibility of a family and divorce as a means of dealing with internal family problems, were promulgated by many, even social agencies, to whom the troubled people had turned for succor.

For Chicago the Council of Catholic Women would be a great aid in combating false doctrine and for the Cardinal it would provide a veritable

2. New World, November 11, 1930.
3. New World, November 28, 1930.
army of messengers to carry the word of his teaching apostolate to all corners, to the highest and the lowest, in his diocese. His interest, then, can readily be interpreted as a keen awareness of the Council of Catholic Women being a universal contact with all the Catholic women in Chicago.

The New World, which had been named as the official news organ of the Council of Catholic Women of the Archdiocese of Chicago, carried in its columns during the year 1930-31 the names of the various women's organizations as they ascribed themselves to the Federation. There were many, too numerous to mention, but the names of a few will indicate the breadth of the new Council of Catholic Women. Besides the various parish societies, such as the Altar and Rosary Society, the Tabernacle Society, that existed in the various parishes, there were those that were larger in scope, such as: The Catholic Daughters of America, the Ladies of Isabella, South Side Catholic Women's Club, Ladies Catholic Benevolent Association, Catholic Order of Foresters, Catholic Women's League, the Illinois Club for Catholic Women, the Big Sisters, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Edgewater Catholic Women's Club. By June, 1933, the Council could boast 650 branches in the Council of Chicago.

The Charter of the Council contained the details of organization and the purpose of the Council:

1. To unite the efforts of Catholic women throughout the Archdiocese by fostering a better understanding and appreciation of the work of the various organizations.

2. To further spiritual and material understanding.
within the Archdiocese by fostering through concentrated effort, such specific activities as shall from time to time be referred to it by the Bishop Auxiliary. 5

Bishop Sheil had prepared the ground for the formation of this charter by stating earlier "I should say that charitable, religious, educational and welfare work will be the object of the organization." 6 The approved charter was very much in accord with the ideas of the Cardinal Archbishop who was gravely concerned with the urgencies of the times and the grave needs of his people.

Immediately upon association with the Council, the various women's organizations became acutely aware of the social and welfare problems confronting the Cardinal. Indications of various needs prompted the various individual societies to volunteer for special duties as outlined by the Council. The Catholic Daughters of America, for example, an affiliate of the Council, made themselves the Auxiliary for St. Mary's Training School, one of the charitable institutions of the diocese. The South Side Women's Club, also an affiliate, expressed the intention to devote most of its energies to the development of the Little Company of Mary Hospital. 7

There were other interests of the Council in Chicago besides the social problems of the Catholic women. There were such subjects in their program as Retreats and Days of Recollection, to bolster the spiritual life of its members; the study of the Papal Peace Plan, International Relations and the establishment of a library for the

5. The Charter of the Chicago Council of Catholic Women, approved May, 1931 - from the files of the New World.
6. New World, November 11, 1930.
7. New World, June 17, 1931.
broader understanding of the Church in relation to the world about it. But our special interest in this paper is the welfare work done by the Council. And the welfare work gradually became specific in two general directions: the establishment of shelters for homeless, unemployed women and the Family Consultation Service.

Father John Barrett had succeeded to the position of executive director, after the organizational work was underway. He indicated by statement that the work that was being done by the Council was clearly in keeping with the purpose of the organization by saying: "There are four main projects of social service of the Council of Catholic Women: (1) opening of centers in underprivileged districts, (2) extension of summer school work in congested areas, (3) extension of social work in courts and (4) fostering of girl welfare work, including Retreats." It was not for Father Barrett to see these projects carried to fruition, because it became necessary for him to relinquish his post in the Council to maintain his other duties with the Hospital Board. Under the direction of his successor, Father James Curry, the full scope of this ambitious program was to be developed. With his energy and drive and with his vision of the vast possibilities of the Council, Father Curry was greatly instrumental in bringing the hopes of the Council to realization, particularly in the Family Consultation Service, which he describes as "an indispensable activity of the Council".

3. New World, October 12, 1932.
9. Interview, February 27, 1948.
CHAPTER III.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAMILY CONSULTATION SERVICE
OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC
WOMEN OF CHICAGO

Previous to the formation of the Council, various individual societies had made sporadic efforts to provide a family service. Their efforts, however, were limited by scope and financial restrictions that prevented any full scale effort. It was a matter of general agreement that a Catholic representative in the courts could be very effective in preventing continued breakdown of an individual once she had come under the jurisdiction of the court. For men the Holy Name Society had been of great benefit in the Boys Court, the Auto Court and the Juvenile Court. The Big Sisters had attempted to provide a service in the Juvenile Court of Chicago.

All of the individual efforts of the various societies were absorbed by the Council when it formed the Legion of Mercy. This was an activity of the Council provided by volunteer workers from the various units of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, who proffered their services to help those of their sex who had come into the courts. They did a kind of case work that was energetic and wholehearted, guided by information gleaned from lectures given for their direction by a staff of professional social workers. Their work was in the Women's Court and the Court of Domestic Relations. To them, through referral from the court, came women, Catholic in religion, needing advice, assistance or direction.
The work they did was highly appreciated and significantly effective. Judge Leon Edelman wrote of them, saying: "I would consider myself derelict in my duty if I did not recognize in writing the splendid work done by your Legion of Mercy in my court. It is not an idle gesture on my part to give full recognition to the fact that your own kindliness and deep-rooted knowledge of human affairs and human beings imparted by you to those of the Legion of Mercy, who, under your supervision had had direct charger of the work in my court, has itself been of immense value in the successful operation of our Social Service Department.....I am frank to say that the machine provided by the municipality would be entirely inadequate to cope with those problems thoroughly and effectively without the splendid aid of organizations such as your Legion of Mercy."

The Legion of Mercy fulfilled in its time a genuine function that, under the circumstances, could not have been obtained in any other way. The time of its origin should be noted: The United States was just emerging from the depths of the depression. There was great need of social work in all fields, especially in the family; but there was not at hand the trained workers to fill the positions, nor were there funds available to create a staff of professional social workers. Probably much criticism could be raised about the technical functioning of the Legion, and the statement that their work was not "professional" could be well substantiated. But the criticism would be a "post factum" one, made in the present time and environment when social work has stepped forth from its swaddling clothes to become a fully-recognized professional activity. What the Legion accomplished is highlighted by the great l. New World, March 6, 1936.
energy employed, the principles engendered and the results obtained. In its time, the Legion of Mercy made a valuable contribution towards relieving some of the congestion that blocked family happiness.

The Legion of Mercy was the predecessor of the present Family Consultation Service. Established in 1933, the Legion functioned until 1941 when a reorganization of this activity was recognized as imperative. 2 The needs of the times demanded that a full-time professional staff of case workers was a vital requisite for the future of the Family Service. The magnitude of the work that had been undertaken, the need of thorough case work and the load that the workers were required to carry demanded trained case workers under trained and efficient supervisors be obtained. To this end the Family Service of the Council was reorganized and placed under a professional basis. Because of their training, professional workers could proceed more efficiently in the handling of cases and could utilize their efforts more effectively. The results in the closing of cases proved the value of this reorganization.

At the present, under the immediate direction of the Executive Director of the Council, there is a professional staff consisting of a supervisor, caseworkers and typists. In general, the Council tries to meet the specifications of the Family Service Association of America which classifies the personnel as follows:

Caseworker. The caseworker is the practitioner in the field of social work who has met specified educational and personal qualifications and is trained and equipped to use dynamic understanding of the individual in society. This practice is carried out within the agency function through the establishment of a professional relationship directed toward

2. New World, October 12, 1941.
helping the client solve his problems, utilizing his own capacities and community resources. Among these specified educational qualifications is a minimum of one year's professional training in an approved school and a field work course of six months in a recognized agency.

**Supervisor.** The supervisor is the case worker with experience in and responsibility for assisting another to practice social case work in accordance with the definition of supervision. Supervision is the dynamic enabling process through which the supervisor helps the case worker to practice social case work within the function of the agency and with awareness of accumulated knowledge and skill in other fields and disciplines. This process involves education, consultation, evaluation and administration. It is a changing relationship and its focus shifts according to the professional development of the case worker and of the supervisor, his growing skill and enlarging range of duties.

**Typist.** The typist is to take shorthand notes from dictation and accurately to transcribe them on a typewriter; to do general typing and simple clerical work.³

The wage standard for the professional personnel is graded to meet the compensation given by other similar agencies. Every effort is made to keep the workers abreast of all progress in the field of social work, and these efforts are complimented by the program of the workers-in-training. But over and beyond the professional skills of the workers, there is the intimate understanding of the words of Pope Pius: "There is no duty more urgent than to make known the unfathomable riches of Christ." ⁴

⁴ POPE PIUS XII. Encyclical: Darkness Over the Earth.
CHAPTER IV.

THE MATRIMONIAL CURIA OF THE DIOCESE

AND THE ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL

OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

Because of the present tendencies toward increased family disorganization, the Archbishop of Chicago has been most solicitous that every measure be employed to counteract in his Archdiocese the current thought regarding easy divorce, so prevalent throughout America today. At his instigation, the Matrimonial Court of the Archdiocese was enlarged, the personnel was augmented, and the facilities for helping people with marital problems were amplified. In 1941 the Family Consultation Service of the Council of Catholic Women of Chicago took over the work of supplying casework service to the Matrimonial Court. The Cardinal had in mind a matrimonial court and a social service patterned somewhat after the plan of action that functions between the Municipal Court of Chicago and its Social Service Department. His primary aim was prevention of divorce and separation; his secondary aim was the removal of causes and factors that contributed to the marital or domestic problem. The Matrimonial Court could be an effective means of attaining these objectives if its Social Service Department were to investigate the people and the problem and, through home investigation, to determine the value of the accusations and through treatment to eliminate the sources of trouble, that domestic tranquility might ensue.

Table I illustrates the reasons for growing apprehension regarding
the rise in divorce. The pace has, for the most part, been steadily progressive with great spurts after national calamities such as the first World War and the depression. Figures for the post-war period after World War II will show an even greater disregard for the permanence of the marriage bond, with a corresponding increase in the divorce rate.

A Catholic, living in an atmosphere of light regard for marital union, cannot escape the conflict arising from the meeting of such an attitude with the indubitable and immutable principles of Christian marriage. The recession from the traditional regard for the sanctity and indissolubility of the marriage bond has paralleled the spread of Secularism in the world. Even non-Catholic Sociologists view the present trends with alarm: "The family as a sacred union of husband and wife, of parents and children, will continue to disintegrate. Divorce and separations will increase until any profound difference between socially sanctioned marriage and illicit sex relationship disappears. Children will be separated earlier and earlier from parents. The main socio-cultural functions of the family will further decrease until the family becomes a mere incidental cohabitation of male and female while the home will become a mere overnight parking place mainly for sex relationship." ¹

Moreover, outside the Catholic Church, there has been no great stand taken by other Churches against the tides sweeping away regard for the sanctity of marriage. In fact, a spirit of compromise between Church teaching and the thought of the world has weakened vitally even the few remnants of present respect for the dignity of marriage.

**TABLE I.**

**Divorce Rate in the United States, 1887-1940**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per 100 Population</th>
<th>Per 100 Marriages</th>
<th>Average for Preceding 10 Years</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>27,919</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>55,751</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>83,045</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>104,298</td>
<td>1.05</td>
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Table (I) from Himkoff, idem., Page 626. The table quoted is from the Bureau of Census, Marriage and Divorce, 1931 (Washington, D. C., 1932); Marriage and Divorce, 1932 (1934); Marriage and Divorce Statistics - U. S. 1887 to 1937 (1940); Estimated Number of Divorces by State; U. S. 1937-1940 (1942).

* - Estimate from 1933 to 1937 made by Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyle M. Spencer, "Recent Increases in Marriage and Divorce", American Journal of Sociology, 44:551-54.

The nature of Catholic marriage, however, is such that once a marriage is validly contracted it is indissoluble. This indissolubility is both intrinsic and extrinsic, once the marriage is ratified and consummated. The whole fabric of Catholic tradition is impregnated with this doctrine and throughout the history of the Church, ecclesiastical practice has been to defend the marriage bond by word and deed. The substance of Christian marriage is contained in a brief, concise exposition in the "Decree for the Armenians". This decree follows closely the letter of St. Thomas' work "De articulis fidei et Ecclesiae Sacramentis". The Revised Code of Canon Law, however, serves best to express what the teaching body of the Church has held and taught to be of faith during the centuries. These laws indicate the pristine Christian concept and the present application.

In the face of the rising tide of divorce, the force of Canon 1029 has refreshing clarity and fixation of purpose. The Canon states that husband and wife are obliged to observe community of conjugal life unless a just reason excuses. Divorce with the right to remarry can never be permitted. Separation by reason of adultery is permitted by Canon 1129. Separation for other causes is considered in the subsequent Canons. But the practice of referral to the Ordinary for his permission must be observed.

With this general picture of the attitude of the Church regarding divorce and separation, the activity of the Family Consultation Service
4. The Code of Canon Law, Title VII, Canon 1012 to 1143.
can be considered, and its referrals to the Chancery Office can more readily be understood.

Through a working agreement with the Clerk of the Municipal Court, the Council of Catholic Women of the Archdiocese has a representative in the Social Service Department to whom is referred all cases involving Catholics. Not all the cases, of course, that come to her are marriage problems; they run the gamut from alcoholism to child abandonment. But for the purpose of this chapter, the referrals are limited to those concerned with marital problems.

The representative institutes casework procedure to discover the true nature of the problem. Through interviews, attempts are made for treatment to alleviate or cure the trouble. If the client persists in the quest of a divorce or separation, the caseworker then outlines the Catholic doctrine regarding marriage, the duties devolving upon her to seek permission from the Ordinary of the diocese for permission to enter a civil suit. The client is then referred to the Matrimonial Court of the Archdiocese.

At present, because of the overwhelming number of cases on the docket of the Court, the priests who act as members of the Court are under pressure and cannot give to each case the time they would like to bestow. Their desideratum would be to act as judges only if their other role, as counsellors, would not solve the case. As counsellors, they would utilize every available resource to aid their clients and remove the cause of disturbance. Here the Family Consultation Service would aid them by providing a complete file that included not only interviews but home visitations, investigations of associates and environment and a detailed
personality report. The priest then would have at hand a good dossier and could advise and counsel accordingly. Only after the exhaustion of these resources would he consider the petition for permission for separation or divorce. The complete report is presently not available to these judges so, if grounds for ecclesiastical permission for civil suit are established and if efforts for reconciliation are ineffectual, the client can be given permission to enter the civil court with her petition.

The caseworker again enters the case at this juncture if the client needs legal aid and is unable to procure it. Through the efforts of the Council, legal representation is obtained for those who cannot afford it. Both the legal representative and the caseworkers are given the proper courtesy by the courts when they appear. The background material provided by the caseworker is properly evaluated by the court.
CHAPTER V.
AN ANALYSIS OF THIRTY-TWO CASES FROM THE FILES OF THE FAMILY
CONSULTATION SERVICE OF THE CHICAGO ARCHDIOCESAN
COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN TO ILLUSTRATE THE
NATURE OF CASES REFERRED FOR ASSISTANCE

A study of thirty-two cases was made for the purpose of orientation
in the work of the Family Consultation Service. These cases were selected
at random, with no intention of obtaining a complete sample, but merely
to enter into the files of the Consultation Service to derive an
acquaintance with the kind of case being handled, the work being done
and the termination of the cases in order that a description of this work
might be set forth.

Of these thirty-two cases, eleven ended in divorce, twelve obtained
decrees of separate maintenance, five were reconciled and four failed to
return to the Agency after the initial interview, or failed to keep an
appointment made with the Matrimonial Court of the Archdiocese. All of
these cases had been referred to the Diocesan Matrimonial Court for their
decision and advice.

Of the number of divorces only four had permission to seek civil
divorce (to accomplish the civil effects only, not to obtain the right
to remarry, of course). One client obtained a legal divorce before she
knew of the obligation of obtaining episcopal permission for such action.
One client acted pertinaciously, flaunting the action of the Matrimonial
Court of the Archdiocese, and a decree of excommunication was entered.
In one other case, permission was given by the Matrimonial Court for a suit of separate maintenance but the civil action terminated in divorce. In one other case permission for a temporary separation was approved by the judge of the Matrimonial Court but the parties pursued a legal divorce. The remaining case was referred to the Matrimonial Court for their action but the clients failed to keep the appointment and proceeded to obtain a legal divorce.

Of the twelve separation cases ten had episcopal permission, one had permission for a temporary separation and the other was advised to make renewed effort to keep their marriage intact and to pursue domestic tranquility. The cases that failed to appear at the Matrimonial Court had had appointments made for them and their lack of cooperation is the reason for closing the case.

Among the thirty-two cases there were five cases in which both husband and wife were foreign-born, two in which the husband was foreign-born, one in which the wife was foreign-born and the other twenty-four cases had both husband and wife native-born. The average length of time in which the case was active in the hands of the Consultation Service was 17-3/4 months. This covers not only cases that were handled without interruption but also cases that were closed and then reopened. The major reason for appeal in ten cases was infidelity; drunkenness was the first reason alleged in twelve other cases, while non-support was given as the greatest reason in four cases. Incompatibility was primary in four cases, cruelty in one and desertion in one.

The husband alone was the support of the family in twenty cases; in another ten both husband and wife were working; in one instance the
family was on relief and in the other both husband and wife were unemployed. The income of the family was an item of interest. In sixteen cases the yearly income was $2,500.00 or less; in seven it was between $2,500.00 and $4,000.00. Two cases had incomes between $4,000.00 and $6,000.00 while in two cases the annual income was over $6,000.00. The other cases were unreported.

Considering the thirty-two cases, the writer found that the average number of children per family was 2.68. One family had eight children, one had none. It was remarkable to note that most of these families had more than one child. Mowrer, in his study of family disorganization in a large city and Cahen in his study of divorce present a picture that shows disorganization in those marriages that have no children, or only one child, to be greater proportionately than in those marriages where there are more children. The proportion of divorce is lower in those families where the number of children is greater -- almost an inverse ratio is had between the number of children and the number of divorces. The following figure serves somewhat as an illustration of this point.

**FIGURE I. Comparison of Marriage and Children and Divorce.**

Two of the marriages, among the thirty-two used as an illustration, were civil; two were revalidations, the rest were in the Catholic Church. Husband and wife were both Catholic in thirty cases, in one case the husband had no religion and in the other case the husband was a Protestant. An interesting item had to be passed over for want of record, namely, the length of time the marriage endured from the time of marriage to the first call at the Agency. There was a record for only nine cases in the thirty-two, but the figures were startling since they showed that appeal to the Agency was not after a hasty marriage in which time for domestic and marital adjustment was lacking. The following figure indicates the length of the life of the nine marriages to the time when the problem needed outside assistance.

**FIGURE II. The Duration of Nine Marriages, From the Time of Marriage to the Time of Appeal to the Agency.**

Only two negro families were found among the thirty-two cases; one white girl was married to a Filipino, while one was married to an Indian. The remainder of the cases had both husband and wife as white.

Of the thirty-two cases, twenty-nine husbands had their ages recorded.
The average age was 24.4 years. In the thirty cases that had the ages of the wives recorded, the average age was 21.03 years. This is the age of the wife and husband at the time of marriage. Only one instance of early marriage is recorded, the bride being fifteen, the husband twenty-seven. In this case both parties were Catholic, married in the Church; four children were born to the family and the income was in the lower bracket, around $2,500.00. Both husband and wife were foreign-born; the reason for appeal to the Agency was drunkenness on the part of the husband. The case closed with the wife obtaining separate maintenance with the approbation of the Bishop.

The illustration provided by these thirty-two cases corroborates one of the general conclusions of this paper, namely, that, with intensified investigation of home conditions and environment, the Family Consultation Service can provide its greatest service through preventive work. After the reading of these cases, one can make the inference that so many contributing factors enter into each case history, that the domestic problem is merely the supervisial indication of an underlying discord. If the facilities were at hand, all the factors could be studied: the racial question, the ages of the clients at the time of their marriage, the economic status of the family, the fact of both husband and wife working for the family support, the religious differences and their effect upon domestic tranquility in mixed marriages, the number of children in each family, the environment of the family home. Each one of these points could be the source of the pressure that ultimately erupts into domestic discord. The investigation of each and every one of these factors, together with an analysis of its bearing upon the family and a recommenda-
tion of treatment would be an invaluable adjunct to each case history.
### CHART I. A BREAKDOWN OF 32 CASES USED AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CASES OF THE FAMILY CONSULTATION SERVICE OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN OF CHICAGO.

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(See following page for key to abbreviations)
KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>no religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revalid.</td>
<td>revalidated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMA</td>
<td>Separate Maintenance Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Divorce Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>No Approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC</td>
<td>Excommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drunk.</td>
<td>drunkenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-sup.</td>
<td>non-support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incomp.</td>
<td>incompatibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>under $2,500.00 a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>from $2,500.00 to $4,000.00 a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>from $4,000.00 to $6,000.00 a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>over $6,000.00 a year</td>
</tr>
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</table>
CHAPTER VI.
THE FAMILY CONSULTATION SERVICE OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN
COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN OF CHICAGO AND
THE SERVICES OF OTHER DIOCESES

The Family Consultation Service fills a great need in the Archdiocese of Chicago and, although of recent origin, has shown promising indications of fruitful growth. While it is a definite, progressive step for the alleviation of marital and domestic problems, and while it is unique in its setting, it is not alone in its field. Other dioceses are attempting to fill the function of the Family Consultation Service by an arrangement of facilities that best meets the needs of their community. They work along the same lines but, from the descriptions of the various agencies, it is apparent that they have not projected their program to the ambitious extent that Chicago has, nor has there been so close a tie-in with the Matrimonial Court of the diocese as there is in Chicago. Many other dioceses recognize the importance and necessity of the function that the Family Consultation Service extends, but limitation of funds, lack of proper facilities and dearth of trained personnel prevent their adopting a full-scale family service-and-counselling program.

A questionnaire was sent out to the more prominent dioceses in the United States to derive a description of their family service facilities and organization. The selection of the mailing list was made on the basis of the size of the diocese, the possible need of such a service in that area and the presence of a large urban community in the diocese. Twenty-
four replies were received; some described in detail the activities, facilities and functioning of their agency; others responded very succinctly to the questions proposed. The following table gives a brief conspectus of the replies; and an exposition of them on a comparative basis with Chicago comes subsequently.

From the replies to the questionnaire, the following facts have been gathered: In fifteen of the twenty-four dioceses, there is an established Family Service that is somewhat similar in function, though not in scope, to the Family Consultation Service of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women of Chicago. Of these, all, with but one exception, is connected with the Catholic Charities of the respective dioceses. The one exception is Newark, New Jersey, which has a consultation service connected with the Charities Office as well as one connected with the Council of Catholic Women in the diocese. The connection with the Charities in these instances is a closely-integrated one, so that the consultation service is a part of the functioning of the Charity Agency.

In Chicago, there is an affiliation of the Family Consultation Service with the Charity Bureau, but there is a difference in facilities and execution. The affiliation is made by referral of cases to the Consultation Service and by the financial arrangements whereby the structure of the Charities provides some funds for the subsistence of the Family Consultation Service.

Monsignor William O'Connor, the Bishop's representative for Charity in Chicago, describes the affiliation as follows: "The specialized field of counselling and service in problems of domestic discord and marital relationships was centralized in this agency. The Family Consultation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Family Service</th>
<th>Charity Service</th>
<th>CCN Service</th>
<th>Referral Service</th>
<th>Problems of Living</th>
<th>Problems of Legal Aid</th>
<th>Service for Matrimonial Causes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore - Wash.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Boston</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Detroit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Bay</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wichita</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albany</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toledo</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, Oregon</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Council of Catholic Women*

CHART II. A Schedule of the Replies of other Dioceses Regarding Family Service.
Service of the Council of Catholic Women for Catholic families. Other social problems and all cases involving financial assistance are the responsibility of the Catholic Charity Bureau, Department of Family Care. A close working relationship was established between these two agencies.

All of these dioceses have a priest-director as the Bishop's representative for charity. He acts as executive in charge of the charity bureau. Helping him in his manifold duties is the staff which, in many instances, is well-established and well-trained for the work of the charity office. The work they do, however, is, in general, co-extensive with the Charity Bureau of the Archdiocese of Chicago but does not include marriage counselling and casework for marital problems, as a general rule.

Six replies stated that they handled personality problems directly, the others implied that their services were extensive enough to be used in all situations requiring help for readjustment. It can be inferred, then, from the nature of the replies to the questionnaire that all dioceses contacted, in some degree or other, render help in personality problems. The same can be said of marital difficulties. For the most part, these Family Services consider themselves equipped to handle all kinds of domestic and marital problems. Some of them, however, act only as referral agencies that direct the cases to such resources as are competent to handle them. In cases, for example, where the difficulty can readily be referred to a parish priest, the referral is made by the agency to the parish, since the priest, in many instances, is more competent to handle a particular problem than an established agency.

1. Description of the Various Catholic Agencies that was made for the Community Chest of Chicago, March, 1943.
The main point of discrepancy between these Services and Chicago is in the fact that the Chicago system has the Family Consultation Service set up primarily as a counselling service for marital problems, while in these other dioceses, the casework for marital difficulties is merely a part of the general program of the Charities Office.

In the matter of referrals, there is a semblance of similarity but, again, it is restricted by the limitations in scope of action imposed upon the Services of other dioceses. Eight replies described a working agreement with the civil courts for the referral of Catholic petitioners. Brooklyn, particularly, was very close to the Chicago program, in that cases appearing on the calendars of the various courts were referred to the Catholic Charity Office, if the petitioners were Catholics and in need of the assistance the agency could offer. The other replies stated that, while they did not have an explicit understanding with the courts, they were always ready to supply assistance, should they be called upon to do so.

Legal aid was explicitly offered by six dioceses. In the Chicago program such legal aid as is necessary is supplied through the Family Consultation Service in cases where the clients cannot afford the court costs and lawyer fees.

Regarding casework service for the Matrimonial Court of the Diocese, seven reports stated that such a service was supplied, there being a working relationship between the Matrimonial Court and the Charity Office. None, however, stated that casework service and social investigation of the clients was a routine matter for all the petitions that came to the Matrimonial Court or for all the referrals that came from the civil courts.
that would, ultimately, be directed to the Ordinary of the diocese for his decision. This point should be emphasized because, in many instances, such social investigations, as is made by the caseworker, is directly influential in the proper solution of the case and the reconciliation of the parties involved in domestic turmoil.

Marriage counselling has not been taken on as a special agency function by most of the dioceses, the matter being left to the zeal and fervor of the priests of a parish. In some instances, the statement was made that all such counselling can be more readily handled by a priest in his parish, since he knows his people and has their welfare always at heart. The Chancellor of the Archdiocese of St. Paul, Minnesota, expresses this view clearly by stating: "It is the practice in the Archdiocese to allow pastors and assistants to handle all marriage problems since we feel that they are better fitted by their office and by their experience to do what is best suited for the parties and for the good of religion."

Another viewpoint, however, is had in the reply from Omaha: "Catholic Charities of Omaha does not have a Marriage Counselling Bureau, as such. Our approach to the problem of marriage counselling has been this: a soundly-established casework program requires that staff member be fully trained. This assures us of mature and skilled personnel who, in their relationship with clients of the agency, have constantly, over a period of years, carried on all the functions described by the concept of marriage counselling." 2

The Catholic Charities of Buffalo describes their activity thus:

2. From correspondence with the Reverend Floyd E. Fischer, Director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Omaha.
"This is the official diocesan agency for Catholic Social Welfare and is staffed with social workers trained to work with families and family problems.... On a service basis we are equipped to extend counselling to parents with problem children, to couples with marital problems and to families with spiritual problems." Regarding an affiliation with the Matrimonial Court, the executive assistant continues to reply: "Our Matrimonial Court..... does not study or treat cases where there is marital discord or where separation or divorce is pending. These cases are usually referred to our Agency by the parish priest or the judge who is hearing the action. The Matrimonial Court has taken advantage of our service in securing reports from clinic or from other agencies. We, in turn, have referred cases to it to determine the marital status of our clients."

In the work of the Catholic Family Center in Detroit: "Marriage counselling is not set up as an independent department within the agency, but it is simply a part of the total service offered to families." The Catholic Charities of Portland, Oregon, describes their set-up in somewhat similar a manner: "Our Family Service is related not to the Matrimonial Court in the Chancery, but directly to the parish priests and local social agencies..... The Agency provides casework services in marital difficulties and in parent-child relationships when the child or children are in the home."

In summary, it can be noted that most dioceses have the office of Catholic Charities as a central agency handling all welfare problems, including marriage problems and marriage counselling. The processing

of all such cases are handled by the same intake desk and routed through the proper channels to the department concerned. In Chicago the manner of procedure is different. The Catholic Charities handles welfare cases and, by referral to the Family Consultation Service of the Council of Catholic Women, takes care of any marital problems that might be met in the course of treating a case. The Family Consultation Service, however, sets up its own intake service; for each case it has its own case record and applies its own particular kind of treatment. After it fulfills its function the case is returned to the Charity Bureau, should their resources be still in demand.

Marital problems and marriage counselling are decidedly within the scope of the function of the Family Consultation Service of the Chicago Council of Catholic Women. It is for them to extend assistance to not only those who approach the Charity Bureau for financial needs, but also to those who come to the Matrimonial Court because their marriage is breaking up. Since they can be of service by investigating all marriage problems, ascertaining by home visitation, contact with relatives and friends, the true nature of the complaint, the party who is to blame and the evident solution to the problem, they could be an effective instrument in the hands of the priests of the Matrimonial Court for the solution of many of the petitions that come to them. Effective treatment can be rendered through such an agency as the Family Consultation Service to impede the descent of marital harmony and prevent the disorganization of a family.
CHAPTER VII.

THE SOURCES OF REFERRALS MADE TO THE FAMILY CONSULTATION
SERVICE OF THE COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN
OF CHICAGO

The chief sources of referral are: The Social Service Department of the Court of Domestic Relations in Chicago, the Catholic Charity Bureau, the Chancery Office and the clergy of the diocese. There are other referrals but, through the course of the years, these have been the prominent sources.

Through a working agreement with the Clerk of the Municipal Court, a trained representative of the Council of Catholic Women is in court each day it is in session. Cases that involve marital or domestic troubles are referred to her through the personnel of the court's Social Service Department. She, in turn, assumes the responsibility of the casework history and, either personally or through another worker of the Council, attends the case until it is closed.

The graph that follows (Figure III), shows the number of cases that were handled by the intake desk of the Social Service Department of the Court of Domestic Relations. This graph covering a period of five years, shows the number of applications made and the number of cases accepted for service by the Social Service Department. Since the court handles cases of non-support and bastardy, for the most part, the decline during the war years is easily explained while the ascent that is contemporaneous

1. Graph through the courtesy of Mrs. E. McDowell, Director of the Social Service Department of the Court of Domestic Relations.
FIGURE III. Decisions Handed Down by the Matrimonial Court in
136 Cases.

- Total Applications
- Cases Accepted for Service
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>1942</th>
<th>1943</th>
<th>1944</th>
<th>1945</th>
<th>1946</th>
<th>1947</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Court of Domestic Relations</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Charity Bureau</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral and Clergy</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancery Office</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends and Others</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Dependent Child Commission</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Societies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Courts and Police Department</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Welfare Department</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with the end of the war and the return to a peace-time economy can be explained by the disorganization of many families because of housing, re-adjustment to civil life and inadequacy in marriage since the marriage was one of wartime hysteria and note one based on real love.

While the number of acceptances is comparatively small, the important point for this paper is the number of applications. Many of these were not accepted because they did not fall within the scope of the court's service. Their number, however, intensifies the importance of an agency such as the Family Consultation Service since they, in many instances, could be helped by a marriage counselling service.

Keeping people out of the civil courts is the objective to be attained. Ordinarily, the usual human being wishes to keep far away from the machinery of the law and it is only as a last recourse that the appeal is made to the court for legal action. If the work of marriage counselling was interjected into many of these cases before they arrived at the breaking point, a happy solution could be effected and the disorganization of a family avoided.

Figures of the cases in the Matrimonial Court are not available for delineation by graph of the applications made there but since 1942 to the present date, 7,000 applications for divorce or separation have been received. When this enormous figure of family disorganization is contrasted to the average yearly number of marriages among Catholics in Chicago, the result is startling. The yearly average of marriages approximates 12,500. In 1946 there were 13,816 marriages; 11,011 of these were Catholic and 2,805 were mixed marriages.

The present caseload of two workers was studied to discover the kinds
of complaints and the action taken. The following chart delineates the situation.

### CHART III. Reasons Cited for Applications to the Family Consultation Service for Assistance in 59 Cases in 1948.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desertion</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruelty</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infidelity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-support</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation (or divorce)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child neglect</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child placement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment wanted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen in this breakdown that remedial measures could have the widest latitude if applied correctly and efficiently. Some cases, however, come in as "last appeals", that is, everything else has been tried and found wanting. Now, as a last appeal, the Consultation Service is invoked to work a last miracle to save the marriage. Relief measures in these instances are poor, emaciated attempts to resuscitate something that already has the mark of death upon it.

### CHART IV. Decisions Handed Down by the Matrimonial Court in 136 Cases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separate Maintenance*</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live apart but without civil action</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil action for the custody of children</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned to ACCW for further work</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconciled</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases pending</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients did not respond to summons</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL:** 136

* - These, of course, refer to episcopal permission to seek such action in the civil courts.
In these cases the action of the Matrimonial Court is indicated. These cases do not cover any particular period nor do they refer to any particular action. They are selected to illustrate the kind of action the Matrimonial Court takes with the various cases that come before it.
CHAPTER VIII.
CONCLUSIONS DERIVED FROM THIS DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY OF THE
FAMILY CONSULTATION SERVICE OF THE COUNCIL OF
CATHOLIC WOMEN OF CHICAGO AND SOME
RECOMMENDATIONS OFFERED FOR
CONSIDERATION

The social upheavals of our times make imperative a program such as that of the Family Consultation Service of the Council of Catholic Women of Chicago. Time was when family integration and domestic accord were the normal, ordinary expectations of two people entering marriage. The complexities of our present industrial mode of life, however, had had their force in every corner of domestic life. Today the shock of mass production with its concomitant routine and monotony and the accelerated pace of modern living have penetrated the innermost recesses of life and drawn from them the life blood of normality. Speed is the gauge of our present existence; speed in living, speed in learning, speed in working and speed in dying. If ever there existed a Frankenstein monster, it exists in the reality of the modern tempo of living.

The first awful consequence of such fast living is the breakdown of marriage and familial ties. Marriage and the family are staid, conservative institutions that derive their social strength from the ponderosity they have within themselves. They cannot be hurried along except at the cost of the loss of weight -- in this case, the dignity and prestige of marriage. Marriage and the family are traditional, natural things.
Modern, high-speed industrialization is an intruder, an undesired invader in the sphere of natural normalcy. The effect of such high speed activity has had a psychological effect on mankind, in that disturbances that are the companions of speed, namely, peptic ulcers, shingles and the like, are more prevalent at the present than in times of a more leisurely pace of living. Psychologically, nervous breakdowns, emotional disturbances and kindred upsets are very much in prominence today. Domestically, similar tragedies have occurred. People do not now adjust themselves to marriage; they have not accepted the responsibilities and obligations inherent in their married state; they will not slow down long enough to know what are the prescriptions for happiness in marriage. The eventuality has too often been sadly demonstrated in the conflict between the slowness of marriage and the family and the speed of mass production something had to give away. Mass production has the irresistibility of an avalanche, and marriage and the family suffered under the impact.

Social agencies are now trying to give first aid; but all their efforts are superficial; all their measures are local, rather than internal and basic. Society must take a good look at itself to accomplish a real cure. Meanwhile, an agency such as the Family Consultation Service of the Council of Catholic Women of Chicago, has tremendous importance and value. This value is in applying such first aid as the various cases demand and in repeating, emphasizing, reiterating the basic principles of Christianity as the only panacea for the social illnesses of our times. A recall to such principles is the only salvation for the marriage and the family.

What the Family Consultation Service has thus far accomplished has
been good. The program it has outlined is beneficial and ambitious. In the opinion of the writer, the following suggestions are made in the form of observations that might be conducive to discussion and stimulating to thought along these lines.

The physical arrangements of the office of the Family Consultation Service leave much to be desired in the matter of privacy for confidential interviews. The present arrangement, because of insufficient floor space, provides merely desk space for the various workers, contiguous to one another. The desired atmosphere for a casework interview is missing.

Because so much good can be effected by marriage counselling, a statistical and research department could happily fit in the general program. By survey, analysis, charts, graphs and other statistical instruments, investigations can be made, results tabulated for a better understanding and approach to all cases. From assembled data, much help can be offered for future cases.

The personnel of the Consultation Service is handicapped by the youthfullness of its members and could be aided by intensified professional training. The caseworkers, in some instances, are young, unmarried, recently-graduated college girls whose youthful appearance does not inspire confidence in a person who has been married for some years and is now experiencing difficulties in her home. So far as training is concerned, a progressive course that will give each worker an adequacy for every case is imperative.

A more extensive home investigation service should be provided; this is particularly applicable in those cases that are referred to the Matrimonial Court for episcopal permission. Too often the case history
that is presented to the presiding priest in the court is sketchy and lacking in essential information. Vital information concerning the personality, education, recreation, pursuits, environs and companions of the clients should be examined so that the proper solution might be forthcoming.

Wages, in general, have never been very high among social workers. For a better Family Consultation Service adequate salaries, commensurate with the work and professional skill entailed, would be a great incentive to an enthusiastic personnel. While many workers in an agency such as this could be carried along by their zeal and fervor, such workers are in the minority, and to depend entirely upon them restricts an agency in its demands on the labor market.

In commenting upon a plan for the establishment of a Social Service for the Divorce Division of the Cook County Court of Illinois, Miss Ruth Coleman, Director of the Court Service Division of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare made this statement:

"Social service is at present desired by the Divorce Division in three areas.

1. To participate in the decision as to whether a couple with children should file an action for divorce (or separation) or whether this should be delayed until they have had skilled assistance in finding out whether a reconciliation might be worked out.

2. To assist the couple to a better knowledge of themselves and their problems in the attempt to bring about a reconciliation if this is socially desirable.

3. To make a social investigation for the court in cases in which
there is a contest on child custody, or any question as to the desirability of a proposed child custody plan. The need for social investigations in child custody might arise when the case first came before the court; at a later date, when the petition for a change of custody is filed; or as to the outcome of semi-annual custody check-up by questionnaires sent out by the Divorce Division — i.e. if the questionnaire is not returned, or if the situation described in the questionnaire does not sound suitable for the child. Reviewing and evaluating returned questionnaires would seem best done by a social worker."

According to Miss Coleman's estimate, the following personnel would be required for servicing the Divorce Division:

1 - Supervisor
2 - Supervising Caseworkers
10 - Caseworkers
3 - Stenographers
1 - Clerk
1 - Statistical Clerk

While no basis for comparison can be established between the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare and the Family Consultation Service, because of many differences, still there is so striking a similarity in the area of service that the proposed Social Service of the Divorce Division will cover and that the Family Consultation Service of the Council desires to cover, that much can be gained from a consideration of the one for the benefit of the other.

Service to families with children, working toward the end that a reconciliation might be effected, logically falls within the scope of a Family Service Agency. If the Family Consultation Service of the Council of Catholic Women in Chicago accepted this task with all its implications,
a progressive step would have been taken. Urban living, with all its difficulties, strifes, and irritations increases the possibility of family disorganization. The Family Consultation Service could enter at the point of friction and, through its service, assist in the removal of the causes of trouble.

The acceptance of this responsibility would imply the augmentation of the personnel, in order that adequate facilities could be provided. Interviewing is a necessary part of any case record; but social investigation, particularly of the environment, is demanded in these cases of domestic discord. A thorough social investigation, with the proper evaluation and recommendation, can aid greatly in the pursuit of a reconciliation.

In the first area of service listed for the Social Service of the Divorce Division -- the interviewing of parents who propose to file petitions for separation or divorce -- the Family Consultation Service of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women can be of the utmost help. Were there an Intake Service and a Casework Service provided for every application for divorce or separation that is presented to the Matrimonial Court of the Archdiocese of Chicago, much of the burden that now rests upon that Court would be alleviated. Factual evidence, that can be provided only through investigation, would be on record before the priest who judges the merits of the case. Witnesses would be investigated, not only the selected witnesses who have been hand-picked by the clients, but any others who could bring light to the case. Welfare of all children would have influence on the recommendations of the investigator. Many cases, that should never be brought before the court, could be handled and
serviced through good casework.

Unfortunately, the value of such service has not, as yet, been tested. The priests of the Matrimonial Court at present do not utilize a casework report to the extent it could be used. The social investigation that, seemingly, should be a prime requisite for every petition presented to the Matrimonial Court, is not available. Thus the judge of the case is somewhat handicapped in his knowledge of the situation.

The personnel that Miss Coleman suggested above applies to the County Bureau of Public Welfare, but in a smaller, but parallel manner, the set-up could be duplicated in the Family Consultation Service, to provide the workers needed for the efficient functioning of a family agency. It is quite obvious that an agency that has limited personnel will give only limited service. For the Family Consultation Service to be of value to the Archdiocese, it is necessary that it function to the utmost of its efficiency. Only an adequate personnel can answer this requisite; less than adequate personnel means limited service.

One area that has not been touched at all by the Family Consultation Service is a follow-up of its cases. What happens to the clients after they have been to the divorce or separation court? What is the disposition of the children; what measures are provided for their personality development if the family unit has been deprived of a father or mother? These considerations vitally affect all subsequent adjustments of the individuals since a broken family implies a disoriented individual, at least, for a time. Juvenile delinquency could, to some extent, be prevented by the supervision that a follow-up service could provide.

Another recommendation for improved service can be had in the
suggestion that a wider and more direct relationship be effected between the Family Consultation Service and the clergy of the Archdiocese. In so many of the cases, the priests of the various parishes could be of great assistance in providing a solution to a problem, since they know the family and are ready and eager to apply suggested remedies. It would be helpful to the clergy, too, if they were notified about divorces and separations because their pastoral ministry might be helpful in assisting the family to make adjustments, if a divorce or separation has ensued. It would help them also if they were notified about people who obtained divorces without permission from the Ordinary, or after such permission was denied. The unworthy reception of the Sacraments could thus be averted.

Finally, a word of commendation might be proffered for the Council of Catholic Women in Chicago whose initiative has originated the Family Consultation Service and whose energy and zeal have carried it forward. To them the following might be applied:

"...we live in a world of conflicting ideas. The Christian idea must be represented in that conflict. It cannot be represented without a strong laity. And the laity cannot be strong unless it is unafraid of the world as it exists, capable of sustained initiative, competent in all branches of human knowledge and activity, closely and personally identified with all those who suffer, aware of the Christian past, and thoughtful in preparing the Christian future."¹

¹. From a speech by G. Howland Shaw, Laetare Medalist, 1945.
ADDENDA

The following are excerpts from some replies received in answer to a questionnaire sent out to the various dioceses of the United States.
In reply to your questionnaire regarding the relationship of the Archdiocese and the Council of Catholic Women to Catholic Family Service, I would like to say that in Omaha we look to the Council of Catholic Women primarily as an organization engaged in social action. Neither recently nor historically have they been associated with the organization of the Catholic Family or Child Welfare Service.

The Archdiocese of Omaha has operated a Catholic Family Service for the past twenty-seven years. This has been the integral part of the service provided by the Bureau of Catholic Charities. It employs a trained case work staff. By that I mean that all workers received graduate training in social work and most of them have their Master Degree. This service, since it was founded, has been under the direction of priests, likewise trained under social work. In addition to economic assistance the agency offers skilled service in the areas of personal adjustment, marital problems, child guidance, unmarried mother service, child placement service, etc. It cooperated closely with the volunteer St. Vincent de Paul organization which has conferences in eighteen parishes and a central office. The executive director of Catholic Charities is usually the spiritual director of the particular council and through that medium cooperative relationship is established and a mutual recognition is established of the need and kind of service each organization can give.
Catholic Charities of Omaha does not have a Marriage Counselling Bureau, as such. Our approach to the problem of marriage counselling has been this: a soundly established casework program requires that staff members be fully trained. This assures us of mature and skilled personnel who, in their relationship with clients of the agency, have constantly, over a period of years, carried on all of the functions described by the concept of marriage counselling. Whenever the community gets excited about establishing a marriage counselling service, we emphasize the fact that such service is already available in the community through the professional casework service of three agencies. By case illustration we are able to show them that the processes of counselling on marriage problems are routine in the type of service offered to clients. We have directed our thinking and action along this line because certain group agencies such as the YWCA, have attempted to develop what they call Counselling Service. We casework agencies have landed on them with both feet, questioning the soundness of such a program and certainly the qualifications of the people who were carrying on a counselling service.

Cases have been referred to us specifically for counselling in marriage problems by pastors, by the Domestic Relations Court, by the Juvenile Court and clients have come who were referred by friends of theirs who had received service from the agency. We route all these requests through our regular Intake Department and set up a case record on this the same as for any other client accepted for service by the agency. In other words, our effort has been to get across the interpretation that the knowledge and skills involved in marriage counselling are a part of the casework program of Catholic Charities.
It is true that this approach does not touch the premarital groups except insofar as they are children in the family or under foster care of the agency. We find in going over the case records that premarital counselling is frequent with especially the older teen age girls. We have serious questions as to whether it is proper function of Catholic Charities to establish a central Diocesan Premarital Counselling Service.

It is also true that our approach does not produce a widespread educational program. Whether or not this is the proper function of Catholic Charities Bureau is again something we want to evaluate further. We have a lot of questions about it in its relationship to the parishes and to existing parish organizations.
The functions of this family service are outlined as follows:

Our family service is related not to the Matrimonial Court in the Chancery but directly to parish priests and local social agencies.

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Portland is the central administrative organization for eight Catholic social service agencies and institutions. Its function is to plan, organize and supervise the programs which are administered by member agencies. One of these member agencies is the Society of St. Vincent de Paul which in 1942 established a central Social Service Bureau for clearance of family welfare cases. In 1944 the Social Service Bureau engaged on part-time basis a trained caseworker to serve families. Beginning in 1946 a graduate caseworker has given full time to the family department which is the Social Service Bureau, operating under the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The major function of our family service is to assist pastors. In fulfilling this responsibility the Social Service Bureau is prepared to give casework service to families or individuals referred by pastors. The Bureau also serves pastors by referring to them families or individuals who are known first to our agency by initiating application themselves for casework help or by referral from other agencies in the community. The problems of the family groups and individuals served through our family service are those which are common to family service agencies. The agency
provides casework services in marital difficulties and in parent-child relationships when the child or children are in the home. Referral for psychiatric services, problems of the aged, referral for financial assistance and supervision of children in their homes when requested to do so by the courts are major functions.

In summary, we provide casework services for many and varied problems which means that in some situations, after the study of the problem is made, the individual or the family may be referred to another social agency for continued service or our agency works cooperatively with another agency to help toward a solution.

The family service works in conjunction with the local Court of Domestic Relations when this is a request of the Court.
The Catholic Family Center is a family agency with a two fold purpose: first, to foster the development of Catholic family life by offering casework service to Catholic families and individuals who are unable to solve their problems alone; second, to serve as a central application bureau for the placement of children under Catholic auspices. The agency accepts applications of Catholic families in which there are emotional and personal maladjustments, family and marital difficulties or problems of relationship which can be alleviated through casework service. These cases are referred by priests, by the Friend of the Court, where divorce petitions are filed, by Catholic institutions and other public and private agencies. In some instances cases are referred by priests in the matrimonial court.

Marriage counselling is not set up as an independent department within the agency, but it is simply a part of the total service offered to families.

The Catholic Family Center, at the present time, is trying to preserve Catholic marriages through casework service. We feel that we should do more, namely, preventative work. The Church has the potentials in the parish organizations and through their schools. The agency may be the instrument through which these potentials may be utilized in the
preparation for better family life.

The agency feels that pre-marital counselling is a need. Couples come to the Center who are unwilling to accept parental responsibilities and even ask for the placement of their child on the basis that they cannot afford the expense.

Pre-Cana and Cana Conferences offer great possibilities in the education of couples and parents in the duties and obligations entailed in the Sacrament of Matrimony as well as the parental responsibility of the father and the mother.
Permissions to institute civil suit for separation or, if necessary, for civil divorce should be initiated in the parish where the family lives. The parish priest should listen to the complaint of the aggrieved party, should summon the party complained against, and after discussing the cause of their friction with each separately, the priest should formulate his recommendation and then summon both parties to the rectory and make a sincere effort at reconciliation and adjustment of the difficulties as he sees them. After failing in this effort if the priest is convinced that a civil separation or even a civil divorce is necessary, he should write his recommendation to the Chancery and give the reasons for his recommendation.

Occasionally the parties themselves are referred to the Chancery by the parish priests and, in some instances, the parties are unwilling to take up their marital difficulties with the priests in the parish and come to the Chancery directly. The Chancery should then check with the parish priest or, if necessary, summon the party complained against to the Chancery in an effort to salvage the marriage. When there is no hope of a reconciliation, permission is issued by the Chancery for the aggrieved party to initiate civil suit for separation or, if necessary, for civil divorce.
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