

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A HOLISTIC INCLUSIVITY

*Inclusivity*, a rarely used word defining a state of including, stands in opposition to its more familiar opposite, *exclusivity*, a state of excluding. Recall that inclusion of the other is the common denominator of operationalizations of the common good. The common good requires inclusion of the other, and, according to Robert Grudin, society on all levels struggles to put this principle into practice. Society benefits from new potentialities, Grudin writes, when “it gives ear to new voices, views differences with the interest they deserve, honors people as individuals rather than stereotypes and sees diversity as holding the seeds of future change.”<sup>1</sup> The common good means inclusivity.

#### **Integrating Inclusivity into a Dissertation**

Chapter Three looked into Pinkerton’s life for examples of dialogue and action—two actions necessary for the common good to become reality. Chapter Four now addresses the common denominator of all operationalizations of the common good—inclusion of the other, and as we shall see, sometimes the other is Thee—the Thee being Pinkerton and all women struggling for full inclusion in the Catholic Church. Chapter Four illuminates insights and practices of inclusivity found in Pinkerton’s speeches, in the writings of other women religious, and in records of religious life.

Inclusive historical research should strive to locate and include all possible avenues of effect on the development of the subject of consideration. Consequently, the researcher looked at social movements for possible significance in the development of Pinkerton’s championship of the common good. From community documents, official news organs of organizations developed by women religious, and from Pinkerton’s speeches, the researcher found examples of new thought gleaned from the humanistic psychology movement. The surprise, however, was the overwhelming significance that women religious assigned to the women’s movement in their personal and corporate growth. Pinkerton called the women’s movement “perhaps the greatest revolution in the history of the planet.”<sup>2</sup> Other social movements of the period are not to be excluded as they were a part of changes taking place among the laity as well as religious, but women religious clearly credited much personal growth to the women’s movement.

#### **Social Movements Broaden Inclusivity**

The 1960s and ’70s witnessed many social movements. Three, in particular, affected women religious and prepared them to support social movements of others. The three included the humanistic psychology movement, the women’s movement, and a movement of inclusive spirituality sometimes referred to as the charismatic renewal. The humanistic psychology movement focused on the whole person rather than fragmented parts. The women’s movement included demands for the inclusion of women as equal partners with men in all areas of life, and the spirituality of the charismatic renewal celebrated and embraced the inclusiveness of the Holy

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<sup>1</sup> Grudin, *On Dialogue*, 40.

<sup>2</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation: St. Joseph Academy" (Cleveland, Ohio, 23 August, 1989), 13.

Spirit rather than denominational rules and practices designed to exclude non-adherents.<sup>3</sup> The confluence of these movements was a revolution of the human psyche and spirit. Pinkerton recognized the evolution of human consciousness that brought these movements into being and the “journey inward” for divine wisdom, both of which are addressed in spiritual and transpersonal psychological literatures. Addressing the graduates of Saint Joseph Academy in 1981, she said:

We are taking the journey inward in a great and human and spiritual awakening which takes us back not just to our cultural, ethnic, racial roots, but to the very core of who we are as God’s masterpiece of creation—each of us unique, gifted, blest with an identity and dynamism all our own—irrespective of our sex, our race, our cultural heritage, our role, our education, our position. ...All the slow imperceptible movements of history have brought us to this point. As humans, we have probed the secrets of the universe and mastered to some degree its processes. But we have come to recognize that the greatest mystery lies in what it is to be truly human in every dimension of our being.<sup>4</sup>

Women religious mentioned all of the movements or thought characteristic of the movements in their speeches and articles, but the lessons learned from feminism<sup>5</sup> seemed to have the most profound effect. Denouncing the system of patriarchy<sup>6</sup> for roles that prevented women and men from being “truly human in every dimension of [their] being,” many women religious became increasingly aware of previously unnoticed means of oppression and the oppression of other groups, also. This continuous learning will be included and interwoven throughout this chapter as examples of a broadening understanding of inclusivity. The chapter begins with a brief recollection of stories of Pinkerton’s early education mentioned in the previous chapter to illuminate the relationship of the events to the theme of inclusivity. The examples of inclusivity proceed chronologically as much as possible. Sometimes a neat chronological separation is not possible as movements converge, and insights arise from multiple influences.

### **Learning from an Inclusive Childhood**

Pinkerton grew up believing she had a right to be heard and a contribution to make to the betterment of society. Inclusivity permeated her childhood. Inclusion in knowledge of parental protests to authority figures against exclusivity and inclusion in serious conversations with her father concerning the interconnectedness of countries in production and exchange of goods via the shipping witnessed on Lake Erie welcomed Pinkerton’s participation at an early age in dialogue and in the business of life. Inclusion in the participative elementary education of the Winnetka Plan that stressed social responsibility, and inclusion in an opportunity to include the poor in the necessities of life via the Catholic Worker Movement provided continuous learning in inclusivity until her immersion into the religious life.

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<sup>3</sup> In some sections of the U.S., the Charismatic Renewal later changed from a focus on the inclusivity of the Holy Spirit to a more fundamentalist insistence on adherence to rules.

<sup>4</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Commencement Address" (St. Joseph Academy, Cleveland, 31 May, 1981b), 8.

<sup>5</sup> Feminism is often used to name the belief system that came out of the women's movement. Francine Cardman describes feminism as a movement "that seeks to realize the equality of women and men in all areas of life, so that our relationships, both personal and societal, are characterized by the freedom and mutuality that can only occur between equals." Francine Cardman, "Feminism and Faith," *LCWR Newsletter* 8, no. 2 (April 1980): 1-2.

<sup>6</sup> Patriarchy as defined by Francine Cardman is "the social (and religious) system that is built on male privilege and power Cardman, "Feminism and Faith."

## **The Exclusivity of Early Religious Life**

When Pinkerton was a young adult and engaging in the developmental task of seeking her own role in a life apart from her parents, she chose to enter the Sisters of Saint Joseph, the religious community, members of which had been her educators throughout twelve years of school. Pinkerton felt called to religious life, but the lessons of inclusivity she had experienced and practiced all of her young life came into conflict with the exclusivity practiced in religious life at the time. On a very personal level, she was to exclude herself from her family, even denying the name her parents had chosen for her and instead answering to the name Sister Mary Pius, a name she detested.<sup>7</sup> In an act of further exclusion, the young sisters were not allowed to go home to visit. Families could come to the convent to visit but only one Sunday afternoon a month. Additionally, the postulants and novices were not allowed to talk to the professed sisters within the community itself.<sup>8</sup> The religious community was not to mix with parishioners. Pinkerton said we lived a life “securely separated from the mainstream of Catholic life and certainly the larger context of the human community. According to Pinkerton, their lives were job-oriented and their living was not integrated into the fabric of society. Somehow they were a group apart living community for community’s sake . . .”<sup>9</sup>

## **Education in One Arena Affects Learning in Another**

The groups living apart, at least communities of women religious living apart from or having minimal contact with other communities, began to change after World War II. As previously mentioned, certification and accreditation measures instituted to insure quality education necessitated bachelor degrees for the sisters who were teachers. At the time, almost all parochial schools were staffed entirely by religious sisters. To educate so many women all at once required strategic planning, resource sharing, and determination. Bear in mind, as Patrice Noterman reminds, planning for this education came at a time “when dependence, conformity, and institutionalized living were the marks of religious life.”<sup>10</sup> Yet, these women religious took charge and through the Sister Formation Conference planned, developed, and executed a holistic education for their young sisters. According to Noterman, these women experienced “a new kind of responsibility, community building, and discernment.”<sup>11</sup> While the young sisters benefited greatly from a holistic education that didn’t take twenty years to complete, the experience of actively planning change cannot be overestimated in its effect on the older women religious who participated in the development of the education plan. The sisters, through experiential, inclusive, participative learning became aware of their own abilities and talents just about the time the humanistic psychology movement emerged with its emphasis on the whole person, creative and self-actualized.

## **Inclusion of the Heart and Body with the Intellect**

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<sup>7</sup> Conversation with Pinkerton on February 4, 1996, at home of researcher in Falls Church, VA.

<sup>8</sup> Postulant comes from the Latin *postulare* meaning to beg for (in this case to beg for admission). Novices were new sisters who had not yet taken their final vow of profession.

<sup>9</sup> Pinkerton, "A Sister Views the Church of the '70s."

<sup>10</sup> Noterman, "An Interpretive History," 1.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Pinkerton said, “The new emphasis became the person, the importance of human development, the relation of the person to community.”<sup>12</sup> Recall from Chapter Two, Charles Tart said the humanistic psychology movement focused on creativity and “finding meaning beyond material gratification.”<sup>13</sup>

Pinkerton remembers the questions being asked at the time: “Are we our own makers? Who are we? Where are we going? Are we free? How can we give ourselves and yet possess ourselves? What does it mean to give love? And to feel freedom? Must we always live in fear and guilt? What is the meaning of death?”<sup>14</sup> Contemporary literature and thought and the evaluations of our social, political, economic and educational systems, according to Pinkerton, gave ample evidence that people were questioning the meaning of existence. “These questions,” she said, “indicate on the part of those who ask them a very earnest consideration of human psychology and human existence -- a desire for authenticity. They express the yearning of our age to lead a full, meaningful life, but they likewise demonstrate the absence of a sense of the God who will give life meaning and completion.”<sup>15</sup>

### **Vatican II Focuses on Inclusivity**

During this period of yearning and searching in the ‘60s, Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council, opened the windows of the church to the world and told the people of God they were the church. Pinkerton says, “Vatican II was the Church’s response to the massive societal shifts already in motion. The Church recognized that we are living through the death of one age and the beginning of another...and therefore, had to address this emerging reality out of a Gospel perspective.”<sup>16</sup> Emerging reality gave the Church a new understanding of an inclusive God who dwells in the secular world as well as the religious. The Church had, in essence, proclaimed God excluded from the secular world, but following Vatican II, the secular world became a place to encounter the sacred. Pinkerton’s community, at the request of Pope John XXIII, returned to the spirit of their founders who met the needs of the church of their day and reflected on how to interpret the call of the Spirit in the ‘60s. Their reflection revealed a need in the world—a need of people to be included.

### **Worldwide Protests Against Exclusion Develop**

Indeed, worldwide protests against exclusion erupted in the 1960s and ‘70s into all sorts of ‘isms,’ ‘ologies,’ and social movements. In the United States, African Americans protesting segregation ushered in the Civil Rights Movement. Women demanding equality renewed the Women’s Movement. Students protested the draft and the Vietnam War and, in other parts of the world, repressive governments. The gay rights movement rose in protest of homophobia. Liberation theology aided empowerment of the poor in Latin America. These large movements protested exclusion. The Sisters of St. Joseph, with the charism of reconciliation, saw their call to be going out into humanity rather than waiting for it to come to them. “They would embrace

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<sup>12</sup> Pinkerton, "Prayer and New Ministry," 6.

<sup>13</sup> Tart, "Introduction," ix.

<sup>14</sup> Pinkerton, "The Meaning of Renewal to the Teacher."

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Address to Religion Education Conference," Religion Education Congress (Providence, RI, 15/March, 1986), 7.

it as Christ did,” Pinkerton said, . . . [and] “try to heed the message ‘that all may be one’ and would seek to help unite rather than further divide.”<sup>17</sup> By the 1980s, Catholic parishes and communities of religious sheltered illegal aliens in the Sanctuary Movement. As Pinkerton explained, “The age of ‘my salvation’ is past. The salvation of each of us is intimately connected with the salvation of all mankind.”<sup>18</sup>

### Old Lessons Are Unlearned

In the age of “my salvation,”(prior to Vatican II) the “good sister” was to be humble, self-sacrificing, quiet, prayerful, hard-working, diligent, concerned with the needs of others, forgetful of their own, and above all—submissive to authority.<sup>19</sup> Anne E. Patrick, SNJM<sup>20</sup> said, “Static, hierarchical authority patterns were assumed to be sacred. The dominant role of male religious authority and the subordinate place of women religious [were] so taken for granted as God’s will that this basic source of the problem does not even reach the level of consciousness . . .”<sup>21</sup> When the source of the problem doesn’t reach the level of one’s consciousness, Sister Laurretta Mather says that person resides in a tomb, the tomb of dehumanization, and “perhaps our greatest sin (which keeps us tomb-bound) is our adaptation to being less than full persons.”<sup>22</sup> Mather described the tomb of dehumanization as marked “by a colonizing mentality which takes control of the other’s life and destiny. The colonist says: ‘We know what is best for you, we know your real name, we know more about your needs and your fidelity than you do--we will determine your destiny.’”<sup>23</sup> Using the analogy of Lazarus coming forth from the tomb into daybreak, Mather told other women religious the “come forth into daybreak” will come when “we give no one the right to define us and when there is no one whom we seek to define.”<sup>24</sup>

Patrick named the unquestioning obedience of women religious, conformity to passive ideals of virtue, and innocence defined by the religious culture as docility to superiors--“passive responsibility.”<sup>25</sup> According to Patrick, passive responsibility involves being dutiful and living up to the demands of a role largely determined by others. Patrick says there is a reward for passive responsibility: “The payoff . . . is security, approval, and perhaps status. But the price is reduced personhood . . . and the loss of what my creativity could have contributed to the contexts of my life.”<sup>26</sup>

Passive responsibility, when processed through personal contemplation, communal dialogue and theological reflection, revealed a spirituality that Patrick says missed the dimension of trust. This dimension was “. . .trust in God’s daily forgiveness and in God’s supportive presence in our process of making choices where innocence is hardly possible, given the

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<sup>17</sup> Pinkerton, "A Sister Views the Church of the '70s,."

<sup>18</sup> Pinkerton, "The Meaning of Renewal to the Teacher."

<sup>19</sup> Anne E. Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker: 'From Good Sisters to Prophetic Women'," keynote address, LCWR (New Orleans, LA, 2 September, 1985), 9-11.

<sup>20</sup> Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 16.

<sup>22</sup> Laurretta Mather, "Come Forth: Naming the Tombs. Making the Daybreak," LCWR 25th Anniversary (Indianapolis, Indiana, August, 1981), 4.

<sup>23</sup> Mather, "Come Forth," 4.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 19.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. , 20.

ambiguities of real life situations.<sup>27</sup> For the sisters, theological reflection, communal dialogue, and personal contemplation act as a filter: addressing emerging reality out of experience and out of a Gospel perspective. The roots of spirituality are included and integrated for a holistic inclusion of the other. Pinkerton's talk at a Formation Conference illustrated this integration:

We must integrate into our desire for personal growth, a new understanding of the redemptional, liberational dimension of the Gospel. The struggle of contemplation and the struggle for the liberation of man in the political and cultural dimensions of his life are one and the same struggle. No contemplation is authentic which does not somehow relate to the struggle to liberate persons in our time and no commitment to such liberation in the public sphere is genuine which does not proceed from the roots of personal contemplation.<sup>28</sup>

Pinkerton's use of the generic *man* in the above citation would soon change as awareness grew of the importance of language.

### **Continuous Learning Reveals Language as a Tool of Exclusivity**

Conversation and language can create marginalization by shaping attitudes and relationships, Sister Joan Chittister writes. "Until we become conscious of the ways our words and communication patterns operate to exclude people as well as simply define and explain reality," Chittister adds, "there is little hope that with all our good intentions we will really do much to correct the basis of exclusion."<sup>29</sup> According to Chittister, "Language theorists and communication specialists have for years been conscious that the single most powerful method of inclusion or separation is symbol systems themselves. ...Peoples and persons are marginalized in language long before a law is ever written, a privilege denied or an access closed."<sup>30</sup> "Words such as Father, Master, king, shepherd, bridegroom defy our experience," Pinkerton says of women in the church.<sup>31</sup> Words such as "Chicano," "nun," "women," "Marxist," "homosexual," Chittister says, are labels that "classify and categorize and evoke reactions that may have little to do with the entire reality. Whole segments of society have been margined because people accept labels as a substitute for understanding and resist larger meanings or insights."<sup>32</sup>

Mary Frances Duffy stressed that: "Language is important because of the reality it reveals and shapes [and] because of the attitudes and values it forms and reflects."<sup>33</sup> Duffy wrote in 1980 that we can conclude from "the prevailing language patterns in our culture (including the church) which remain frozen and statically masculine...that the attitudes and values mirrored therein are

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<sup>27</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 17.

<sup>28</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Untitled," speech given to sabbatical group/clergy (Catholic University Washington, D. C., 1975e), 4.

<sup>29</sup> Joan Chittister, "Talking Your Way Out of Touch," *LCWR Newsletter* 7, no. 2 (June 1979): 7.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>31</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "The Future of Ministry and You," Formation Conference (Farmington, MI, 1979), 5.

<sup>32</sup> Chittister, "Talking Your Way," 8.

<sup>33</sup> Mary Frances Duffy, "Language, Attitudes and Reality," *LCWR Newsletter* 8, no. 2 (April 1980): 5.

essentially sexist.”<sup>34</sup> Duffy defined sexist language as “forms of communication which utilize gender and sex images to the extent that one or another of the sexes is ignored and/or eliminated,” and, asserts Duffy, “Sexist language is an issue! At best, it is annoying; at worst, it is oppressive and unjust. In either case, a facile dismissal of the issue as being unimportant is inadmissible.”<sup>35</sup> Then Duffy spoke of what she called the ultimate inclusive Word: “In the beginning, the life-giving Word at Creation spoke humanity into being as male and female, as man *and* woman. May that life-giving word be in our hearts and on our lips; be in our attitudes and our values; be in our actions and our words, once again, as in the beginning, speaking humanity into being as male and female, as man *and* woman.”<sup>36</sup> In the use of inclusive language, secular society has made much progress since Duffy wrote that in 1980. The Catholic Church has made some improvements in liturgy; however, it hasn’t given up language that refers to God as male.

In addition to the use by some of the word kindom to replace kingdom to emphasize collaboration rather than power over, theologian Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza writes the word God as G\*d “to indicate the brokenness, ambiguity and indeterminacy of human G\*d language.”<sup>37</sup> Fiorenza says the “call to be G\*d’s people is not exclusive but inclusive;” hence, she uses the expression “the ekklesia of wo/men.”<sup>38</sup> “Ekklesia,” explains Fiorenza, is a Greek word that “can be translated as assembly, gathering or congress of full citizens,” and she uses it to emphasize the democratic nature of the early Christian community versus the monarchical-hierarchical structure of the Roman church.<sup>39</sup> Fiorenza does not use the word wo/men for feminist chauvinism and exclusivism, she reassures us. Rather, Fiorenza says whenever she uses wo/men, she uses it “in the generic sense so as to include men, the word *she* as including *he* and *female* as including *male*.”<sup>40</sup> She points out that we don’t hear wo/men as inclusive or generic because we are all socialized into a different language system.

Another interesting turn that came from a renewed focus on language was the return to the root of words such as authority and obedience to gain a new understanding of their original intended meaning. More about these two words further on, but Pinkerton says revelation of the root of *obey* opened many minds to needed changes. Indeed, it was a turning point for all, but most importantly for many women religious who had been reluctant to change tradition<sup>41</sup>

Some words slip unnoticed into common usage at the grass roots level. Without close attention, we miss their significance. The word *ministry* as used in Catholic circles is one such example. John A. Coleman, S.J., in his talk “Ministry in the 1980s” presented at an LCWR

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid. , 4.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. , 5.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> This is editor, Bill Thompson’s explanation of Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza’s use of G\*d in her keynote address. Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, “Equality: A Radical Democratic Ekklesial Vision,” in *Spirituality Justice Reprint*, ed. Bill Thompson, Call to Action National Conference (Milwaukee: Call to Action, 31 October, 1998), 1.

<sup>38</sup> Fiorenza, “Equality,” 1.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. , 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. , 5.

<sup>41</sup> Information given to researcher during telephone call January 5, 1999.

Conference in Philadelphia, noted how the use of the word *ministry* which became ubiquitous in the 1980's "freed imaginations to see reality in a new light."<sup>42</sup> Coleman says:

"No one, of course, talked very much in the 1950's and 1960's about ministry. Then the prized words were 'apostolate', 'mission', 'vocation', and 'priesthood'. Priesthood ...functioned as a kind of 'ministerial moloch', abrogating to itself—in pre-eminence at least, if not in fact—all ministries within the church. ...How the simple and apparently innocuous language shift to ministry has changed all that! For the term, ministry, finesses the whole issue of lay vs. clerical or lay vs. ordained. Both ordained and laity share ministry. The laity, far from being a residual category, now provide the generic term, ministry, for which the ordained are a mere sub-species."<sup>43</sup>

One word signaled an important shift to inclusive thinking among the laity. According to Coleman, "the appeal to ministry language masks a collegial, non-pyramidal view of charisms mutually building up the one body against a non-collegial, monarchical and purely hierarchical model."<sup>44</sup>

### **Transformative Learning Leads to Action and Change in Governmental Structures of Religious Communities**

The inclusion of all women religious in the process of determining ministries necessitated that the women assume active responsibility for their choices. They did so through critical self-reflection, theological reflection, and dialogue with peers and those in leadership in communities. Jack Mezirow says this process "has the potential for profoundly changing the way we make sense of our experience of the world, other people, and ourselves."<sup>45</sup> Mezirow calls this transformative learning and says that such learning "leads to action that can significantly affect the character of our interpersonal relationships, the organizations in which we work and socialize, and the socio-economic system itself."<sup>46</sup> Such learning did indeed affect the organizations in which the women religious work.

Not all communities changed to the same degree, but, for the most part, as women religious began to understand the experience of being 'fully human,' LCWR reported "interaction among peers...displaced dependency on a single authority figure."<sup>47</sup> LCWR reported that hierarchical structures shifted to a horizontal model in which all became included in processes of decision making. Majority-minority approaches began being replaced with a consensual method of reaching decisions. Authority became seen as one of service, and obedience as "a positive orientation of one's life to God's will and a commitment to work with others to carry out that will."<sup>48</sup> Chittister clarifies:

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<sup>42</sup> John A. Coleman, "Ministry in the 1980's," Leadership Conference of Women Religious (Philadelphia, PA, 9 May, 1980), 5.

<sup>43</sup> Coleman, "Ministry in the 1980's," 5,7.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. , 7.

<sup>45</sup> Mezirow, *Fostering Critical Reflection*, xiii.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> LCWR, *Publication of Patterns in Authority and Obedience* (Washington, D.C., 1978).

<sup>48</sup> LCWR, *Publication of Patterns in Authority and Obedience*.



Authoritarianism, a poor synonym for obedience, works its will on others for the sake of the productiveness of the group or the exercise of power itself. Obedience is a joint listening by the authority figure and the religious to the signals of the Holy Spirit around them: to the needs of the person herself, to the circumstances of the congregation, to the people in society whose needs are not being met, to the very purpose of the congregation itself. To make a decision without weighing each of these elements in the balance and then to call it religious is to diminish the whole concept of religious obedience.<sup>49</sup>

Practicing their new understanding of obedience, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Cleveland determined together that they needed help in setting up new forms of government. To learn each person's role in a horizontal model of governing, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Cleveland studied organizational development. Among other things, they learned to view conflict and tension as healthy rather than devious and to accept diversity in prayer, ministry, and lifestyle.<sup>50</sup> Eager to learn, the community utilized The Educational Research Council of America to train facilitators and group leaders. Republic Industrial Educational Institute conducted tests geared to individual strengths and limitations, as well as to attitudes about community direction and ministry. REM of Cleveland developed evaluative instruments for the study of ministries, and the Passionist Leadership Institute aided in every level of government restructuring.<sup>51</sup> These women accessed and included knowledge from the secular world in their quest for holistic change in themselves and in their communities. They were arising from the "tomb of dehumanization and coming forth into daybreak," and daybreak illuminated more work to be done.

### **Relationship with the Institutional Church Is Strained by Exclusion**

The researcher is convinced that only transformative learning could allow women religious to so peacefully and persistently pursue structural reform in the institutional church for so many years. Transformative or emancipatory learning prompted by critical reflection liberated women religious from the cultural assumption that the "good sister" was selfless, quiet, dutiful, and submissive to authority and allowed the women then to see structures that limited their development and growth into agents of social change.<sup>52</sup>

Pinkerton reported that in 1967 the Third World Congress of the Lay Apostolate passed a resolution requesting "a serious doctrinal study be undertaken on the place of women in the sacramental order and in the church" and that women be granted "all the rights and responsibilities of the Christian within the Catholic Church."<sup>53</sup> Thirty years later, those demands are still far from realization, but the women and some brave ordained men continue to speak out. Not all agree on what changes need to take place or even if work for change is viable. According

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<sup>49</sup> Chittister, "An Amazing Journey," 81.

<sup>50</sup> Pinkerton, "World Issues," 14.

<sup>51</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Remarks About Renewal as Continuing" (undated), from box 2-9-1 of Pinkerton's speeches, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Social change, according to Jack Mezirow's theory of learning, may result from perspective transformation, but that is the learner's decision, not the educators. Paulo Freire's conscientization, by contrast, has as its intent, radical social change. Jack Mezirow, "Transformation Theory and Action: A Response to Collard and Law," *Adult Education Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1989): 173; Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*; Sharan B. Merriam and Rosemary S. Caffarella, *Learning in Adulthood* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 261.

<sup>53</sup> Pinkerton, "Organizing for a New World," 141.

to Pinkerton, some women religious believe women should be ordained. Others have the attitude of ‘Why bother?’ because the structures aren’t going to change, and still others don’t want to be ordained in what they see as a “sacramental cultic ministry.”<sup>54</sup> A brief look through the pages of history reveals the persistence of women religious in their struggle for inclusion as equals in the institutional church.

At the 1974 NAWR Convention, members passed a resolution urging the restoration of the diaconate to Roman Catholic women. The women sent copies of the resolution to: (a) the Apostolic Delegate to the U.S.A., Archbishop Jean Jadot; (b) the four U.S. bishops who would represent women religious at the 1974 Synod; (c) the National Catholic Council of Bishops (NCCB) (d) committees on the permanent diaconate, on pastoral research and practices, and on the status of women; and (e) the Vatican Commission on the Status of Women. Also in 1975, Pinkerton asked in her talk as outgoing chairwoman of NAWR, “What can Sisters and Sisters’ Councils do together nationally and internationally to strengthen the position of women as equals with men in the decision-making and policy-making processes within the Church, as persons eligible for all professional and ministerial roles in Church and society?”<sup>55</sup>

In a 1975 interview, Sister Francis Borgia Rothluebber told Donna Foran that women should be ordained if they wanted to end “the discrimination, to pick up our history where we lost it;” however, she called ordained ministry a “sacramentalism that is not life-giving” and explained her reason: “The Lord kept very clearly separated from the temple ministry. His is a different kind of priesthood.”<sup>56</sup> The ministry of Jesus was a ministry of inclusion—inclusion of those who often were excluded by the practices, beliefs and rituals of the temple ministry. In Matthew 15: 9, Jesus said, “They do me empty reverence, making dogmas out of human precepts,” and He proceeded to place the needs of humanity above laws of the sabbath.<sup>57</sup>

Three years later in 1978, with no positive response from the Church, Pinkerton said, “For the Church to ignore the movement among women for equality of personhood and to act as if these movements have nothing to say to one-half Her membership is unconscionable. As the mystery of Jesus, the Church should be in the vanguard of human liberation, not coming in on its coat-tails.”<sup>58</sup> Pinkerton continued, “Is woman of lesser dignity than man? Does one’s chromosomes influence the sacramental effects of Baptism which supposedly admits us to fullness of life in Christ? Are women always to experience their choices in the Church as being allowed in rather than in aspiring to what is rightfully theirs?”<sup>59</sup>

According to Pinkerton, a theology of person needed to be developed--“a process not of developing a theology or theological statements, but of living theology, constantly correcting and reassessing in the light of the wisdom and sacredness of the past as well as the experience of the

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<sup>54</sup> A sacramental cultic ministry would be a ministry in which the means of grace is administered through and controlled by an ordained priest. Pinkerton, “NAWR: A Vision for the Future,” 2.

<sup>55</sup> Pinkerton, “NAWR: A Vision for the Future,” 2.

<sup>56</sup> Donna Foran, “LCWR: Our Thinking on Ministry 'Radical',” *National Catholic Reporter*, October 12 1979, 5.

<sup>57</sup> *New American Bible*, Saint Joseph edition, trans. The Catholic Biblical Association of America (NY: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1970), New Testament.

<sup>58</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, “Reality of Today: Vision of Tomorrow” (Saginaw, Michigan, 10 November, 1978c), 1.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

present.”<sup>60</sup> This correcting, reassessing the past, and acknowledging the experience of the present, Pinkerton said, gives women religious a serious responsibility “to work with all who are Church in coming to grips with all aspects of the person question” that is “basic to the coming of a Church that is whole.”<sup>61</sup> “In the process,” continued Pinkerton, “we are called to work side by side with the men of the Church in a relationship of mutuality, aware that at this historical moment we will be on the short side of equality. This is our loving, patient contribution to the Church of the future. This loving relationship is based on understanding that we, both men and women, are victims of stereotypes, of structures that have created and reinforced false images.”<sup>62</sup>

When women seeking equality within the Church and society were accused by critics of seeking power, Pinkerton responded, “Yes, but not exploitative power, manipulative power, competitive power, or even nutritive power; rather women seek integrative power<sup>63</sup>--power with the other-- win-win relationship [in which] the dignity of the self and the other is respected. It is non-harming because it is integrated with love.”<sup>64</sup> Pinkerton continued:

If we women of the Church set out to attain equality within the Church without understanding and utilizing integrative power, we shall, indeed, be involved in the oppression of the male element of the Church. Such efforts rather than building the Body of the Church will further fragment it. ...My goal and yours must be the building of a Church that is whole, a Church where not our rights or independence is the question, but where interdependence becomes the goal, the full sharing of the gifts of the Spirit to the Church.<sup>65</sup>

Pinkerton believes a church that is whole acknowledges the feminine and masculine characteristics of God and Jesus and notes:

Genesis says He created them male and female to His own image. If all perfection of persons is in God, must God not embody both the masculine and feminine qualities? What does one do with Yahweh’s ‘Am I to open my womb and not bring birth? Or I who bring birth, am I to close it?’ ...What do you do with imagery Jesus uses: ‘How often did I long to gather her children as a hen gathers the chicks under her wings, and you would not?’<sup>66</sup>

Pinkerton noted agreement with Margaret Farley, RSM, then professor of ethics at Yale University, who believed unless we reconcile male and female characteristics in the person of God and Jesus, it will be difficult to reconcile God and Jesus as having the perfection of person.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Pinkerton, “Reality of Today: Vision of Tomorrow,” 9.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. , 10.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Rollo May identified these five kinds of power in his book *Power and Innocence*.

<sup>64</sup> Pinkerton, "Reality of Today: Vision of Tomorrow," 10.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. , 11.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. , 9.

<sup>67</sup> Pinkerton, “Reality of Today: Vision of Tomorrow,” 10.

The Church continued to show little sign of including women in decision making positions, and on October 7, 1979, when Sister Theresa Kane, as President of LCWR welcomed Pope John Paul II at the National Shrine in Washington, D.C., she shocked the world by urging the pope to allow women to serve the Church as fully participating members.<sup>68</sup> Some women religious reacted with horror, even placing in newspapers notices that Kane did not speak for them. Anne E. Patrick, SNJM, however, admired Kane's decision to respond to repeated refusals for private conversation with the pope by "using the occasion of a formal welcome to convey a message she deemed it urgent for him to hear."<sup>69</sup> Patrick explained:

The action was unexpected and controversial, but I think it epitomizes values within limited circumstances. There was the duty to express welcome and respect; there was the obligation to represent the injustices experienced by those who had chosen her as leader. Both concerns found their way into the course she finally elected, and to my mind, she succeeded in the Christian ideal of 'speaking the truth in love'.<sup>70</sup>

### Speaking the Truth Begins to Include the Word "Feminism"

By 1980, the words feminism and feminists began to appear in Pinkerton's speeches and in the writings of other women religious. These words often evoke a lot of negative images such as "femi-nazis," "amazons," "male-bashers," etc., but the sisters claimed the words as meaningful and good and defined them as such in their work. Carol Coston, OP, in a Network publication, described feminism as a values transformation that valued "cooperation rather than competition, mutuality rather than hierarchical decision making, and integration rather than dualism."<sup>71</sup> Coston said that feminism "opposes . . . patterns of domination and subordination . . . rejects the win-lose pattern and the 'Gotta be #1 syndrome,' works not by exclusion but by incorporation, . . . is wholistic—not monolithic or tyrannical, but organic and differentiating, . . . seeks to learn from differences, . . . is life-supporting, . . . values a sense of stewardship toward all life and makes choices to preserve life now and for the future."<sup>72</sup>

Francine Cardman told the sisters that feminism is not anti-male, but "by questioning and rejecting arrangements of male dominance, feminism can introduce, at least for the time being, an element of difficulty and discomfort, even discord, into relationships between men and women."<sup>73</sup> Cardman insisted, however, that feminism does not create conflict and agreed with Jean Baker Miller that feminism merely "reveals conflict that already exists though it has been suppressed or masked."<sup>74</sup> Cardman asserted the fundamentally religious foundations of feminism and wrote that feminism is: "an insight into the dignity and equality of persons, which demands that we treat one another with justice and equal regard; and a call to freedom, which invites us to openness and risk."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Theresa Kane, "Welcome to Pope John Paul II" (National Shrine, Washington, D.C., October 7, 1979).

<sup>69</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 31.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Carol Coston, *Feminism: Values and Vision* (Washington, D.C.: Network, 1987), 2. This article was adapted from talks Coston gave in 1980 to the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet.

<sup>72</sup> Coston, *Feminism: Values and Vision*, 2.

<sup>73</sup> Cardman, "Feminism and Faith," 1.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid; Jean Baker Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1976), 126.

<sup>75</sup> Cardman, "Feminism and Faith," 1.

This openness and risk, called “the price of creative responsibility” by Patrick, required giving up the security, approval, and perhaps status of passive responsibility.<sup>76</sup> In taking creative responsibility, Patrick explained to members of LCWR, one risks “being mistaken, being criticized, losing approval and status,” but in return, one gains “an enhanced sense of self-esteem that comes from using all ...[one’s] talents and a sense of being a full adult participant in life rather than a minor, someone who is only marginally involved in shaping ...[one’s] self and the contexts of ...[one’s] life.”<sup>77</sup>

### Conflict With the Hierarchy Intensifies

Being a full adult participant in society and in the church, Pinkerton called “a human issue” not a feminist issue.<sup>78</sup> Whether one saw full participation in the church as a human issue or a feminist issue mattered not to the Most Reverend Pio Laghi, Apostolic Delegate in the United States, who told women and men religious they had to be “in deep and sincere unity with the Vicar of Christ and with the orientations he gives, especially those which concern religious life....”<sup>79</sup> Laghi spoke those words at a 1982 joint meeting of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, (CMSM), and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). At that same conference, five women had been asked to distribute the wine for communion during Mass, but when they went forward to receive the wine at the appropriate time during the Mass, they were quietly told to return to their seats. Archbishop Laghi, the celebrant, had stated it was not to be. Archbishop Augustine Mayer, OSB,<sup>80</sup> Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, (SCRIS), believed “it was ridiculous to have women distributing communion when there were so many priests present.”<sup>81</sup>

The proceedings of that joint meeting of LCWR and CMSM reveal the conflicts present when the status quo is challenged. James D. Baines, then Professor of Urban Education at William Patterson College in Wayne, New Jersey, and also a speaker at the conference, bemoaned the reliance on rules rather than relationships. Baines said, “We rely...on the innate laws of our own inventions...of institutional behavior. We have, in the words of Eric Fromm, sunk into idolatry—into the worship of our own creations.”<sup>82</sup> Baines continued, “It would be nice if we could compile a list of commandments as Moses did when the Israelites were searching for their identity in the desert; but Christ put an end to such neat legalisms when He transformed all the commandments to their essence—love.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 20.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Pinkerton, "Commencement Address," 9.

<sup>79</sup> Pio Laghi, "Homily to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men," *Proceedings Convergence II*, 15-20 August 1982, 31.

<sup>80</sup> Order of Saint Benedict

<sup>81</sup> LCWR/CMSM, "Official Minutes of Convergence II," 2-6-2B (Congregation of Saint Joseph archives, Cleveland, Ohio, 15-20 August, 1982), 5.

<sup>82</sup> James D. Baines, "Bridging the Gap: From Power to Peace," *Proceedings Convergence II*, 15-20 August 1982, 5.

<sup>83</sup> Baines, "Bridging the Gap," 12.

Sandra M. Schneiders, IHM,<sup>84</sup> said in response to Laghi's action, "To absolutize the institution of the Church...is not a recognition of nor a participation in the royalty of Jesus. It is an exercise of royal consciousness against which, as prophets, we must cry out for it is an idolatry that blinds people to the coming of the reign. To participate in the royalty of Jesus is to so identify with the reign of God that we see clearly the relativity of all human regimes, that of the ecclesiastical institution as much as that of the civil institution."<sup>85</sup> Schneiders continued, "...We pervert the Gospel ideal of meekness when we make it an excuse for allowing ourselves to be dominated rather than face the struggle to achieve maturity in our relationship with institutional authority."<sup>86</sup>

Ronald N. Carignan, OMI, President of the CMSM, reflected on the criteria for ministry that developed during the meeting and listed the following 'covenant values' around which they make important choices in the present development in ministry: "collaboration, interdependence, accountability/mutual responsibility, faith/risk, dialogue, global awareness, synergy, construction/new order."<sup>87</sup> Carignan described synergy as "when one and one equals three. It is the value that is operative when in our doing things together we transcend our limits. What we do together is greater than the sum of what we could do individually."<sup>88</sup> Carignan then said they need to promote structures that favored the development and the expression of those covenant values and they need to mediate a new vision of what it means to be church today. "In order to do this we have to lead in liberating the anima<sup>89</sup> within the Church and the World. This is not just a woman issue. It is an ecclesial and global issue."<sup>90</sup>

At the end of the conference, criteria for ministry were listed under four categories: (a) those that were strongly affirmed by the great majority of members, (b) criteria warmly affirmed, with an occasional minor hesitation, (c) criteria that were positively accepted, though with some hesitation, and (d) criteria that met considerable hesitation, although they were lukewarmly affirmed. One additional category headed "Areas which surfaced from several groups and which represent material for further discussion" contained the following two items: (1) selecting areas of ministry in which fair treatment of women is exemplified, and (2) serving only in those ecclesiastical structures where people are consciously working toward justice in their policies and practices with regard to decision-making and adequate provision for material needs.<sup>91</sup> Apparently the men and women religious were unwilling to address in either of those ways the injustices they saw in the church.

### Pinkerton Advocates Dialogue and Corporate Action

Undeterred, Pinkerton, in 1983, addressed the General Assembly of the Sisters of St. Joseph that, for 6,000 years of history, "reality and human affairs were ordered by power and

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<sup>84</sup> Immaculate Heart of Mary

<sup>85</sup> Sandra M. Schneiders, "Prophetic Consciousness in the Contemporary Church," *Proceedings Convergence II*, 15-20 August 1982, 24.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ronald N. Carignan, "Reflections on Criteria for Ministry," *Proceedings Convergence II*, 15-20 August 1982, 36.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Anima is an inner feminine part of the male personality in the analytic psychology of C. G. Jung.

<sup>90</sup> Carignan, "Reflections on Criteria for Ministry," 37.

<sup>91</sup> LCWR/CMSM, "Official Minutes of Convergence II."

domination” but that age was coming to an end and an inclusive age of equality among differences was beginning. This was to be an inclusiveness that would recognize the variety of God in the voices of men *and* women, the richness of varied cultures and in *all* the great religions of the world.<sup>92</sup>

Not all women religious agreed on women’s role in the church. In her 1983 LCWR Presidential acceptance speech, Pinkerton noted the difference between tolerating or accepting the diversity, honest informed differences, among women religious and respecting that diversity as “symbol of a God who is infinite variety, calling each of us to newness, to greater richness, to places and positions we have not embraced before . . . .”<sup>93</sup> She saw how every voice needed to be included for true solidarity, but also knew the difficulty this presented. Her solution? She called for:

a poverty of spirit that is open to dialogue, to clarifying our positions while perhaps still owning them, to letting go but never dropping out or walking away from membership or involvement without being open to coming back after a good second look, a good laugh, a brisk walk, or a solid time with the God who makes us so uniquely different from one another. For we need each other to affect the peace for which the world hungers. We cannot do alone what we have the power to do corporately.”<sup>94</sup>

Members of the National Association of Religious Women (NARW), formerly National Association of Women Religious (NAWR),<sup>95</sup> spoke corporately when the Vatican told communities of women religious to submit their constitutions for approval and told bishops to investigate religious life in the U.S. In a press release, the women announced, “Our response to an escalating pattern of deepening oppression of women religious by the Vatican Church is simple and clear. We will stand together. We will not be broken.”<sup>96</sup> The women called the Church’s actions “a means once again of depriving women religious of their right to define themselves. The approval of constitutions thus becomes a mechanism for control, for imposing discipline.”<sup>97</sup>

Pinkerton’s address to the Vicars for Religious (representatives of the Bishops), was cordial and welcoming, but she let them know they were dealing with an equal, a representative of LCWR. Pinkerton told the vicars that if they saw themselves only as relating the Bishop’s concerns and decisions to the religious, they would “do both him and the religious life in the local Church a disservice.”<sup>98</sup> In other words, Pinkerton was settling for nothing less than a dialogue in a collaborative relationship.

At the 1984 LCWR National Assembly, the women religious present voted on how to respond to Vatican intervention in U.S. religious congregations. Pinkerton’s speech setting the tone for the discussion was deliberately omitted from the records so as to avoid

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<sup>92</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Call to Assembly" (Cleveland, Ohio, 18, March, 1983), 2.

<sup>93</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Acceptance Presentation" (LCWR, 18 August, 1983b), 1.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> The name was changed to reflect inclusion of lay women in the organization and to express unity with them.

<sup>96</sup> National Association of Religious Women, *For Immediate Release* (Chicago, ILL: NARW, 1983).

<sup>97</sup> National Association of Religious Women, *For Immediate Release*.

<sup>98</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Presentation to Vicars for Religious" (Cleveland, Ohio, October, 1983d), 4.

further conflict, but the speech had prior LCWR Board approval, and board members sat on the stage while Pinkerton spoke. The sisters voted 462 positive, 4 negative that it was appropriate, “in accordance with established norms, [for] the conference to be involved with an individual congregation experiencing difficulties with ecclesiastical authorities” and 463 positive, 3 negative “that the conference should set up, as a resource to members, consultation panels to assist members in situations of ecclesiastical conflict.”<sup>99</sup>

### Reaction to Obedience Injures but Isn't Lethal

Pinkerton told students at John Carroll University, “The documents of the Church in principle uphold the equality of the sexes,” and noted from scripture Paul’s proclamation that ‘all are baptized in Christ; you have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female’.<sup>100</sup> “But,” continued Pinkerton, “the Fathers and Doctors of the Church had different concepts of woman.”<sup>101</sup> To illustrate, Pinkerton referenced a 1977 Vatican Declaration on the ordination of women that used “the arguments of the defective nature of women and their inability to image God in its wording: ‘When Christ’s role in the Eucharist is to be expressed sacramentally, there would not be this natural resemblance which must exist between Christ and His minister if the role of Christ were not taken by a man. In such a case, it would be difficult to see in the minister the image of Christ. For Christ Himself was and remains a man’.”<sup>102</sup> The crucial issue here, Pinkerton says, is “Does imaging Christ reside in one’s sexuality or in one’s humanity?”<sup>103</sup> Pinkerton saw this question of where Christ resides as a crisis of consciousness and said feminism in the Church as in society is a response to that crisis.<sup>104</sup>

Response, however, brought the risks of creative responsibility that Patrick mentioned: “the risk of being mistaken, being criticized, losing approval, and status.”<sup>105</sup> Pinkerton shared those experiences with the students: “When they (sisters) had their consciousness raised and took positions, especially in team or pastoral ministry, they began to realize the dimensions of their socialization in a patriarchal system.”<sup>106</sup> Pinkerton told the students of the pain the sisters experienced when, after following the Pope’s call for renewal and subsequently shifting their lives “from dependence and matriarchy to interdependence, taking full responsibility as equals for their lives and decisions regarding community life and direction,” people labeled them as radical and disobedient to the Pope. “The truth of the matter is that we were most obedient to the call of the Church to renewal. In that process, we truly became humanized in Christ and with one another. We began to see the injustices which stem from non-recognition of the equality of us all in the Church as in society and we, many of us, pledged to address human rights in the Church.”<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> LCWR, "Official Minutes," LCWR National Assembly (Kansas City, Missouri, 26-30/August, 1984), 7.

<sup>100</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Talk to Students" (John Carroll University, 15 March, 1984), 3.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 20.

<sup>106</sup> Pinkerton, "Talk to Students," 5.

<sup>107</sup> Pinkerton, "Talk to Students," 5.



On May 9, 1983, Catherine Pinkerton, CSJ; Bette Moslander, CSJ; Lora Ann Quinonez, CDP; and Helen Flaherty met with members of the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes (SCRIS) to discuss, among other things, Pope John Paul II's insistence that religious garb (a habit) be required as a sign of consecration. The women respectfully but firmly told the Vatican representatives that (a) wearing secular clothing had "facilitated their ministry and presence to the people, and has resulted in a deeper interiorization of religious identity and commitment," (b) "a uniform frequently connotes status and privilege, identifications not acceptable to many religious, who see themselves as apostolic religious called to be with and among the people, and (c) many women religious who are living religious life deeply cannot, in conscience and as a matter of principle, accept the law that a distinctive religious garb is to be worn nor that it is essential for membership in religious community."<sup>108</sup>

The women showed great courage in refusing to abdicate their judgment to authorities. Courage, Patrick says, is the quality or characteristic most typical of creative responsibility "Without courage, one cannot risk the creative deed or the prophetic word, for fear of failure, for fear of losing status or approval, for fear of getting into trouble."<sup>109</sup> Pinkerton said the Church that speaks to the world about justice must first be just itself in order to be heard. According to Pinkerton, those who are working for equality of women in the Church don't expect to see its fruition in their life times, but it will come. She says, "Transformation is a process of planting seeds—building awareness, changing consciousness and perceptions, organizing support groups, reflecting, contemplating, acting always in a mode of co-creating and of deep conversion."<sup>110</sup> Pinkerton's definition of transformation can also be a definition of adult education that is inclusive of the spirit as well as the intellect—an education that taps into the wisdom within. The deep conversion of which Pinkerton speaks gives one knowledge of the interconnectedness of all things and fosters awareness of the importance of the common good in maintaining a balanced system of interrelatedness.

### **Three Inclusive Transitions Seen by Pinkerton as Interrelated**

Pinkerton, in a 1989 address to educators, spoke of what she saw as the confluence of three transitions which "will shake the very foundations of our social, economic and political systems: (a) the decline of patriarchy and the movement toward structures of mutuality, participation, equity, collaboration, (b) the rise of ecological consciousness, and (c) the convergence of science and spirituality and the development of wholistic planetary spirituality."<sup>111</sup> Pinkerton said patriarchy, a three thousand year old system, has never been challenged in recorded history until the advent of the feminist movement which she called "perhaps the greatest revolution in the history of the planet. ...The strong movements toward interdependence in marriage, economic equity, political equity, changing relationships in the workplace are slowly beginning to evidence the decline of patriarchy."<sup>112</sup> Mincing no words, Pinkerton defined patriarchy as part of a culture of domination that "strips life of real meaning

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<sup>108</sup> LCWR, "Memorandum to LCWR Members: Report of SCRIS/LCWR Meeting," 2-6-2B (Congregation of Saint Joseph archives, Cleveland, Ohio, 9/May, 1983), 3.

<sup>109</sup> Patrick, "The Moral Decision Maker," 21.

<sup>110</sup> Pinkerton, "Talk to Students," 7.

<sup>111</sup> Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation," 10.

<sup>112</sup> Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation," 11.

and destroys the energy of looking toward a future.”<sup>113</sup> Citing evidence of change, Pinkerton continued:

Millions of people in countries across the globe: Chile, Yugoslavia, Algeria, Latvia, Burma, South Korea, China and Poland give evidence of the development of a collective consciousness. People are coming into the streets in various forms of peaceful protest to seek economic, others’ political birthrights and demanding that authorities respond to them. There is evidence that communications networks are linking people and that a powerful force of related purpose and mutual encouragement is at work<sup>114</sup>

Pinkerton then told the gathering of Christian educators the question for them was: “How will you prepare your students, the inheritors of a culture of domination, to face the inevitable redistribution of the power and resources of the world community?”<sup>115</sup> Based on a belief that the American psyche of ‘win all, take all’ would be transformed with the “rising tide of people everywhere who are no longer intimidated or apathetic and will risk all to claim their human rights,” Pinkerton asked the educators, “How do you prepare them (the students) to envision and prepare for a world community of peoples who must share equitably the world’s resources, and who each bring a unique culture to the mosaic of the world reality?”<sup>116</sup>

Turning the focus on the educators themselves and on herself, Pinkerton questioned: “More importantly, how will we enable ourselves in the first world to see the true significance of this global pattern of the assertiveness of the oppressed, be they women in our own nation or victims of oppression in any form?”<sup>117</sup> “What we must learn,” she continued, “is that we are not the saviors of the poor and oppressed; they will liberate us from our paralysis of preoccupation with power, getting ahead.”<sup>118</sup> According to Pinkerton, respecting the rights of each person and the integrity of each nation begins “not with respect for the most powerful, but rather with empowering the most vulnerable.”<sup>119</sup> Thereby, we begin to repudiate the curse of the modern world, namely the domination of the many by the few,” she said .

### **Increased Awareness of Domination Leads to Ecological Consciousness and Enriched Spirituality**

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<sup>113</sup> Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation," 13.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. , 13-14.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. , 14.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. , 15.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Empowering the most vulnerable was the thesis of liberation theology that arose in the 1960s in Brazil to empower the peasants. The movement developed among Latin American Catholics who believed the Gospel of Christ calls for liberation of all people from oppression and poverty. It was in this setting that educator, Paulo Freire, developed the dialogic process of conscientization to bring people to awareness of the means of their oppression and to acceptance of responsibility "to become subjects of their own destiny." The phrase 'subjects of their own destiny' was taken from Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and cited by Robert Goulet's introduction to *Education for Critical Consciousness* by Paulo Freire. Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, viii.

Pinkerton lamented domination over the earth, the severe degradation of the natural environment upon which we are completely dependent for life: “The global ecosystem and the further evolution of life on earth are so seriously endangered that they could well end in a large scale ecological disaster,” Pinkerton told educators.<sup>120</sup> She noted the existence of mustard colored smog that burns eyes and chokes lungs, pollution that kills plants and changes the animal populations that depend on them for life, and food additives, pesticides and other chemicals that threaten our health. The core problem, according to Pinkerton, is the domination of nature for “selfish, short-termed productive reasons, rather than entering into a partnership with the earth.”<sup>121</sup>

Pinkerton then tied ecological consciousness to the convergence of science and spirituality from which is emerging a planetary spirituality. According to Pinkerton, “The scientific, mechanistic age in which reality was that which could be scientifically measured and validated, and spiritual phenomena was considered but a manifestation of matter” was coming to an end.<sup>122</sup> Calling the convergence of science and spirituality “one of the strongest rays of light illuminating our world view,” Pinkerton said this synthesis of insights provides a wholistic view of life in which “true reality is found in both sensory and supersensory aspects which coexist within an embracing reality.”<sup>123</sup> Physicists Fritjof Capra and Brian Swimme are authors who write about new concepts in physics that have changed world views from a mechanistic conception to a holistic and ecological view.<sup>124</sup> Pinkerton, who reads Capra’s, Swimme’s and Thomas Berry’s works, cited Berry’s support of the *Gaia hypothesis*<sup>125</sup> in which “the whole earth is a single living creature-unique in a neighborhood of other heavenly bodies that do not possess life.”<sup>126</sup> Pinkerton says that, according to Berry, “We humans are the reflexive consciousness of the planet. We can now stand outside the planet and reflect on the wonder of the universe gaia contemplating the eternal creator . . . [and] this is our role as humans--if we choose to accept it fully and grow to the maturity to which we are called in Christ. It is the development of a global spirituality. Indeed, the next frontier is soul size—the linking of minds and hearts.”<sup>127</sup> Intrigued with this merging of science and spirituality, she sees it as part of the evolution of human consciousness. Pinkerton’s spiritual journey to the development of a global spirituality is the topic of Chapter Five.

### **Inclusivity Grows from Experiential, Interactive, Continuous Learning**

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<sup>120</sup> Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation," 17.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation," 18.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Readers interested in spiritual and ecological integrity or ecology and cosmic purpose can read more in the following books: Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point* (New York: Bantam Books, 1983); Brian Swimme, *The Universe is a Green Dragon* (Santa Fe: Bear and Co., 1984); Brian Swimme, "The Cosmic Creation Story," in *The Reenchantment of Science*, ed. David Ray Griffin (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), 47-56; Albert Gore, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1992); Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*.

<sup>125</sup> Physicist James Lovelock, author of *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*, originated the *Gaia Hypothesis*, named after the Greek earth goddess. Lovelock maintained that the earth is a living organism upon whom our lives depend.

<sup>126</sup> Pinkerton, "Faculty Orientation," 19.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. , 21.

This chapter primarily dealt with the struggle of women religious to be included as equals with men in the work of the church and for them and all women to be seen as equally imaged in God because of the emphasis given this struggle for inclusion in Pinkerton's speeches and other documents. Pinkerton clearly envisions inclusion of all as important for a holistic community, and her speeches over a thirty-year period give witness to the strength of that vision. Pinkerton and other women religious mostly credit the women's movement with enabling them to learn the breadth and depth of domination and exclusion. Chittister said, "Underlying the entire process of religious renewal... was the surging consciousness of women that they had long been denied their share of the gospel, either its rights or its responsibilities."<sup>128</sup> These women religious learned their right as women to define themselves, their right to obey (listen for and hear) God's will for them, and their right to author (give life to) the inclusive Gospel of Jesus in the world today. These rights are not asserted in independence but in dialogic, collaborative, inclusive interdependence with a deep, profound belief that this is God's will. Pinkerton described this process in a 1981 talk:

The renewal of religious life these past fifteen years has brought us through many stages of human and spiritual development, some of them difficult, others exciting, others absolutely confusing. Whatever and whenever the kinds of stages and dynamics, we are as women religious in this country conscious of our new identity and maturity. We have gone through those processes which brought each of us, after years of another type of formation, to a sense of our own personhood, our uniqueness, the specificity of our individual call and our responsibility to participate in designing the life and direction of our congregations. From our former dependency levels, we moved through some stages of independence and into what is emerging as interdependence.<sup>129</sup>

They learned experientially and interactively, trying new forms of government,<sup>130</sup> new ministries,<sup>131</sup> new rituals,<sup>132</sup> new ways of living community,<sup>133</sup> new ways of praying, new

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<sup>128</sup> Chittister, "An Amazing Journey," 85.

<sup>129</sup> Catherine Pinkerton, "Justice and the Poor" (Congregation of Religious Education, 24 June, 1981c), 1.

<sup>130</sup> In 1984, the Congregation of Saint Joseph in Cleveland settled on team leadership—a three member team. They saw this structure as (a) providing healthy support for each of the three, (b) affirming congregational values, (c) being a healthy, radical response to the call of the Gospel and Vatican II, healthy for the church, and (d) a counter-cultural model filled with potential. Congregation of Saint Joseph, *A Moment in the Life 1984-1988* (Cleveland, Ohio: Congregation of Saint Joseph, 1988), 13.

<sup>131</sup> In 1988, about one-third of active community members still worked as professional teachers and administrators. The next largest group worked in parishes, diocesan offices or social service institutions as administrators, pastoral ministers, and counselors. A growing number worked in rehabilitation centers, housing complexes, and home health care. The women expressed frustration that administrative positions in church related ministries, for which many of their members were qualified, were not open to them Congregation of Saint Joseph, *A moment in the Life 1984-1988*, 24.

<sup>132</sup> Both the 1980 and 1984 Directional Statements on the Role of Women proposed developing a list of songs, prayers and resources for worship that are free of sexist language and that enhance non-sexist attitudes of God and preparation of paraliturgies and prayer services that are non-sexist and inclusive. The Directional Papers were Proceedings from the 1980 and 1984 Chapters of the Congregation of Saint Joseph, Cleveland, which were compiled in *A Moment in the Life: 1980-1984* Congregation of Saint Joseph, *A Moment in the Life 1984-1988*.

<sup>133</sup> Some members live in local communities (in Cleveland), some with co-members, some with non-members, and others away from community in apartments. Congregation of Saint Joseph, *A Moment in the Life 1984-1988*, 24.

membership,<sup>134</sup> and new ways of confronting oppression.<sup>135</sup> They used theological reflection, self-reflection, critical reflection, and dialogue, both when division arose among them and to proceed from a position of unity.

While lessons learned from the women's movement did help these women exchange passive responsibility for creative responsibility, the preceding humanistic psychology movement must have prepared them. The humanistic psychology movement with its emphasis on the whole person and creativity taught the sisters that it was all right to define themselves by who they were rather than by what they did. They gave themselves permission to appreciate themselves as gift, each uniquely designed and created by a loving God. It was not sinful to see themselves included as gift. Also, planning and executing, through the Sister Formation Conference, a holistic education for their members gave the sisters concrete realization of their talents and capabilities.

If one accepts Dewey's theory of the continuity of learning—that all learning builds upon prior learning—then lessons learned from the women's movement arose from the preparation gained from the humanist movement. Continuous learning is like a layer cake that continues to add new layers. New layers of learning rise from the yeast of prior learning to take their place on top. The layers grow richer in wisdom, as knowledge in one area begins to be seen as relevant and applicable to another. The exclusion, domination, and oppression these women experienced in a patriarchal system, they also noticed in nations, in abuse of the world's resources and in the omission of spiritual phenomena from reality. The layers continue to build, but the icing that bonds them together is a deep, rich, evolving-in-revelation spirituality—a spirituality that continues to grow in inclusivity.

Pinkerton's spirituality is the topic of the next chapter, but for now it should be noted that this growth in inclusivity is not without its "lumps in the icing." As religious communities continue to broaden their membership to include various configurations of associate members, Margaret Brennan, IHM,<sup>136</sup> tells us the fear of some women religious of loss of identity causes them to meet attempts to include others "with anxiety, apprehension, and sometimes hostility."<sup>137</sup> Nonetheless, Brennan says, expanding understanding of feminist and ecological insights continues to foster "spiritualities that are prophetic, contemplative, holistic and mystical in the truest sense. Recommitments to work for justice are nuanced by a growing sense of the

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<sup>134</sup> The Congregation decided in 1976 to have co-members. Co-members include both male and female, single, married, divorced or widowed. They are people who share the same spirituality, want to be of service and want to do it corporately. They remain co-members as long as the mutual commitment exists. Congregation of Saint Joseph, *A Moment in the Life 1984-1988*, 21.

<sup>135</sup> A few of the ways of countering oppression mentioned in the 1980 and 1984 Directional Papers of the Congregation of Saint Joseph, Cleveland, include: denouncing militarism and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, lobbying Congress, writing books about sexism, participating in peaceful protests, providing public sanctuary for refugees from Central America in protest of U.S. government's refusal to protect those in danger of any form of persecution—not just political persecution, awakening the consciousness of others to the needs of the poor, causes of poverty, and possible remedies, and providing salary subsidies for sisters focusing their work on the economically poor. Congregation of Saint Joseph, *A Moment in the Life 1984-1988*.

<sup>136</sup> Immaculate Heart of Mary

<sup>137</sup> Margaret Brennan, "A White Light Still and Moving: Religious Life at the Crossroads of the Future," in *Religious Life*, ed. CP Yuhaus, HED (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 104.

interdependence and unity of all creation as central to the emerging view.”<sup>138</sup> This continued movement toward inclusivity led Felix Cardegna, at a 1989 joint meeting of LCWR and CMSM, to predict that by 2010 religious communities would be ecumenical and possibly interfaith, as well as composed of persons of different genders, cultures, and even sexual orientation, have both lay and clerical members, and with priorities for service influenced by global awareness.<sup>139</sup> Such changes may seem impossible and unrealistic, but a holistic, contemplative, mystical spirituality seems to foster another view of differences. Differences cease to mean ‘other than’ or ‘lesser than,’ but neither are differences simply overlooked or ignored. Rather, women religious who appear to have such spirituality seem to view, even welcome, differences as gift--gift reflecting the limitless mystery of God.

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<sup>138</sup> Brennan, “A White Light Still and Moving: Religious Life at the Crossroads of the Future,” 99.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.* , 104.