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Editorial Note. Walter P. Schoenfuhs, fellow at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, prepared a study of Roman Catholic charities. This brief review covers a portion of that study. Thanks are due to the publishers of the books which have been quoted but especially also to Fathers John F. Cronin, S. S., and A. H. Scheller, S. J., for the use of their personal notes.

Roman Catholic child welfare is concerned with the dependent child, including the delinquent child, which for one reason or another has gone wrong. Roman Catholic social workers recognize the change that has taken place from the days when education was the distinctive function of the home — first, on the mother's knee, and then beside the father in the fields — to the present time, when this function has largely been institutionalized and schools for the most part exercise this responsibility. This means that professional educators must take the place of the parents in the education of the child. Since an education without religion presents its own peculiar problems, the church must step in to supply that factor. Roman Catholics find cause for alarm in our system of public education, which is handicapped by a legal inability to inculcate virtue or the basis of objective moral standards and belief in a personal God. This concern not only motivates their support of an extensive school system, conducted on all levels of education, from the elementary school to the university, but also inspires their zeal for the care of dependent and delinquent children.

The history of Roman Catholic care for dependent children in the United States may be divided into four periods: (a) that which preceded 1840; (b) the period between 1840 and the Civil War; (c) the postwar period; (d) the modern period, beginning in 1898. Before 1840 there were sixteen Roman Catholic institutions for dependent or neglected children. In 1729 the Ursuline Sisters established the first institution for such children in New Orleans. This institution is recognized by Roman Catholic social workers as the first special institution of any sort for dependent children

in the territory of the present United States. A massacre of the whites by the Natchez Indians had left many orphans in Louisiana. Soon after 1805 the Visitation Convent at Georgetown, D. C., was caring for orphan girls, as were Mother Seton's Sisters of Charity at Emmitsburg, Md., in 1809. About that time the Sisters of Charity in Philadelphia and New York and the Sisters of Loretto and the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth in Kentucky established schools for the care of orphans and poor children. The following decade the Sisters of St. Dominic engaged in the same work in Kentucky, and the Sulpician Father Joubert, the "Apostle of the Colored Catholics in America," worked in Baltimore among the poor colored children from San Domingo. This work resulted in the founding of a colored religious community, the Oblate Sisters of Providence, in 1829. During the same decade the Sisters of Charity opened up orphanages in Baltimore, St. Louis, and Cincinnati as well.[1]

During this early period of Roman Catholic charities, ending in 1840, the work of education and charity went hand in hand. The greatest need and first objective of the foundations made in this period was religious education; the care of dependent children was merely incidental. The number of homeless children was small, since most of them could be adopted by friends or relatives. As a result the Sisters were usually able to support the orphans from the earnings derived from pay pupils.

After 1840 the arrival of large numbers of Irish and German immigrants necessitated greater attention to the care of dependent children, particularly in view of the many children who were left orphans by the epidemics of Asiatic cholera and yellow fever. The challenge of this situation was met by both Roman Catholics and Protestants in the establishment of private orphan asylums. Several states already operated juvenile reformatories, but separate state institutions for dependent children did not come in till after 1860.[2]

After the Civil War, Roman Catholic institutions for children grew up rapidly with the aid of public grants. The states had various ways of caring for dependent children, but no state was able to care for all its needy children, and private agencies continued to play an important part in the child-care program everywhere. In some states public funds were devoted to the

support of such agencies. Protestants viewed the state support of Roman Catholic institutions with alarm, fearing an eventual union of the Roman Catholic Church with the state.[3]

The new method of child care which marks the modern period, beginning with 1898, was inaugurated by the placing-out policy. The New York Children's Aid Society began to experiment with this method in 1853. After 1885 most public and church-related agencies introduced this method. Roman Catholics feared the loss of children to their faith if the children were placed in Protestant homes. Accordingly, in 1898, a group of laymen, members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, organized the Catholic Home Finding Bureau of New York and arranged with Vincentians and church authorities in the Middle West for suitable Roman Catholic homes for the children that were now overcrowding New York institutions. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of Baltimore went a step further and set a new pattern for American Roman Catholic charities by putting all Catholic social work on a unified, city-wide basis rather than on an independent parochial and religious-community basis. These efforts at co-ordination were quickly copied in other cities. In 1910 the National Conference of Catholic Charities was formed, closely followed by the establishment of diocesan bureaus of charities providing the necessary leadership, which enabled Roman Catholic workers in every field of charities to utilize the best of the technique of modern social work. At the present time the technique of social work is basically very much the same among both Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics.[4] Social workers today assume that both the institution and the foster home are necessary parts of any well-rounded system of child care.

The problem child receives particular attention on the part of Roman Catholic charities. This phase of child welfare brings the social workers into close contact with juvenile courts. Roman Catholic social workers raise the legitimate question in connection with the juvenile court: "What right has the state to interfere with the rights of parents in the care of their children?" They answer this question correctly by insisting that the state has rights both affecting the family as a unit and affecting individual members of the family, but that these rights exist only when the family fails to function properly.[5] The question, however, remains: Where may

the most adequate treatment for problems of children be found? The juvenile court is only one of the many agencies assuming a certain amount of responsibility for children. The schools, churches, private child-welfare societies, public welfare departments, and other resources in the community are likewise interested in the welfare and adjustment of children. At this point religious education enters as an important factor in reclaiming delinquents. As it does so, the responsibility of the church becomes correspondingly apparent. Murray and Flynn explain:

> If there is any argument at all for parochial schools, religious vacation schools, and other forms of religious education for the normal child living in his own home — and non-Catholics in increasing numbers are coming to admit the wisdom of the Catholic viewpoint on this subject — the case is doubly strong for the religious education of children who have been committed to an institution for delinquency. Although unfortunately some modern social workers are infected with the idea that "goodness without God" is possible not merely in the "minor moralities" which differ very little from good manners but in the more vital relationships of life as well, most of those who have come in direct contact with children in institutions feel that religious and ethical training is absolutely essential.[6]

Since the state is handicapped in supplying the necessary religious instruction, the church must step in. Thus many Roman Catholic institutions have developed in the United States, receiving in most instances public aid for Catholic children committed to their care by the courts.

The House of the Good Shepherd for girls is one of the best-known and most widely distributed private institutions of this type. The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, or the Good Shepherd Sisters, came to this country from France. Ever since their arrival here the Sisters of the Good Shepherd have confined their efforts solely to work with delinquent or predelinquent girls. In 1930 they operated forty-four homes and a branch of the community; the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge operated eleven similar institutions.[7] A particular feature of the religious program of the Good Shepherd Sisters is the department of Magdalens. This consists of women who, after showing evidence of perseverance during a period of at least three years, express

a wish to take vows and remain for life in the institution, living according to the rule of St. Theresa. The Magdalens, remaining to help the Sisters with younger unfortunates, serve as examples to the newcomer trying to mend her ways.[8]

In the area of recreation three activities are especially noteworthy. The Columbian Squires program, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Youth Organization, commonly called the C.Y.O., and the Youth Bureau established by the American Hierarchy. The Columbian Squires have a program offering varied spiritual, cultural, physical, and civic objectives for boys of high-school age. An important contribution of the Squires program is its stress on trained leadership. The education and training of leaders is one of the functions of the Boy Life Bureau, which sponsors six-day intensive training courses at strategic points during each summer. At these institutes adult leaders are given guidance in meeting the problems of youth of all ages, although stress is placed on work with boys in their teens.[9]

The Catholic Youth Organization, developed in many parts of the United States, is not a program as such, but it is an organization designed to co-ordinate, integrate, and stimulate parish and youth programs. It does not replace, but furthers, the work of sodalities and parish clubs. Although the athletic side has been widely publicized, the work of the organization in its best form includes many cultural and spiritual activities as well.[10]

The National Catholic Welfare Conference maintains a Youth Bureau to serve as a fact-finding agency in the whole field of youth work. Though of rather recent origin, it has already assisted in the establishment of several diocesan programs for boys and girls; it works in close co-operation with the National Council of Catholic Men and the National Council of Catholic Women. The Youth Bureau, located in Washington, D.C., is able to keep in close touch with legislation and with agencies affecting youth and to serve as a source of information concerning the organization of various youth programs.

Other youth programs of various recreational and cultural groups include such diverse activities as the Sodality Movement, the Junior Holy Name, the Catholic Boys' Brigade, and activities shared with non-Roman Catholic groups, such as the Y.M.C.A. and

Y. W. C. A. programs, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and the Camp Fire Girls.[11]

The *National Catholic Almanac* supplies detailed information regarding various Roman Catholic charities in the United States. The current issue holds that the most significant feature of the Catholic Charities program in recent years has been the development of central diocesan agencies, of which there are now 273 diocesan and branch agencies in the United States. These represent the official interest of 109 dioceses in Roman Catholic charities and are listed under the respective archdioceses and dioceses in *The Official Catholic Directory,* issued annually. Diocesan social services include such activities as counseling in marital problems and handling of disturbed children, but a better-known service is that of placement of dependent children.

The National Catholic Almanac reminds the reader that the care of dependent, neglected, and handicapped children has been given first place in Roman Catholic welfare work. The latest figures available in January 1954 show that institutions for dependent children at that time numbered 351 and cared for 40,718 children. For physically handicapped children there were 24 institutions; for the mentally handicapped there were 15. There were 152 protective institutions, caring for the needs of 15,029. In addition to children provided for in Roman Catholic institutions, there were 20,543 children being cared for under Roman Catholic auspices in foster homes.[12]

In view of the tremendous activity of the Roman Catholic Church, one naturally seeks the dynamic which motivates such a comprehensive and aggressive program. It is comprehensive, appealing to every member of the Roman Catholic Church. Father John F. Cronin, S. S., Assistant Director of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Social Action, lists many areas of social action and challenges each member of his church to ask the question: "What can I do?" He says: "Surely some phase of this work will fit in with your attitudes, abilities, and opportunities. Of course, the needs of different parishes vary. Pastors may ask your help in different projects, depending on local conditions. But the resourceful Catholic will usually find ways of making society better."[13] The program is aggressive. Father Cronin con-

tinues: "The apostolic Catholic seeks to make his faith an integral part of his life. He judges problems of the home, neighborhood, community, and work in terms of the ideals laid down by the Church. He then seeks to embody these ideals in his surroundings. Negatively, this means removal of conditions which make Christian living difficult. For example, he might ask which influences are harming home and children, and what can be done to correct these evils. Positively, Catholic action would mean to him a sustained effort to bring Christ into society." [14]

Father A. H. Scheller, S. J., Director of the School of Social Service at St. Louis University, emphasizing the spiritual aspect of social service, draws attention to the fact that though Christ's Gospel contains no systematic social program, yet we find in it a series of spiritual principles and motives, so charged with power that they gave a new direction and an unending impulse to all subsequent social work. Among the more important of Christ's doctrines Father Scheller finds the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man in Christ; the infinite value of the human personality; the supremacy of spiritual values; the obligation and splendor of benevolent service; divine compensation for the simplest service; Christ's life of service constituting a model of perfection. Under the heading "The Obligation and Splendor of Benevolent Service" Father Scheller says:

> In Mt. 22:35-40 Christ places love of God and love of neighbor (charity) on an equal plane. One cannot practice [one] without the other. "A new commandment I give unto you: that you love one another as I have loved you." "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love for another" (Jo. 13: 34-35). Loving service to one's neighbor is thus an obligation on every follower of Christ, but it is also a glorious duty: "As long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it unto me" (Mt. 25:40). Service rendered to the needy is thus actually rendered unto Christ Himself.[15]

In viewing the religious aspects of Roman Catholic charities, one senses that charity, or love, is identified with social service. There is an emphasis on man's inherent goodness in his natural, unregenerated state. The regenerative power of the Gospel and the causal relationship between faith and love are not brought out in any discussion of motivation. The mere statement that faith is

never without love does not suffice. The emphasis is rather on merit and reward. Thus Marguerite T. Boylan, Executive Secretary, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Brooklyn, writing on social welfare in the Roman Catholic Church, in speaking of the philosophy of Roman Catholic social work, says:

> There are certain fundamental truths upon which Catholic social work is built. First and foremost is the truth that we are made by God and that we are destined for eternal happiness with God. After Adam's fall God sent His only-begotten Son, the God-Man Jesus, upon the earth through Whose infinite merits man is rendered capable of meriting eternal life. In His goodness God endowed man with free will. This life is a time of probation and man must prove his own worthiness by his observation of both the natural and positive law of God, his Creator. Man's whole ability of meriting, however, as well as his actual merits and satisfactions, are derived from the infinite treasure of merits which Christ gained for us on the Cross (Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Chap. XVI; Sess. XIV, Chap. VIII). Catholic social work helps to lead man to God through Jesus Christ.[16]

Early Roman Catholic child care in the United States was motivated by the desire to preserve the faith of the dependent child. John O'Grady says:

> The history of Catholic charities in the United States is almost always a history of the struggle of the immigrant for the preservation of the faith of his children. The immigrant entered into a civilization essentially Protestant. The whole life and outlook of the country was Protestant. Many people believed that a great favor was conferred on the child of the immigrant when he was rescued from his poor home in the slums and brought up in the ideals and virtues of Protestantism. Many others were governed only by sectarian or anti-Catholic proselytizing agencies. Before the Civil War the immigrant who needed assistance had to look to Protestant sources. In fact, the public institutions were just as Protestant in character as those operated by the individual denominations. Their agents were often ministers or ex-ministers, or women who were aggressively evangelistic. The Protestant religion was a part of their life and their spirit. When the friendless children of the Irish were brought to them, their only thought was to preserve them from the errors of "Romanism."[17]

At the same time Roman Catholic authorities continued their struggle for the recognition of the principle that children should be brought up in institutions and families of their faith. When in 1892 a Roman Catholic child was placed in a Methodist family by the County Children's Home in New Haven, Roman Catholics appealed to the courts against the action of this Home, but the Supreme Court of the State upheld the Home. Continued agitation on the part of the *Connecticut Catholic* led to the passing of a law by the State legislature, providing that children should be placed in homes of the same religious faith as the parents.[18] This principle was also demanded for the placement of children in private homes. Deprecating any effort on the part of Protestant agencies to gain converts among Roman Catholics, Marguerite T. Boylan says: "To the true Catholic, religion is his most treasured possession, and any effort designed to rob him of his faith stirs up a feeling of deepest resentment." [19]

Papal social teaching in Roman Catholic schools is largely based on the social encyclicals, which, say the educators, should be taught in religion, sociology, economics, history, social problems, ethics, typewriting, shorthand, and any other classes where the social teaching of the church can be profitably explained. According to Gerald J. Schnepp and Thomas J. Bain there is considerable room for additional coverage. In the light of their investigation it appears that formal presentation of one or more social encyclicals is offered by 83 per cent of Roman Catholic high schools, 62 per cent of colleges, and 41 per cent of the seminaries.[20]

Religion being the most treasured possession to the true Roman Catholic, it is but natural that he would want to pass his religion on to the non-Roman Catholic. Protestant social workers and pastors have had occasion to observe that desire. Though it would be hazardous to base a general policy on isolated instances in the treatment by Roman Catholic authorities of non-Roman Catholic children coming to Roman Catholic institutions, such cases as the following seem to be numerous enough to cause alarm among Protestant social workers. In a New York foundling hospital, run by the Sisters of Charity, a child is baptized by the priest upon admission, thus becoming Roman Catholic. This is quite logical. Not so is the case of an unwed Protestant mother's child, whom

the priest baptized and whom the Sister Superior thereupon claimed for the Roman Church. In Buffalo, New York, Roman Catholic Charities were taking in many Lutheran children, asserting they had better facilities for the children. An interview on the part of the Lutheran social worker with the priest resulted in a current change of policy.[21] It would be of little practical value to multiply such instances. Mere negative criticism only gives comfort to the indolent. Roman Catholics met the alleged Protestant efforts at proselytizing with an energetic positive program of charities. Protestants, unhappy about Roman Catholic efforts at making converts, should meet such efforts with even greater zeal. At the same time it may be in order to remind all social-service workers within the Christian Church to observe the ethics of Christian charity.

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NOTES

1. Raymond W. Murray and Frank T. Flynn, *Social Problems* (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1944), pp. 573, 574.
2. Ibid., pp. 574, 575.
3. Ibid., p. 576.
4. Ibid., pp. 578, 579.
5. Ibid., p. 534.
6. Ibid., p. 547.
7. Ibid., pp. 547, 548.
8. Ibid., p. 549.
9. Ibid., p. 556.
10. Ibid., p. 557.
11. Ibid.
12. Pp. 384, 385.
13. Mimeographed notes submitted by Father Cronin.
14. Ibid.
15. Classroom lecture notes submitted by Father Scheller.
16. Marguerite T. Boylan, *Social Welfare in the Catholic Church* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 6.
17. John O'Grady, *Catholic Charities in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Charities [printed by Ransdell, Inc.], 1930), p. 147.
18. Ibid., pp. 148, 149.
19. Boylan, p. 26.
20. Gerald J. Schnepp and Thomas J. Bain, "Papal Social Teaching in Catholic Schools," *America*, XC (March 6, 1954), 593, 594.
21. Information from Henry F. Wind, Executive Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, personal interview.