

**The Pastoral Theology of Pierre-André Liégé:
a critical and comparative study in pastoral and
practical theology.**

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ABSTRACT

Pierre-André Liégé (1921-1979) was a major French Catholic theologian and a prolific writer, whose pastoral ministry inspired thousands. He introduced *la théologie pastorale* into France, and was an influential figure behind the innovations of Vatican II.

This thesis introduces Liégé to English readers. Based upon primary sources, interviews, relevant secondary French literature, and the appraisal of representative British texts, it is an exercise in critical, comparative practical theology. It examines the social, ecclesiastical and theological context and content of Liégé's pastoral theology. This was prophetic but uncompromising; radical but systematic; focussed on catechetics, and ambitious for disciples. It was inseparable from his life and action, and sought to reform church *praxis* in conformity with the gospel, thus building mature Eucharistic communities. The thesis goes on to explore the impact of Liégé's work on contemporary and subsequent French practical theology. Then it critiques British practical theology through the lens of Liégé's thought. The British approach is revealed as more individualistic and diffuse, focussed on pastoral care, not catechetics, and neither prophetic, nor seeking radical church reform.

The thesis concludes that Liégé's life and thought demonstrate an essential role for the practical theologian, and the need for a constantly renewed practical theology, if church *praxis* is to be reformed towards conformity with the gospel. It argues British practical theology can learn from Liégé: His use of theology to drive *praxis*, to transcend its focus on individualistic pastoral care, and to discover a theological discourse transmitting faith could be used to enlarge the British perspective. The thesis proposes an agenda for possible development and change. By presenting Liégé as an exemplar of French practical theology, the thesis demonstrates the general value of critical, comparative, international and interdenominational approaches to practical theology and broadens the shared understanding between countries, denominations and theological traditions.

**The Pastoral Theology of Pierre-André Liégé:
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Abbreviations

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| APDF : | Archives de la Province Dominicaine de France |
| ICP: | Institut catholique de Paris |
| ISPC: | Institut Supérieur de Pastorale Catéchétique |
| JAC : | Jeunesse agricole catholique |
| JOC : | Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne |
| RSPT : | Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques |
| UER: | Unité d'Enseignement et de Recherches (de théologie et de sciences religieuses) of the ICP |
| P. | Père |

Stylistic and referencing conventions

Capital letters

Generally I have not used capitals for theological words such as revelation, incarnation, salvation, grace, church etc. The exception is when, quoting Liégé or others, I have thought it right to convey (and respect) the ethos of their writing by maintaining their use of capitals, especially in Liégé's French, since he uses them so liberally. The custom in France is rarely to capitalise even keywords in a book or article title, so I have not, unless it is so in the original. In English it is, so I have.

Names of people

Generally I have introduced individuals with at least the initials of their Christian name when they are part of Liégé's story, though subsequent references use only their surname. The exceptions are practical theologians not part of Liégé's story but whose writings are relevant to the discussion, referenced, and included in the Bibliography.

Liégé's writings

I have consulted the writings referenced in the text unless indicated. The exception is Appendix One where I have referenced further texts of Liégé in the context of presenting an overview of all his themes. These are included in the Bibliography for the benefit of subsequent researchers. Sometimes Liégé wrote more than 26 pieces in one year. When the alphabet is exhausted I have continued with aa, bb, cc etc.

Dates of Liégé's Pastoral Theology Courses

Liégé's pastoral theology courses run over two or three years. I have referenced them in the year of their completion.

Italics

French words have been italicized throughout for clarity and consistency.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the late Tony Dyson of Manchester University for his motivating inspiration. He strongly encouraged me to pursue this study and offered to supervise. He was aware how sparse was British research into French pastoral theology. He admitted how little he knew himself but referred me to Adler and Vogeleisen's book (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981).

In 1989 I found a welcome at the *Institut Catholique de Paris* by the then Director, Jean Jonchery. Two interviews with his predecessor, Professeur Jacques Audinet have been especially helpful, as was an interview with Liégé's close friend, Père François Coudreau. I am grateful to the Prior of the *Couvent St Jacques* in Paris, for hospitality in 2001 and especially to Jean-Pierre Jossua OP, Pierre-Marie Gy OP and Patrick Jacquement OP and a number of other French Dominicans for their interviews and conversations. These were all theologians very well placed to offer personal reflections, both historical and theological, in answer to my prepared list of questions. These interviews were invaluable. I am equally grateful to Mgr Raffin OP, Bishop of Metz and to Mme. Nelly Liégé, Liégé's sister, for their interviews. I am grateful for the help of the staff of *le Saulchoir* and especially to André Duval OP for making certain Dominican archives available. In 2001 and 2004 I stayed most enjoyably with Père Gérard Reynal, *Vice-Recteur* of the *Institut Catholique de Toulouse* whose doctorate on Liégé was conferred in May 2004 (Reynal 2004). The publications, recordings and theological detail about Liégé he drew to my attention were significant. His gift of a copy of his dissertation following his *Soutenance de Thèse* was especially appreciated.

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Most especially I am grateful for the enlightenment, excitement, challenge and inspiration of having had the good fortune to discover Liégé. It is clear to me that he is worth presenting to an English speaking theological readership in his own terms. However much his writing has dated, there is, paradoxically, a freshness about both his style and content. His thirst is for the living God, and the reader feels this on almost every page. His pastoral approach deals in the big questions of whether God is worth bothering with and why. Why not be an atheist or simply live a secular existence? Liégé wrote with passionate and challenging arguments in response to these questions.

Chapter One: Introduction

1. Preamble

Pierre-André Liégé (1921-1979) was a leading French Roman Catholic theologian of the twentieth century and the founder of modern francophone pastoral theology. He was one of the French church's most charismatic communicators of Christian faith for three decades. His influence was felt in the USA and Canada, Africa, Asia and South America as well as many European countries. He uniquely pioneered pastoral theology from systematic theology as a coherent university level subject with its principles and subdivisions, seminally influencing subsequent francophone pastoral and practical theology until today. He contributed significantly to the Second Vatican Council. It was as if he lived at large in the French church.¹ He made an incalculably great impact on thousands of people by the force of his personality and the integration of his theology with his personal freedom and capacity to be present to others. He was one of the greatest preachers in the France of his day and an exceptional exemplar of radical Christian discipleship and Dominican spirituality.

Yet his name and work are virtually unknown in Britain. Although this is not the first study of Liégé, it is the first to introduce him to English speakers. The hypothesis is that British practical theologians have much to learn from Liégé. Since his life and work are inseparable, the thesis aims to present Liégé, his context, personality, ministry and theology, in particular his pastoral theology, and then, by a method of comparison and contrast, to use this perspective as a lens through which critically to view recent British pastoral and practical theology and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses.

The comparative method adds value because it enables the study to make double use of Liégé: to see what he has to offer in his own right as well as to see what light that throws on British pastoral theology. The study is not without prejudice. I believe pastoral theology in

¹ The review *Réalités* published a mini *Who's Who* for the decade 1950-1960 with the title '*les 200 CV du moteur France*' (the people who drive France) which cites Liégé among the half dozen religious personalities out of its list of two hundred (Laneyrie 1985).

1950s France to be innovative, lively and exciting while British pastoral theology was less so. The thesis examines what, even now, can and should be learned from Liégé for British theologians, charting the unexplored territory of his thought for them and asking why it matters that it is unknown. Further, if it is remarkable, *why* is it unknown? Partly because it is Roman Catholic. This already distances it from the predominantly Protestant British mindset making it seem inaccessible and even irrelevant. But mostly because of language. So for this study I have read Liégé's key writings in the original and translated their core ideas for English speakers. Finally, British pastoral and practical theology's isolation from much Continental writing has tended to impart too narrow a view of pastoral theology's history to British scholars. This study aims to enlarge this understanding.

2. Historical Background

The Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches shared the problem of responding to the end of 'Christendom' and the rise of the modern world. What adaptations should they make? The history of these responses was shaped as much by cultural as by denominational factors. For example, the relationship between church and State in France was altogether different from Britain. The French Revolution and its long aftermath brought great challenges to the French church which nevertheless proved a catalyst to diverse renewals and lively developments in the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth. Add to this the optimistic ethos of post-war France and the stage is set for understanding that, by 1950, even before it, an influential group of French theologians were posing radical challenges to their church all of which were taken up a decade later in Vatican II. Surfing the waves of this ferment, the young Dominican Liégé, fresh from ten years of study in Paris and Tübingen, introduced his pastoral theology into France.

In Britain it was still low tide. No young theologians were excited by the heady combination of M.-D. Chenu, Y. Congar, F.-X. Arnold, the Tübingen School of pastoral theology and far reaching catechetical renewal. Vidler (1971: 273) characterised the theology of the period as 'quiescent'. Liégé introduced both renewed pastoral theology and experiential learning based on placements for theological students in Paris more than ten years before this was happening in England and Wales. And whereas the 1950s in France featured an enduring

and at times bitter struggle between the innovative radical theologians and their church, in Britain no such theological tension existed. Not till the 1960s and 1970s does theological turbulence, much influenced by cultural and social shifts, become shared across the Channel as common challenges are set by the agenda of the times. British pastoral and practical theology was also transformed during these decades. Its development was exponential. Yet throughout this whole period, there was little to no cross-fertilisation in pastoral theology between France and Britain. Insights, knowledge and changed practice were not much, if at all, shared. However, there are significant comparisons and contrasts between assumptions, aims, methods, definitions, content, styles and ecclesiologies. Despite this lack of crossover, by the end of the twentieth century practical theology is broadly categorised as 'international'. Its proposed definitions relate as much to culture and society as to the church's pastoral practice. But the respective British and French stories remain unexplored by the other side. The question arises, does this matter and what can be learned from examining the comparisons and contrasts?

This pastoral and practical theology of mid and late twentieth century France and Britain is the field of thought in which this study is set. Inevitably it also considers developments in the U.S.A., as the influences from this country on British thought cannot be overlooked.

3. Personal Background and Motivation

An amalgam of personal and professional motivation drives this thesis. Since childhood I have been struck by the salient mismatch between the New Testament account of the teaching of Jesus and the practice of the church. It disturbed me and, for example, I argued even as a child that Bishops should not live in palaces and be chauffeured in luxury cars. For thirty-three years as an ordained Anglican I have struggled in a diversity of contexts to find ways to reconcile this mismatch, none of which seems to have been more than marginally or momentarily successful. The frustration has been constant and remains, both with myself, for failing to integrate theology with practice, and with my church for the most part, as it seems to me, hardly even caring that theology and practice lie so separated. For authentic care is expressed in practice and there is scant evidence that the Church of England lets its practice be driven by theology.

The discipline in which this issue is theorised and thought about is pastoral and practical theology. I became interested and involved in this subject as an ordinand and have continued to study it ever since. It is unnecessary to expand on this beyond saying that, struggling to develop a corporate parish ministry as a Vicar in Tottenham, London during the early 1980s, I deepened my knowledge by completing an MA at Birmingham University entitled, 'Church and Community in Tottenham: A Theological Reflection on a Church of England Congregation in the Inner City'. It took the ideas of R.A. Lambourne as a basis for discussing how the church in a setting of serious urban deprivation might better embody the gospel and be an agent of redemption. The background hum of this whole study is my concern for the church to incarnate the gospel both in its institutional life and in local congregations whose theology is explicit and practical. Whilst, for the argument's sake, my general approach is ecumenical, especially in thinking about British practical theology, my personal experience is rooted in the Church of England.² This influences my choice of illustration and I should acknowledge this particular interest.

This explains the motivation and context for a critical and comparative study that surveys and examines aspects of British pastoral and practical theology; but how does Liégé enter the picture?

Whilst in Tottenham I became interested in the church in rural Normandy. Though in institutional decline, its diocesan catechetical centres were developing impressive lay ministry. This presupposed a catechetical depth that does not exist in Britain. What or who lay behind this? Further, I began to wonder how this good French practice might assist ministry in a British parish. What might be learned from French pastoral theology? How might French pastoral theology contribute to my thinking about my preoccupying 'background hum' issue? Shortly after this I found myself teaching pastoral theology at Salisbury and Wells Theological College and was able to start research. Initial investigation revealed that '*la théologie pastorale*', had been pioneered by the Dominican, *Père Pierre-André*

² My curacy was in an ecumenical team with the United Reformed Church and for five years I was rector of a Local Ecumenical Partnership with the Methodists and URC in Bristol. I have always worked ecumenically, having spent six months at the World Council of Churches' *Institut Œcuménique* at Bossey whilst an ordinand.

Liégé OP. A three hundred page book bearing witness to his life and achievements demonstrated his considerable theological significance (Refoulé 1980). Not only had he made an impressive, highly exceptional, personal impact, but he had been an advisor at Vatican II, had written extensively, and had been a high profile scholar, teacher and preacher who when he died was Dean of the *Institut Catholique* in Paris. What is more, the question that seemed to preoccupy him most was exactly the same as mine: what does the church need to do to conform to the gospel? I had found a focus for my research which became the key question of this study: *what, if anything, can be learned from the pastoral theology of Liégé?* The research project clearly entailed, first, a study of Liégé in his own right to discover his thought in its own context and, secondly, an exploration of the extent to which his thought was of interest and relevance when compared and contrasted with pastoral and practical theology in Britain.

4. Academic rationale and contribution

Why might this be of academic significance? How might it be a contribution to scholarship?

At Salisbury I had been surprised to discover that no book current on pastoral and practical theology university reading lists in the mid 1980s contained even a single bibliographical reference to French pastoral theology. Could it be there was none? If there were, it was not known about in Britain. No British Protestant theological academic I have spoken to about this research since 1989 has heard of Liégé.³ Does it matter? British scholars may or may not have learned or learn from Liégé. This thesis will argue they could have and can. Be that as it may, this study's first contribution to scholarship is to open up and examine this unexplored territory and draw some conclusions.⁴

³ Enquiry has revealed that the Bodleian library in Oxford has two translated pieces by him. The Roman Catholic Heythrop College has one, as does Bristol University library. Cardiff has nothing.

⁴ It is because this territory is so little explored in English, and Liégé himself quite unexplored, that I have erred on the side of including data and details in the footnotes that future researchers might need, and not easily find, and also as an outlet for information from interviews that could not be gained again. It is planned to deposit a 'Liégé box' in Cardiff University library containing a very much longer, earlier, draft of this study, as well as printed material, recordings of interviews (though the sound quality is often poor) and photographs given by Mme. Nelly Liégé.

Why is French pastoral theology unknown in Britain? Whatever the answers, prominent amongst the reasons is the difference of language. The language divide has up to now inhibited any possibility of mutually enriching dialogue between French and British practical theology. For this study I have translated enough to introduce Liégé's thought to an anglophone readership. This is a second contribution.

A third contribution is introducing Liégé the man to English readers. It was swiftly apparent that I had discovered a quite exceptional exemplar of Christian discipleship. Liégé deserves to be introduced to an English speaking audience for the person he was as well as for the richness of his thought. Indeed I concluded that his theology cannot be understood without reference to his life because his was an integrated personality whose thought was generated by his action (Reynal 2004: 514-516). It grew out of his pastoral activities and involvement. It was a response to the circumstances and events that surrounded him. He was not what the French call a *théologien de cabinet*. For him theology was not a job to be done in a library from nine a.m. to five p.m. It was an all-consuming way of life; a life lived in direct existential response to theological imperatives. Michael Walsh (2001) selects Liégé for his *Dictionary of Christian Biography* precisely because he finds him to be among the most committed six thousand five hundred Christians who have ever lived.⁵

The fourth contribution is to address the isolation of British practical theology from the content, approach, methods, assumptions and priorities of francophone pastoral theology. This study explores what is illuminated when this is exposed and the British perspectives are placed alongside this other tradition. I offer a critique of British pastoral and practical theology from a Liégéian francophone viewpoint. I open up a new, contrasted, set of ideas. This enlarges the understanding of the history of pastoral theology for British theologians.

⁵ His entry reads:

French Dominican preacher and theologian, born Coiffy-le-Bas, 22 June 1921, died Paris, 9 February 1976. Liégé succeeded Yves Congar at *Le Saulchoir* in Paris, and taught at the *Institut Catholique*, where he developed the programme of pastoral theology. He attended the Vatican Council II as *peritus* to French bishops, in particular to Paul-Joseph Schmitt of Metz. He published *Adultes dans le Christ*, which stressed the necessity of maturity in faith and the normative value of the adult community, which emphasis he hoped would form the basis for renewal in the Church (Walsh 2001: 776).

Schmitt himself has no entry. Liégé's contains three errors. He died in 1979. He cannot be said in any meaningful way to have 'succeeded Yves Congar' at *Le Saulchoir*. He was a theological advisor, emphatically not a *peritus*, at the Council.

British accounts of the history of pastoral theology up to now have comprehensively ignored the French perspective. This study broadens the context of shared pastoral theological understanding and throws light on France's distinctive contribution.

5. Thesis Structure and Method

The aims of the thesis have shaped its structure. It will be seen that pastoral theology is highly contextualised in France. Therefore it is necessary to contextualise Liégé's life, ministry and thought within French Catholicism. Part One aims to do this. Part Two presents his pastoral theology. Part Three examines his pastoral theology from comparative historical perspectives. Part Four offers comparisons and contrasts, and weighs the value of introducing Liégé to British practical theology.

A lynchpin of the presentation is that in Liégé we have a major pastoral thinker whose theology is tested against his work with the Scouts. His personal identity and character matter to the subsequent discussion. This is why the chapter on his personality is placed at the start in chapter two. Readers need to know whom they are dealing with. It draws on both written sources and interviews to draw attention to the key features of Liégé's personality as expressed by his contemporaries. Prominent among them are the qualities of indefatigable industry and conscientiousness, 'presence' to others, personal freedom and authenticity of faith.

Chapter three shows both the context Liégé inherits and how his theology emerges from an historical unfolding that has led to a paradoxical situation, at once a short 'Golden Age' of theological creativity and a conservative status quo of which he is pungently critical. The nineteenth and early twentieth century history of the French church and its theology and disputes are well known; so I have compressed the introductory material needed from mainstream accounts. Similarly the brief, compressed presentation of the catechetical background is drawn exclusively from the *magnum opus* on this subject by two great scholars (Adler and Voegelien 1981).

It is Liégé's integration of life and thought that also explains why, before introducing his theology proper, I have given both biographical background and, more substantially, a fair coverage to Liégé's theological development and ministry in chapter four. They are critical to an understanding of what he chose to write about and why. Nine areas needed to be addressed.

First, concerning Liégé's formation as a Dominican and as a theologian, it is necessary to know what shaped his assumptions, concerns, style and method. Second, it is important to an understanding of Liégé's output to understand the context and the narrative of the almost continuous conflict that accompanied his life as a theologian. He finds himself in repeated and long-standing conflict with Rome, with the Dominican hierarchy, with many Bishops, with fellow Dominicans, faculty colleagues and scholars, with missionary societies and with publishers. This conflict inevitably influences what he gives his attention to and the theology he produces. Third, it is pertinent to know something of Liégé the preacher and teacher of preaching. The Dominicans are called the Order of Preachers (hence the letters OP). Preaching is a core Dominican activity; hence the significance of Liégé's being made, in 1963, 'Preacher-General' of the Dominican Order through the fame and power of his own preaching. He taught it influentially to seminarians for twenty years. Fourth, since Liégé's theology is utterly inseparable from his teaching it is important to understand something of his relationship with the *Institut Catholique* in Paris where he was a founder member of the new catechetical institute in 1950, where he taught for twenty nine years until his death, and where he was elected Dean, taking the helm at the threshold of a new era for a reconfigured *Institut* whose early, difficult, years he guided; indeed he wrote its Constitution. Fifth, Liégé's association with the significant Dominican journal *Parole et Mission* was so close that its story, concerns and activity need to be at least introduced. The journal was integral to Liégé's work and evolving theology.⁶ Sixth, this Chapter includes a brief acknowledgement of Liégé's role with the Scouts, expanded in Appendix 2, since, as mentioned above, his theology was tested

⁶ When I visited the Dominican library, *le Saulchoir*, in Paris for the first time in 1989, and spoke to the librarian about Liégé research, he was of the opinion that a particularly useful thesis could (and should) be written evaluating the significance of the whole *Parole et Mission* project and Liégé's place in it. He considered it had played a key role in the development of the theology of mission during the 1950s and 1960s. In fact I began my Liégé research with an examination of all Liégé's contributions to the journal and the scope of its coverage from 1957 – 1973. In the end this focus on a journal did not seem to be as useful as a general presentation of Liégé and the comparison with British pastoral and practical theology.

against his years of communicating with them as a chaplain. Again, his theology accompanies his active ministry. He had to find words to explain his faith to students and teenagers. It was in a Scouting journal that his uncompromising response to the Algerian War found expression. It was to inspire his students and scouts in their faith that he wrote three of his books. Seventh, there is an introduction to Liégé as a moral theologian. This is included because Liégé developed an increasingly public profile, including radio broadcasts and television appearances, as well as a wide pastoral reputation, for his controversial response to moral issues, not always in harmony with the church's official teaching.⁷ It is an important aspect of his ministry. Finally, it is essential to say something about Liégé's involvement with (eighth), and in the years following (ninth), the Second Vatican Council. Hastings (1986: 525) regards this as the most significant Christian event of the twentieth century not just for Roman Catholics but for all Christians. Liégé was a prophet of its teachings in the decade before it, an advocate of its reforming work as an invited theological advisor during its sessions, and a commentator on and implementer of its theology and decisions for the rest of his life. It was the pivot and centrepiece of his theology and ministry.

Having given the reader the context in which to understand it, chapter five sets out the foundations of Liégé's theology, placing it within a framework. In particular, it elaborates Liégé's understanding of the Word of God and of faith, both essential to an understanding of his pastoral theology. This description of core theological themes matters because his pastoral theology is not an add-on to his theology but grew out of it. There is a need to note what pastoral theological questions are implicit within these themes and how they underpin Liégé's more developed pastoral theology.

This pastoral theology, the kernel of Liégé's theological creativity, is presented in Part Two (chapter six). The presentation is chronological because we are examining a lived history that evolved with Liégé's life and the significant events, such as Vatican II, that accompanied it. For example, the term 'practical theology' is only introduced in the second half of the unfolding. His pastoral theology is best understood by tracking the way it emerged. The chapter starts from a famous article he wrote in 1955 arguing that pastoral theology is both

⁷ I was able to see tapes of two of Liégé's television appearances through the kindness of the Dominican archivist at the *Couvent de l'Assomption* in Paris.

autonomous and a dimension of all theology because all theology concerns *l'agir de l'Église*, the action of the church. This is a key phrase for Liégé.⁸ Pastoral theology's task is to serve every aspect of what it means, leading to his first definition of it as 'systematic reflection on the total lived life of the church in the time of its up-building' (Liégé 1955b: 3). Liégé places pastoral theology in catechetical and historical context and gives it divisions and principles. The pastoral mission of the church is prophetic, liturgical and royal. It articulates the criteria for church action, based on their paschal origin, criteria that are theocentric, incarnational and historical. Pastoral care is to enable the church to live the Pentecostal Event, the Event of Jesus Christ.⁹ It is essentially corporate, a *pastorale d'ensemble*, another key Liégé phrase. It leads to a community deeply involved with the secular world, taking the preferential option for the poor, and that nurtures and encourages all that it means to be an adult, such as risk taking, responsibility and freedom. Liégé's pastoral theology was in alignment with what Pope John XXIII called the church's 'pastoral magisterium', basic to Vatican II. After the Council and until his death, Liégé maintained this approach to pastoral theology. During the 1970s the debates focussed particularly on the place of *la pratique* in theology, or, in more Liégéian language, the practical as a theological place. By the time of his death Liégé is raising more questions about these issues than offering closed answers. He acknowledges that on many points the debate remains open.

Part Three examines Liégé's pastoral theology from comparative historical perspectives. Chapter seven is needed both to show how this context played out during his lifetime and sufficiently to describe the Roman Catholic and French setting to make a counterpart for subsequent comparison and contrast with pastoral and practical theology in Britain. Together with Chapters eight and nine, Part Three's purpose is to articulate a sufficient description of pastoral and practical theology in the French and British contexts as to allow the discussion of Part Four.

Chapter seven aims to see Liégé's achievement through the Roman Catholicism of his times. It tracks the far reaching changes from the stultifying atmosphere of Pius XII's 'Roman

⁸ Or 'church action'. It is difficult to translate, the verb, as often in French, being an infinitive, giving a literal meaning of 'the "to act" of the church'.

⁹ A capital letter is used for Event to mirror Liégé's choice of a capital for this word when used in the context of 'the Event Jesus Christ'.

system' to the current era of post modern international practical theology, the way ecclesiology has shifted from one of authority rooted in the Counter Reformation to one of communion and the People of God. Also tracked is the shift from the theological ethos in which the clergy do no more than apply pastoral manuals, to a pastoral theology at the heart of the renewed ecclesiology, and to a practical theology that is more a theological hermeneutics of Christian action. It then examines the main shifts in practical theology in the francophone world since Liégé's death. Chapter eight is important for its contrasting portrait of conservative British church life during the 1950s where, despite evidence of ardour, there was a lack, in Hastings' words, of 'a lively interplay between learning and religious practice', fortunately enlivened by individual pastoral initiatives (Hastings 1987: 442). However it is equally important to note the explosion of theological activity that came with *Honest to God* and which accompanied the pastoral studies movement during the 1960s and 1970s that strongly influenced theological education. These two chapters enable the discussion in Part Four to be against a contemporary setting.

Part Four consists of two Chapters. Chapter nine is needed to compare Liégé's context to that of Britain and then compare and contrast their respective aims, definitions, styles, ecclesiologies, interests, content and methods. Chapter ten evaluates the value of Liégé's pastoral theology to pastoral and practical theology in Britain. The conclusions are modest: Liégé is of historic interest to British practical theologians because of his significance for French pastoral theology and as an example of an embodied, evangelist-pastoral theologian. Liégé has a different vision of practical theology. It offers a significant and different model. Liégé's model provides a lens for examining British practical theology. The Liégéian critique does not suggest that the world of British practical theology could be much different from what it is. But it offers some pointers, chief of which are that it would strengthen British practical theology to re-connect with historical and systematic theology. It would strengthen British church life if the churches could allow praxis to be driven by theology. It would strengthen British church life to take catechesis, in Liégé's rich understanding of it, far more seriously.

This thesis is thus not primarily an evaluation of Liégé's pastoral theology in its French context.¹⁰ It is not a general historical presentation of French pastoral theology. *It seeks to present Liégé as an exemplar of French pastoral theology and as a focal point for examining British pastoral and practical theology from that perspective.*

6. Resources

The **primary source** is Liégé's own published writings. The Dominican library in Paris, *le Saulchoir*, contains most of Liégé's output of books, book sections and articles, as well as the French Dominican Archives. The Dominican house in Paris, *L'Assomption* has TV footage of Liégé and recordings of his talks. These sources in Paris have provided much of the raw material for this research. Then came research using **secondary sources**, namely, writings of others about Liégé, to put him into context, and explain his significance. Three sources here are of special value: The book produced by his colleagues in the months after his death (Refoulé 1980); Reynal's doctorate (Reynal 2004); and Lemoine's dissertation (Lemoine 1997).

Tertiary sources included field research and interviews with people who knew Liégé and who have reflected on his theology for many years. The most significant interviewees were Jean-Pierre Jossua OP, Professeur Jacques Audinet, Mgr Raffin OP, Bishop of Metz, Père François Coudreau, Pierre-Marie Gy OP, and Père Gérard Reynal. The exception was his sister, Mme. Nelly Liégé who had not read much of his work but who offered valuable insights into his family background, early life and character. Liégé was a person with strong roots in the Haute-Marne. Apart from interviewing Mme. Liégé it seemed important to get a feel for the places of his childhood near Langres.

The more familiar bibliography of American and British pastoral and practical theology has been the source for discussion and comparison. It is such a vast field that choices have had to be made about inclusion, exclusion and focus. From the United States, Tillich, Hiltner, Boisen, Nouwen and Browning have been singled out because of their seminal influence on British practical theology. The diverse nature of British practical theology makes the choice

¹⁰ This has been amply provided by Reynal (2004).

of who to include much harder. This study selects a small cross section of the most influential literary exemplars with University connections. Because their scope goes beyond the reach of what is possible in a single study, it does not aim to do justice to the wide range of practical theologians working in the field, often in parishes or other pastoral appointments. For the same reason neither does it explore the Evangelical contributions of writers like Stephen Croft or Paul Goodliffe who start from different critical assumptions from Liégé which would need more examination than is possible here.

Some of the bibliography reflects the pastoral and practical theology that emerged, much of it ecumenically, from the Second Vatican Council. *Concilium* is the obvious example here. *The International Journal of Practical Theology* has been useful source for tracking more recent shifts.

A particular challenge has been the necessity of working in French, both in translating texts and engaging with people. Because this thesis aims to introduce French pastoral theology to English speakers, I have translated all French quotations, unless their meaning is obvious. The French original has been included where the meaning is ambiguous or especially colourful.

PART ONE: SETTING LIÉGÉ'S PASTORAL THEOLOGY IN CONTEXT

Chapter Two: Liégé's personality

1. A slipstream of freedom

In the summer of 1938 Liégé went on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. On his return he announced to his parents that his vocation was to be a priest. Nelly Liégé described her brother as 'determined' in his faith. He had struggled with his father during his teens, which she called 'tough years' (Liégé 2001). He never looked back.

Yves Congar wrote of Liégé, 'I have never known anyone who possessed to this degree all his forces of intellect, heart and physical power so as to be able to apply them voluntarily, with supreme personal freedom, to the service of the Gospel and the faith' (Congar 1980b: 23).¹¹ Congar asks how someone who got back to his room at midnight only then to start on that day's correspondence could be so fresh and *disponible* the next morning. His answer is that Liégé 'possessed his life totally' and freely 'offered it in the service of the evangelical passion which was his habitat. For me, he was the Friar Preacher Number One, a living ideal unable to be equalled' (Congar 1980b: 23)¹²

The Dominican theologian, Jean-Pierre Jossua (1980: 28), frankly owns his attraction to Liégé's 'powerful proclamation of the Gospel and, more deeply, his way of seamlessly linking faith and personal communication' as causing him to 'decide to enter the Dominican Order'. Like Congar, Jossua claims never to have known someone whose central conviction enabled the living of so intense a life. Jossua asserts that in the entire time he knew Liégé, he was captivated

¹¹ 'Je n'ai jamais connu quelqu'un qui possédât à ce point toutes ses ressources d'intelligence, de coeur, de forces physiques, pour les appliquer volontairement, avec une liberté souveraine, au service de l'Évangile et de la foi'.

¹² 'Pour moi, il était le frère prêcheur no. 1, un idéal vivant inégalable'.

by the force of his faith and his passion for the Church on account of the Gospel to mark ineffaceably my approach to Christian life in deliberately transmitting to me the only Gospel. My only baptismal catechesis was to read the New Testament. As difficulties appeared – evil, hell, the expiatory cross, the Church’s refusal of religious tolerance – he taught me to step back a little, to stay free, to guard my own health, to hope for a less sectarian Church. I realised my luck: it would have been very difficult for me with someone else who tried to make me conform my behaviour and keep my thinking confined to the Seraglio (Jossua 1980: 25).

Jossua continues:

From then on one thing intrigued me about this Religious: his incredible multiplicity of activities and intense engagement with contacts in which he was always entirely present to each person. I saw that he worked beyond the limit of his strength, sleeping very little, generally without lying down, which seemed wonderful to me, even heroic. But I never quite managed to understand how he could be involved with young offenders, at the very margins of his work with the Scouts, and at the same time be the confessor to duchesses, arousing the jealousy of the Fathers at his rather aristocratic convent; he managed to vote socialist (a priest ! as a young bourgeois I could not get over it) and yet have the confidence of not a few cardinals, etc. And then I was only at the start of my discoveries about him! When we all met together after his death to prepare this book I again had this impression of someone engaged in the widest possible range of sectors, keeping up great numbers of relationships of a most dissimilar nature; we simply could not gather it all up. And so it is that we have a man here who occupies a significant place and makes his mark profoundly on an entire generation – then he disappears and the traces of him that mark him out are derisory. Another history of the Church could be written than the one represented by the books on a library shelf. But how? (Jossua 1980: 26).

Liégé constantly reminded Jossua (1980) of St Paul: he spoke more of the risen Christ than Jesus of Nazareth, as the one through whom we can be mobilised entirely. He had a passion to preach the Word to the extent that, despite its simplistic and manipulating approach, led him to admire Billy Graham’s courage (Jossua 1980: 28). He dreamed of preaching in the street to all comers. But he was assuredly held back by something else, equally deeply rooted in him: his sharp sense of the contemporary situation of unbelief and post-christianity. He recognised that long *convivence* (shared table hospitality) was a pre-condition of preaching and that verbal evangelisation was futile without it.

Liégé’s Jesuit colleague and friend René Marlé, who, as director of the ISPC during the 1970s worked closely with Liégé at the UER, adds an explanation that ‘this life, full to overflowing and crossing so many paths and the widest possible range of problems’ was ‘mysteriously

organised by the secret of a unified heart' (Marlé 1980: 276). He recognised that he overdid it. He used to say, '*je me brûle*' (I burn myself up). He slept little in order to work at night so that he could give his day to people. Indeed he left the light on and the window open so as to be woken as early as possible.¹³ Liégé's colleague A. Cruiziat writes:

He worked; he wore himself out in being available to every appeal that was ceaselessly made to him at every level and at every busy crossroads of the times both official and informal, either in France or any corner of the world: to reply to letters, to write, to preach, to teach, to celebrate, to talk, to intervene in a situation or to debate. He was engaged with clergy, lay people, believers, struggling believers, unbelievers including politicians in power and in opposition (Cruiziat 1980: 305-306).

Paul Rendu, who worked alongside Liégé with the Scouts from 1951-1957, wrote Liégé simply had 'a passionate confidence in God' (Rendu 1980: 56). Marlé concurs that what makes Liégé's theology so 'authentic and fruitful' is its 'being rooted in his unfailing faith which manifests itself in every sentence' (Marlé 1980: 272).

Père Michel Legrain, Vice-Rector of the ICP at the time of Liégé's death, describes him as 'A man entirely inhabited by the space (*espace*) of the gospel' (Legrain 1980: 187). He judges that with Liégé, the term '*espace*', whether qualified with the adjective 'ethical' or 'evangelical', immediately evokes 'the idea of liberty' (Legrain 1980: 189). Liégé, was such a free person himself, in the most noble sense of the term, that wherever he went he left behind him a slipstream of freedom (*sillage de liberté*) (Legrain 1980: 189).

2. Liégé and death

The context of Christian freedom for Liégé is preparation for death. It is more than simply being free in the face of death. It is rather that since our dying is the moment of being received by absolute love, we are free to throw ourselves into life fully right up to death, which is our sister, not something to dread. Liégé writes that the Christian on the road to discover their true freedom prepares for death from a long way off in order to ensure that 'death carries into it the whole of one's life' (Legrain 1980: 193). 'Life, he writes, 'anticipates death in order to fashion the death of a *human* (my italics) and not simply a banal biological

¹³ Biographical data from a conversation with Patrick Jacquemont (1999) OP in Paris on 13th April 1999.

accident...’ (Legrain 1980: 191, citing Liégé 1978b: 5-6). Liégé had teased Legrain fraternally that the links he had expressed in an article about death and quality of life were ‘far too flaccid’ (Legrain 1980: 193). Legrain considers that, living himself to the utmost, Liégé could only conceive of dying in the same ‘flat out’ way that he had lived (Legrain 1980: 193). Legrain writes that Liégé dreamed of seeing Christians so imbued by the Spirit of Christ that their faces were transformed by a liberating liberty. He asked why Christians appeared crushed as if by a heavy or unwanted load. Christians were given wings to fly rather than a millstone round their necks. Where was the eloquent witness of joy in life and freedom as children of God who were able to radiate simply because of the knowledge of being immensely loved? ‘It is up to each and every one of us to show the Church as an assembly of free people, concerned with the liberation of the whole being...’ (Liégé 1978: 83).

Liégé’s much younger Dominican colleague, Patrick Jacquemont (1980: 72), speaks of Liégé’s ‘contagious communication’ with the seminarians to whom he taught preaching. For this generation it was liberating to hear him talk of freedom of expression and inventiveness within the church and to see how he himself lived this liberty. ‘One felt the Spirit blowing’ (Jacquemont 1980: 72).

3. Liégé, a beacon for the gospel of Jesus Christ

Yves Congar (1980: 23) wrote that Liégé ‘had the world for his parish’. Despite Liégé’s commitments in the French church, ‘he never ceased to have the Universal Church as his horizon’ (Refoulé 1980: 100). Hence his travels to Africa, South America and Canada and his vast correspondence with people from all over the world.

In 1947 he confided to F. Refoulé OP, editor of Cerf publishers, that he wanted to go head-on into an intense apostolate but also to write a properly scientific work of theology. Refoulé quotes Saint Dominic, who sold his precious manuscripts in a time of famine saying, ‘I don’t want to study these dead skins while people are dying of hunger’ (Refoulé 1980: 11). Jossua comments, ‘the truth is that this original and audacious theologian did not leave a work fully illustrating the measure of his gifts simply because was devoured, flooded over by

multiple requests which, if mistakenly then magnanimously so, he made it a rule never to refuse' (Jossua 1980: 27-28).

He had a quite exceptional sense of *urgency* about his apostolate. He cannot be accused of 'activism' in a pejorative sense, says Refoulé, because it was evident that what he did stemmed from a passion for the Gospel, from his attention to the needs of people, and a sense of what needed to be done right now. Refoulé many times asked himself how he could possibly maintain the pace of his life and keep himself in balance. It seemed to be a mystery. Refoulé claims that 'without doubt the secret is that he never separated his "being there for others" from his "being in the face of and with God"' (Refoulé 1980: 12). He lived his words. He was a Dominican in the strictest sense of the word; someone who identified totally with Dominic's motto, '*Contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere*'. Refoulé considers that he had no other 'secret garden' than his prayer; being alone with God (Refoulé 1980: 12).

Paul-Joseph Schmitt, Bishop of Metz at the time of Liégé's death offers his explanation of Liégé's sense of urgency: he was carried along by his strong sense that he would prefer to lead a life that was rich and intense than long-lived but not fully committed. He burned up his life in a great fire (Schmitt 1980:17).¹⁴ When Liégé was still a young priest, Congar had said to Liégé that he would not be able to sustain such an intensive life with so little sleep. Liégé had replied, 'I like my choice' (Congar 1980: 22).¹⁵

4. Liégé an awakener of faith

Jossua writes that Liégé's presentation of faith had a Paschal accent, in full harmony with the biblical and liturgical flowering of the time. The Paschal mystery was his focus of faith and the rest followed from it: the engagement of Christ unto death, the complete orientation of human history on God; the obliteration of a cramped, shut-in-on-itself way of life and the victory of the Resurrection over death and evil. His preaching, articles on marriage, the Eucharist, penitence and holiness stand out and 'attest to the project of a theological synthesis centred on the light of Easter but which he never mapped out' (Jossua 1980: 27).

¹⁴ Perhaps Schmitt knew Liégé used to say '*je me brûle*'.

¹⁵ Also see Reynal (2004: 143)

Bishop Schmitt wrote:

Devoured equally by a rare passion for the Gospel and for human beings, he never separated his teaching from his ubiquitous involvement with the live issues facing the church or facing the future of humankind....Attentive to the big issues of the world he also had a stunning sense of persons (Schmitt 1980: 17).

He adds that if you had the privilege of knowing him you felt ‘marvellously recognised’ and ‘returned to the depths of yourself’ and ‘renewed in your reasons for living, put back on the road’ (Schmitt 1980: 17). Lemoine’s research similarly bears witness that his ‘very profound humanity is massively attested by his contemporaries’ and comments that this is what they remember and speak of first even before mentioning his theology (Lemoine 1997: 8). Lemoine adds that his ‘human qualities’ are essential to understanding the force of his theology and pastoral and spiritual influence (Lemoine 1997: 8).

Jossua has already borne witness to Liégé’s power to awaken faith, and Jacquemont to his ‘contagious communication’ with the seminarians. Even Nelly Liégé claimed how much he had influenced ‘theologians and bishops’. They were all ‘hit by the force of his personality’ (Liégé 2001). Even his opponents bear witness to the breadth of his influence: Congar’s diaries for 1955 report the Dominican Father General’s summing up of Liégé: ‘Certainly Fr. Liégé is a good Religious, he has a great deal of influence over the young; too much indeed, according to the Papal Nuncio’ (Congar 2001: 405).

He ‘engaged remarkably well’ (*accrocha remarquablement*) with the polytechnic students though he himself had no scientific education (Refoulé 1980: 38). He inspired a number of Dominican vocations, among them Albert-Marie Besnard.¹⁶ In 1951 he was appointed national Chaplain to *la Route*. He was ‘a stunning awakener of faith’ amongst the young (Rendu 1980: 59).¹⁷

¹⁶ An exchange of correspondence between them was published in a double edition of *La Vie Spirituelle* (No 627-628).

¹⁷ See Appendix Two for a fuller description of this ministry

He was aware of every area of new research which informed the Church, he knew with sure-footed judgement how to get us involved in the excitement of this new sap flowing from the tree. He who later was to be one of the artisans of the Council helped us live in advance the change of perspectives that the Council later was to propose for all Christian people. In liturgy and missionary innovation *La Route* with Père Liégé was undoubtedly one of the living places of the Church. Its influence was felt in parishes, especially the fruits of the *Centre de pastorale liturgique*, particularly the paschal celebrations – as yet still completely new – and the psalms which gradually replaced the 19th Century canticles (Rendu 1980: 58).

Liégé's generation of *routiers*, unlike their predecessors, had their eyes turned towards the working class, immigrant workers. Rendu concludes, 'I cannot measure the amount of work he accomplished in those five years but I know that a large number of people remember with immense gratitude his luminous time with us' (Rendu 1980: 58).

Rendu recalls how, from their first meeting, he was struck by his luck in having a person like Liégé to work with. Their organisation involved several thousand young Christians from 17 – 22 years old. They edited a review, *La Route*, designed programmes, visited communities, trained leaders, gathered for congress or for grand liturgies at Vézelay or Orcival. They met several times a week in Paris or daily during camps to review events. Rendu speaks of the privilege of such a friendship for him and the rest of the team of four. He helped them 'construct their adult personalities and live at the deepest level of themselves' (Rendu 1980: 41). Nothing can efface this debt and memory.

Liégé demonstrated his responsiveness to youth from the outset in the way he handled the journal *La route*. In December 1951 he used a quotation from Léon Bloy on the cover with considerable effect (Rendu 1980: 47). Subsequent cover quotations were equally striking and reveal Liégé's self-confessed favourite authors: Bernanos, Mounier, Péguy, Camus, Kierkegaard and Aquinas. Or he would use such quotations alongside his own articles. Rendu remembers that 'the accord was often so sharp we learned fragments by heart; they circulated in our circles like a common language' (Rendu 1980: 47).

Jossua (1980: 28) points to the same qualities, 'He had the charismatic capacity not only to galvanise a crowd of young people, not too difficult for a man with his gifts, but to be the catalyst of a bursting out of profound joy shared by all'.¹⁸

Jossua said that Liégé was 'marked strongly among us by his personal capacity to elicit an experience of which everyone knew he was the source' (Jossua 2001). Through such an experience many people recognised something that echoed or confirmed something authentic, deep within them and their deepest searching. One was left feeling struck by what he had said and caught up in a sharing with him and walking alongside him as if the communication was quite obvious (Jacquemont 2001). Liégé's friend and collaborator François Coudreau adds to this portrait. Of his meeting and hearing Liégé speak for the first time in 1939, he writes:

I heard Father Liégé's message, which renewed me in my very depths. It had solidity, clarity and dynamism. It dealt with the essential themes of what I was thinking about: Faith, Revelation, the Word, Tradition, Evangelisation, Mission. I was seduced (...) I made the discovery, yes, of a theologian, but also of a priest and pastor, of a man and a friend, of someone who could participate in our dialogue and our relaxation, available and welcoming, both a realist and an optimist, present and attentive to everything and everyone (Coudreau 1980: 128-129).

5. Liégé the effective pastor with a gift for friendship and for being 'present'

After Coudreau's dismissal in the catechetical crisis of 1957, he was enclosed '*en pénitence*' in a House of his order, far from Paris, deprived of ministry for almost a year. He remembers Liégé's 'presence' during that time with these words:

It is at a time like this that you count on your friends - and often you find them to be very few... Fr. Liégé knew how to offer the assurance of his delicate presence (*sa délicate présence*). He knew how to express his loyalty and since I am asked to write about it, I must make my witness: He was not two-faced - in him the man of faith was the man of faithfulness (Reynal 2004: 187).

What struck René Marlé was the robustness and vigour which drove his capacity to meet and accurately estimate with 'stunning permeability, the expectations and needs that surrounded

¹⁸ Jossua (1980: 28) writes of Liégé's charismatic qualities especially at the great gathering of Routiers at Vézelay where, 'with such talent' he galvanized the crowds of young people.

him' (Marlé 1980: 273). Liégé's capacity to take in and be present to the people and the issues of the world around him is common to many accounts. The then Prime Minister of Portugal, Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, wrote:

I have rarely met anyone so open to the questions emerging in the world around him. A little more than a year ago, in one of our meetings, I was speaking to him about the latest developments in the feminist movements (...). We talked for a long time, Father Liégé always obliging me to go even further in my own thinking by his unique ability to act as a catalyst to my reasoning (Refoulé 1980: 296).¹⁹

Yves Congar (1980: 22) has written similarly, that although Liégé was so intensely involved in so many issues and organisations yet he was 'entirely with' the person in front of him. In his Council Journal entry for 10th November 1962 he writes, of a conversation with Liégé, 'he questioned me above all with his attention extraordinarily PRESENT to everyone' (Congar's capitals) (Congar 2002: 200). Of a similar conversation six days later he writes:

Then, until dinner, with Liégé. We spoke of many things. His gift of being present to what is really essential and within this [he has a gift of] sensing what the essential requires... (Congar's three full stops) (Congar 2002: 224).²⁰

Liégé was indefatigable; a warm person of huge energy and drive who never stopped working.²¹ Bishop Schmitt writes:

We will never know much about the sleepless nights [he had], often in the train, where amidst the jostling of the carriages he prepared his work or faced up to his immense correspondence from all over the world (Schmitt: 1980: 19)

René Marlé writes:

It was enough just to spend a morning or afternoon working with him in his office to make it clear what a quantity of people, of every possible sort, would knock on his door or telephone him (...). His diary always threw into perplexity those who lived close to him. *Il y notait tout, dans tous les sens* (Marlé 1980 : 273).

¹⁹ Prime Minister from 1979 –1980, in *Les nouveaux féminismes. Question aux chrétiens ?* Paris, Cerf 1980, quoted by Refoulé (1980: 296) and Reynal (2004: 136).

²⁰ Not easy to translate: 'Son don de présence à l'essentiel et, en cela, de présence à son esprit des exigences de l'essentiel...'

²¹ 'Il avait une puissance de travail', conversation between Nicholas Bradbury and Patrick Jacquemont OP in Paris on 13th April 1999.

He was very involved with people, the complete opposite of a *theologian de cabinet* like Congar. He never said 'no'. He was as industrious in administration, an immense correspondence '*aux dimensions du monde*', teaching and scholarship, as he was with people. He could listen exceptionally acutely (Congar 1980: 18).

How did he respond to arriving in Canada for the first time? Gérard Pelletier writes:

His curiosity was not like anyone else's. He did not ask about the land itself, about the difference between American and European life (...) He wanted to know what preoccupied people (...); he wanted to understand the nature of the human relationships that we had in our families, our factories and in the Church. What were the young people seeking? What were our common aspirations? At the end of the trip (a two-hour drive from Montréal to Québec), I realised that, not for an instant, had he talked about himself (...) He asked questions, he listened, he spoke little (Pelletier 1980: 293).

The Dominican A.-Marcel Henry (1980: 122) writes that he had 'a heart of gold'. He too bears witness to Liégé's never missing the anniversary of large numbers of people. He loved both *tête à tête* dinners or breakfasts. Henry enjoyed these with him every two months or so. These were occasions when he seemed composed, 'stunningly refreshed', happy for stopping a moment (Henry 1980: 122). This was so; and yet his extraordinary discretion was such that one knew almost nothing about his relations with anyone else. His friendships were not transparent one to another. Somehow this enabled him to give a particular part of his heart and the very best of himself to everyone.

6. Liégé in conflict

Liégé was in conflict with forces in his Church for three decades. His upbringing may have helped equip him to manage this. Jossua described his family as 'scheming, small, squat but stocky and always at each other's throats'.²² 'His mother was always rounding the angles, as it were' (Jossua 2001). Jossua said that while it would be wrong to attribute such

²² '*maguillant, petit, trapu, toujours en conflit.*

characteristics to Liégé, yet 'his family context played a role in who he became'.²³ Jacques Audinet, Liégé's successor as Director of the ISPC, agreed, 'The Haute Marne is poor, and though his family was solid enough, it was as if they were always trying to do a deal and maybe cheat you' (Audinet 2001). He also said Liégé could be abrupt; and certainly his sister shared this quality (Audinet 2001).²⁴

If Liégé had friends, he also had one particular sparring partner, if not antagonist, the Jesuit, Jean Daniélou. The struggle between the new Catechetical Institute and the Faculty of Theology in Paris after 1950 was 'incarnated by these two personalities' (Reynal 2004: 179). There was in every way a tension, a suspicion, a suitably theological rivalry gripping these two people. The relationship between them was a constant talking point. They sat in on each others' lectures ready to contradict (Reynal 2004: 179).

According to Coudreau, Liégé's style in conflict was varied. He led the fight in the catechetical crisis of 1957, with 'stubborn gentleness' and 'Gospel-like fervour' (Coudreau 1980: 135). Liégé's style was not to attack his opponents. In 1954, following the condemnations of him, Liégé used *La route* not to reply to his attackers or justify himself, but simply to reaffirm his faith in the church with a quotation from Chrysostom. His response to the Algerian war, however, was radical. He stressed the necessity to put God, conscience, justice and the poor before everything. He quotes Mounier in prison in 1942 saying prison is a natural place for Christians in a troubled period. He advocates speaking out and always telling the truth (Rendu 1980: 47).

On the other hand Congar writes that after the 1954 summons to Rome, Liégé was 'temporarily discouraged' - 'as for Fr. Liégé, he speaks of becoming a Trappist. He has often told me of his desire to withdraw there' (Congar 2001: 406).

Legrain wrote:

²³ Bishop Raffin of Metz, Liégé's Prior at the time of his death, met his family at that time and described them as '*assez solide*' and '*équilibré*' with all the '*bon sens*' and '*jugement*' you would expect of the Haute Marne *paysannerie* (Raffin 2001).

²⁴ He had also said that Liégé, himself very straight and correct, tended to be discreet about his horse-trading family and his origins.

It is hardly surprising to find in this man, entirely impregnated with the Gospel, some of the attitudes of Jesus when faced with opponents: the art of shifting the question, of setting traps, of getting back to the essential issue. He was often interviewed by journalists skilled in asking him trick questions and on the look out for controversy or sensation; and was always disconcerted to see how far his actual response had been dismembered, shorn of all evangelical power and reduced to some peremptory assertion that entirely betrayed him. In the face of these sad manipulations, his friends divided. Those who themselves kept a prudent silence, counselled him to refuse to play such a dangerous game which raised the suspicions of the ecclesiastical authorities about him. Others charged him with naivety. Others supposed he just liked this kind of provocation. Very few really understood the torture he went through of obeying the necessity, deep within him, of witnessing to the Gospel in every circumstance however tricky (Legrain 1980: 188).

It was his sense of the necessity of prophetic mission that stopped him from keeping out of trouble by sticking to lukewarm or evasively safe answers. For him such human prudence was folly in the eyes of God:

Yes, by such carnal prudence humans gain advancement. Such a perspective was totally foreign to Liégé. Before he actually wrote down this terribly exacting demand, Liégé (1979a: 64) had lived it: 'Put your life under the banner of the incomparable risk of swearing to yourself that you'll never trick your conscience, whatever interests are at stake' (Legrain 1980: 188).

Liégé was also, all his life, a courageous man.

In a sermon Jacquemont (1999) noted:

He never ceased to fight, on all sides (...) his temperament was that of someone who struggles. Certainly he was a man with the courage of his convictions, for example, in taking a stand against the torture perpetrated by the French army during the Algerian War, and he was not afraid to criticise, with Congar, his friend and fellow-Dominican, Patrick Jacquemont's books for children.

But to find the source of these struggles we need to focus less on his temperament and more on the force of his convictions. He truly struggles for the faith, or, more precisely, for the Gospel. The meaning and direction of his combative engagements, as in all his teaching, was concerned with helping to build a Church ever more true to the Gospel (Marlé 1980: 275).

Liégé was the first person to Jossua's knowledge who radically challenged the traditional

‘natural morality’ taught by the church. He accepted the ethical neutrality of contraception in the general context of sexual life. Right to the end he held on to his intellectual courage, scandalously rejecting the common habit of cutting difficult and painful moral questions up into neat dogmatic segments (Jossua 1980: 30).

He was miserly in self-regard. In 1947 or 1948 he had quoted to Refoulé, by heart, a sentence of Flaubert, ‘The difficulty is to ripen. Certain places harden, other places ripen; so one does not truly ripen’ (Refoulé 1980: 12). This issue preoccupied him somewhat even in 1947/8. It stayed with him. The quotation is again used in his last book, *Le temps du défi* and he comments, ‘in the adventure of the Gospel there are those who ripen admirably and those who do not ripen at all because they have become sceptics’ (Refoulé 1980: 12). Refoulé assesses that Liégé never became sceptical, bitter or blasé: ‘his passion for Christ was no less strong in 1979 than it had been in 1947 (Refoulé 1980: 13).

7. Liégé’s shadow

Liégé himself never wrote a diary. He did not even write letters which reveal ‘his personal questions, doubts and difficulties’ (Refoulé 1980: 12). He has to be discerned from his writings and the testimony of those who knew him. Liégé was, for Henry, hugely (*terriblement*) rational. He hated sentimentalism, ‘pious’ or poor reasoning. He had a horror of self-pity. He did not like to talk about himself.

Jossua’s portrait of him honours Liégé by being willing to look at the whole truth ‘which is always a bit cruel’ (Jossua 1980: 24-32). Liégé was most important to Jossua personally. Liégé had been involved in preparing Jossua for baptism in 1952, and it was with him that Liégé dined in a small restaurant in the *rue Dauphine* two evenings before his death. He makes some comments, especially useful in adding some grit to the otherwise suspiciously saintly portrayal of Liégé generally found in the archives and personal reminiscences:

Now his powerful temperament, his very rich affectivity, his rare gifts of intelligence and articulation merged into a single lava flow of personal Christian conversion making nothing but a block of contagious conviction and carrying along with it at the same time this monolithism, these moments of hardness which never ceased to

become scarce, over the course of two, almost three decades, to make place for a welcome more tolerant and nuanced. To speak of this charismatic faith (1 Cor. 12.9) is for me to recall the many hours of my existence that he was involved with, often carrying a decisive impetus (Jossua 1980: 25).²⁵

Sometimes, especially when Jossua heard him preach to young people he thought there was something ‘a little wilful’ (or ‘headstrong’) (un *peu volontariste*) about Liégé’s faith, something ‘*un peu Führer*’ in his Christ (Jossua 1980: 27). But he adds that the purity and depth of Liégé’s conviction outdid this too intensive force giving it a total cogency. In his last years, Liégé, especially as Prior, came into conflict with colleagues who found him too hard-line. Jossua believes that Liégé simply could not understand why those around him radicalised their choices instead of sticking with the precepts of Vatican II. Jossua again goes back to his personality, his psychology. Jossua (Lemoine 1997: 53) describes Liégé as a ‘mixed’ man capable both of ‘great understanding and friendship and of behaving like a *Gauleiter* of Christ but adds that many relied on the rock of stability he offered: for while he could be exacting, he was a source of great knowledge and understanding; he had interiorised the compassion of the gospel. It is remarkable, Jossua concludes, that he also retained a personal freedom *vis à vis* institutions and in regard to people (Jossua 1980: 32).

He could be ‘self-willed’ leaving Cruiziat ‘stupefied, scandalised and moved, in turn’ by the way he lived his life, for example taking stimulants so as to be able to work through the night (Cruiziat 1980: 306). Cruiziat’s final word is ‘Dear Liégé, I believe you made a success of your life’ (Cruiziat 1980: 307).

²⁵ Others have disputed the appropriateness and fairness of this comment, notably Reynal (2004: 143). Fergus Kerr (December 2006) offers another antidote to an over-hagiographical view of Liégé in an email to me having read the draft of this text: ‘There is absolutely nothing substantial I think is misguided or misleading. It brought flooding back these appearances at *Le Saulchoir* (1962-1964) when he’d swan in, with everyone flocking round him, except for us foreigners, who were totally ignored, no doubt because we didn’t speak well enough, but also I suspect because L. had no interest whatsoever in anything happening in England or coming from English Catholics; but I don’t think he’d any interest in the others either, Brazilian, Flemish, Dutch and so on. Anyway... on the main lines of exposition and interpretation I have nothing to add or suggest changed’.

Chapter Three: The social, ecclesiastical and theological context of Liégé's thought and action.

1. Introduction

In this Chapter the significant social, ecclesiastical and theological shapers of Liégé's context will be outlined. It briefly introduces the issues and conflicts that accompany his life. In essence they comprise the tensions felt in and beyond the church throughout the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, but with Reformation roots and exacerbated by the Enlightenment, between disparate attempts to respond positively to the modern world and the general unwillingness of the church to do so.²⁶ It is necessary to understand how it was that the context in which Liégé started his work was, on the one hand, so generally vibrant and creative, ripe for his theological originality and, on the other, why he needed to be so polemical and critical of the status quo. What were the tributaries feeding the river of his motivation and which also shaped the possibilities and horizon of his theological world?

To provide a simple frame, the argument might be put thus: since, by common consent, 'the French Revolution had almost destroyed the Church', how was it possible that by the mid twentieth century France had assembled what Fergus Kerr (1997: 106) calls 'a remarkable generation of French theologians' whose 'great influence' particularly 'through the Second Vatican Council' expresses their 'wholly new vision of the priorities for theology, and irrepressible energy to put their ideas into practice'? The ingredients of the answer include renewals or developments in philosophy, spirituality, politics, journalism, social justice, the human sciences, biblical and literary criticism, patristics, medieval studies, historical and textual scholarship, education, work with the poor, catechesis and work with young people. Liégé grew up in a world glistening with epoch-making theological renewals set within a very conservative ecclesial institution which, far from welcoming these new developments, generally condemned them.

²⁶ Kerr (1997) takes the view that a more profound analysis shows that it was the church rather than the Enlightenment that provoked the dualism of grace and nature that itself produced the split between the sacred and the secular that led to so much subsequent tension and conflict.

2. The legacy of the nineteenth century

The nineteenth century Roman Catholic Church, in general terms, resisted the modern world. Its dominant theology, inherited from the Middle Ages, had become rational and juridical at the expense of mysticism: mysteries had become problems (Reynal 2004: 20). Pius IX encapsulates this in his *Syllabus* in 1864 with its catalogue of the modern errors of liberalism. Vatican I (1870-1871) enshrined this intransigent spirit in its combative and apologetic documents.²⁷ Of course certain prophetic figures, like Félicité-Robert de Lamennais (1782-1854) attempted to articulate some accommodation with the times.²⁸ They only succeeded in exacerbating the anathemas and condemnations of the Vatican.²⁹

3. Miscellaneous Revival and Renewal

Nevertheless, the church in France, 'impoverished in leadership and resources' by the Revolution, was helped to revive by a number of means (Dubost 1989: 442). The Napoleonic *Concordat* of 1801 'gave Roman Catholicism official status as the national faith' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601).³⁰

Individual leaders played a significant part in numerous other revivals.³¹ Besides the restoration of the Benedictines and Dominicans, the first half of the century saw the

²⁷ E.g. its constitution *Dei filius*.

²⁸ 'perhaps the most remarkable Christian writer of the nineteenth century' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601).

²⁹ Lamennais died unreconciled with the church and, at his own request, was given a pauper's burial.

³⁰ In 1803 Vicomte François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), 'the outstanding literary genius of the early nineteenth century', although no theologian, helped revive religious sentiment with his *La Génie de Christianisme* which 'did much to awaken the enthusiasm for medieval piety and *le merveilleux Chrétien* which characterised the early phases of the Romantic Movement.' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601).

³¹ Dom Guéranger (1805-1875) restored Benedictine monasticism and became Abbot of Solemnes. Henri Lacordaire (1802-1861), 'whose sermons in Notre-Dame in Paris were perhaps as influential as those of Newman in St. Mary's, Oxford', not only restored the Dominicans, he was also a liberal, the co-founder (with Lamennais and Montalembert) of the journal *l'Avenir* (Greenacre 1996: 8). *L'Avenir* aimed 'to promote ideals of spiritual and political liberty and the establishment of a Christian democracy' (Greenacre 1996: 8). Its motto was 'God and Freedom'. It sought freedom of conscience, of cult, the press, social association, education and favoured a separation of church and state, thereby earning Gregory XVI's condemnation two years later in the encyclical *Mirari vos* (1832). Charles de Montalembert (1810-1870) was another who lent his considerable weight, both aristocratic and intellectual, to Lamennais' liberal cause and *l'Avenir*. Louis-François Veuillot (1813-1880), on the other hand, 'probably the most militant and virulent Roman Catholic writer of the nineteenth century' used *L'Univers religieux*, a prominent daily he edited, bluntly to attack liberals of any kind (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601).

founding of more than a hundred religious congregations (Dubost 1989: 444).³² In the field of biblical and literary criticism and history the outstanding name was that of Ernest Renan (1823-1892). A great Semitic scholar of immense erudition, Renan succeeded in becoming, despite the controversy he provoked, 'with Taine, the foremost representative of French thought in the later years of the Second Empire' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 604).³³ There was a significant religious element in contemporary creative writing.³⁴

An 1875 legal amendment permitted the foundation of a number of Catholic institutes including those of Paris, Lyon, Lille, Angers and Toulouse. The new institutions stimulated French theological scholarship, particularly since the more open Leo XIII (1878-1903), in the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* encouraged a renewed Thomism.

Scholarship prospered. In 1890 the Dominicans under Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855-1938) founded their *École Biblique* in Jerusalem.³⁵ This eventually engendered the Jerusalem Bible. Meanwhile Jacques-Paul Migne (1800-1875), opening up neglected patristic texts, paved the way for the appearance, from 1903, of the great encyclopaedias on a new scholarly basis that

³² Two important founders here are Charles Martial Lavigerie (1825-1892), a cardinal from 1882, Archbishop of Algiers, whose missionary approach took account of human needs and who bothered to study Islam seriously, who founded the White Fathers and the White Sisters who opposed slavery. Frédéric Ozanam (1813-1853) combined direct charitable commitment to the poor by founding the lay movement, *les équipes de Saint-Vincent de Paul* with a call for social justice and a sustained attack on the 'ignominious doctrine' of economic liberalism (Dubost 1989: 446). Also note here the spiritual influence and witness of the three Saints, Thérèse de Lisieux (1873-1897), the Curé d'Ars, Jean-Marie Vianney (1786-1859) and Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes (1844-1879) who influenced the climate of French Catholicism as did Charles de Foucault (1858-1916). René Voillaume founded the *Petits Frères de Jésus* in 1933 precisely to live out the spirituality of de Foucault.

³³ His *Vie de Jésus* (1863) caused 'an undeniable sensation' - 'for beneath an enchanting lyrical picture of the carpenter's son growing to maturity amid the flowers of the Galilean countryside lay a rationalization of the fundamental belief in the divinity of Christ' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601). Hippolyte Taine's (1828-1893) importance 'lay in his theories of the interdependence of the physical and psychological factors which influence human development, and in his application of the principles of scientific investigation to the study of literature, history and art' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601). Despite his determinism and his vigorous attacks on spiritual philosophers, Taine sought and received a Protestant funeral (Dubost 1989: 448). Edgar Quinet (1803-1875) was another prolific and influential producer of historical, philosophical and religious writings with a powerful imagination, 'an idealistic patriot, fundamentally religious for all his anticlericalism, and a worker in the cause of educational freedom' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601).

³⁴ In Chateaubriand, but also in the poetry of Alphonse Lamartine (1790-1869) and Victor Hugo (1802-1885). 'Religious sentiment and emotion are the very essence' of poems by two writers with nineteenth century origins who had both a general influence and a specific influence on Liégé, Paul Claudel (1968-1955) and Charles Péguy (1873-1914) (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601). A later-born writer whom Liégé admired greatly was the opponent of hypocrisy, Georges Bernanos (1888-1948). 'His novels, written with great force, sometimes with a violence that reflects the struggles described... are battle-grounds for the warring forces of good and evil' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601). He was an obvious candidate for a novelist to woo a soul like Liégé's.

³⁵ See also Kerr (2007: 22, note 12).

would later be built on by the Jesuits Jean Daniélou (1905-1974) and Henri de Lubac (1896-1991). In Paris the *Recteur*, from 1881, of the new *Institut Catholique*, Maurice d'Hulst (1841-1896) facilitated the reconciliation of modern science and religion.

The Thomistic renewal Leo hoped for occurred but went in opposing directions, contributing directly to the conflict that would dominate Catholicism till Vatican II. The divide was between the approach of, for example, the Dominican Garrigou-Lagrange, emphasising rigid Thomistic precepts and the more open approach of the Dominican Ambroise Gardeil (1859-1931) or the two great lay philosophers Étienne Gilson (1884-1978) and Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) (Kerr 2007: 10-18; 34).³⁶ Gilson's book *Le Thomisme*, (1920), a popular, clear introduction to a more historical, less speculative approach to Aquinas, was enormously influential, as were Maritain's lectures at the *Institut Catholique* in Paris. The impact of these two men on the next generation of scholars was crucial.

To the greater openness of Gardeil may be added the allied openness of others such as Victor Deschamps (1810-1883), Archbishop of Malines and, at least from the date 1907, of his first translation into French, John Henry Newman (1801-1890). Their willingness to respond to adversaries with positive argument rather than blanket anathema was echoed in the work of the most influential of all contemporary scholars, the Master of Aix, Maurice Blondel (1861-1949) whose *L'Action* first appeared in 1893 'whose 'method of immanence' aimed to show that there was something of transcendence in man, albeit latent, in the form of a need or lack' (Reynal 2004: 23). Other philosophers to take account of are Henri Bergson (1859-1941) and his disciple Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973).³⁷

³⁶ See especially Gardeil's *La crédibilité et l'apologétique* (1908).

³⁷ Bergson's philosophy 'had a profound influence on modern thought and literature...He sought (to use his own words) "to rebuild the bridge (broken down since Kant) between metaphysics and science"' (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601). Liégé, himself a great maker of neologisms, makes significant and distinctive use of the concept of *la durée* and it is not easy to discern precisely how he means it to be understood. Presumably however it derives in some way from Bergson's use of the word which may be introduced as follows: He observed that philosophers in describing change have taken time into account only in the sense of a conventional measure, spatial in character (as we measure time by the distance traversed by the hands of a clock), and have ignored real duration, *la durée*, 'what each of us apprehends when he reflects on his own conscious life, a process of change in which none of the parts are external to one another, but interpenetrating, where there is a perpetual creation of what is new (A.D.Lindsay) (Harvey and Heseltine 1959: 601). Gabriel Marcel was influenced by Mauriac, and converted to Catholicism in 1929. 'He became one of the representatives of Christian existentialism, who opposed Jean-Paul Sartre with great energy as he opposed all atheistic existentialism for its pessimism' (Dubost 1989: 632). He actually preferred the expression 'Christian

4. Relations between Church and State

This story, too complex to be fully narrated here, is important as background to theological issues.³⁸ There was a brief improvement under Leo XIII who not only recognised the distinction between the two powers of church and state, he even called for French Catholics to ‘rally round the Republic.’ He wrote a positive encyclical, *Rerum novarum* (1893), the springboard for future social initiatives within French Catholicism.³⁹

However in 1905 the long-standing tension between church and state boiled over. They were legally separated (Kerr 2007: 17).⁴⁰ The 1905 separation expressed a conflict stirred up at the Revolution and exacerbated by the perceived victory of traditional Catholics at Vatican I and other events.⁴¹

Socraticism’ to existentialism, from which he wanted to distance himself. He wanted to restore the balance of ‘having’, which alienated, with the mystery of ‘being’.

Reynal (2004: 23) considers ‘the great names’ of the others of this period who develop their discipline in relation to critical science to be: in history, Pierre Batiffol (1861-1929), Louis Duschesne (1843-1922); in exegesis, Marie-Joseph Lagrange, Léonce de Grandmaison (1868-1927), Jules Lebreton (1873-1956), Joseph Huby (1878-1948, Monsieur Pouget, a blind *Lazariste* mentor of and ‘a profound influence’ on Jean Guitton (1901-) ‘above all the philosopher of the *durée*’ and the first lay person to be designated an ‘*auditeur*’ at Vatican II by Paul VI (Dubost 1989: 629), who drew Guitton towards exegetical studies and philosophy in the first place; in philosophy, Auguste Valensin (1879-1953), Lucien Laberthonnière (1860-1932). For further details, see Reynal (1998) which has entries on all these but Pouget). These initiatives were bound to provoke a backlash which duly occurred with the condemnation of Alfred Loisy’s (1857-1940) work and Modernism with *Pascendi* (1907).

³⁸ For a brief but adequate account see Greenacre (1996: 4-17).

³⁹ The names of Frédéric Ozanam, Albert de Mun (1841-1914) and Léon Harmel (1829-1915) are important here, as are the following: the founding in 1904 of ‘*Semaines sociales*’ and, by the Jesuits, ‘*L’Action Populaire*’ as well as ‘*L’Association catholique de la jeunesse française*’ (A.C.J.F.) and Marc Sangnier’s (1879-1950) ‘*Sillon*’. For more on these initiatives see Dubost (1989: 454-470).

⁴⁰ Religious orders now required state authorisation and so went into exile. The Dominicans removed their library and centre of studies (*Le Sauchoir*) to Kain, (Louvain?) in Belgium. They returned to Étioilles, (Essonne) only in 1937, the year before Liégé’s entry. The Jesuits went to England.

⁴¹ For example, the disgrace of General Bourbaki’s defeat at Héricourt in 1871, by Germany and notably the seriously divisive ‘Dreyfuss affair’ in the 1890s. In the divide, adherents of the Third Republic, anti-clerical promoters of ‘*laïcism*’, were pitted against ultramontane papalists, characterised by traditional catholic loyalties including monarchist leanings. The focus of the divide was schools. Republicans felt that church schools undermined support for the Republic. In 1880 Jesuit schools were closed and the Jesuits banned. After 1882 religious instruction in schools was discontinued. Conversely state schools were perceived as too secular, promoting atheism. For more detail see Dubost (1989: 470-471).

The Catholic side was promoted, from 1898, by the journal and movement *Action française* under the leadership of Charles Maurras, himself an agnostic. But while his religious views came under fire, his right-wing vision of Catholic social order was welcomed by many. The Maurrassian influence remained strong and goes some way to explain the pleasure felt by many Catholics at the dissolution of the Third Republic in 1940 and the welcome they gave to the Vichy regime. Having said this, as Fouilloux (1998: 67-98; 305) shows, other Catholics had either long broken with Maurrassianism or never subscribed to it in the first place. Certainly none of the post war theological luminaries were Vichy supporters.

5. Ecumenism

Historians see the years 1930-1960 as a golden period of vitality and creativity in French Catholicism. Reynal says that Cholvy and Hilaire (1988: 7) speak of ‘the thirty glorious years’ in their *Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine* (Reynal 2004: 20).⁴² The seedbeds providing soil for renewals in philosophy, patristics, biblical studies and exegesis, historical theology, liturgy and ecclesiology encouraged a new interest in ecumenism. For although the ‘Malines Conversations’ which took place between Lord Halifax, M. Portal and Cardinal Mercier from 1921 -1925, seemed to come to nothing, the French intellectual ecumenical interest, inspired perhaps less by the Protestant ecumenical movement than by a renewed theological interest in the mystery of the church, had taken firm root. Where the Jesuit, Émile Mersch (1890-1940) had rediscovered an enthusiasm for understanding the church as a ‘mystical body’, even influencing the 1943 encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, the giant theologian, Liégé’s teacher, Congar (1904-1995) would step in, starting the *Unam Sanctam* collection and going on to make the unity of the church a central theme of his life’s work (Kerr 2007: 38ff.). When a mind like Congar’s started to look at different conceptions of the church, and from an ecumenical perspective, a radically renewed ecclesiology and theology of the laity was not long in following. In the aftermath of the Second World War this renewed interest in the nature of the church opened up, in the writings of some, like the founder of *Esprit*,

⁴² Reynal is not accurate here: Hilaire and Cholvy are referring to the economy rather than Catholicism and their thirty years, actually twenty-nine, are 1945-1974. However his point is still valid. See also Cholvy and Hilaire (2002: 7).

Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950), into a willingness to be bluntly critical of the church as an all too fallible human institution.

6. A kaleidoscopic efflorescence of renewals

In the years of Liégé's upbringing something remarkable was occurring in the French church. Even the apparent setback in 1905 may be seen as a positive, setting up theologically productive antinomies that gave impetus to renewal. Kerr (1997: 106) associates French theological achievement in this period with their return from exile of the religious orders. On the church state split he comments:

In wider theological terms, the problem was concerned with how to respect the autonomy and intrinsic value of the world without reducing the church to the sphere of purely private religion (Kerr 1997:105).

Seminal thinking developed from this context on dichotomies such as church versus world, sacred versus secular, clerical versus lay, natural versus supernatural, history and tradition versus dogma and authority and grace versus nature (Kerr 1997: 105).

These years give rise to a vision of the church freed from its anti-modern, anti-protestant position adopted at Trent (1545-63) and reaffirmed at Vatican I. Renewals take place which 'return to the sources' (*le ressourcement*) and which begin to pay proper attention to the modern world (Reynal 2004: 26).⁴³ There is the philosophy of Rousselot and Marechal with its incorporation of Kant. There is the 'Personalism' of Mounier, defined by O. Strunk, Jr (1990: 894) as 'a philosophical perspective for which the person is the ontological ultimate and for which personality is the fundamental explanatory principle' and which much influenced Liégé. There is, with the work of Dom Lefebvre, the start of renewal in liturgy and in biblical studies.

Following the founding of JOC (*Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne*) by Georges Guérin in 1926, a number of *Action catholique* initiatives developed to give laity a far more significant place in the life of the church (Reynal 2004: 27). JOC was for the working class. Scouting, introduced

⁴³ As did the fiction of Claudel and the research of Teilhard de Chardin

into France in 1911 only four years after its birth in England, was more popular with the other social *milieux*.⁴⁴

The 1940s were especially important (Kerr 2007: 35). The *Mission de France* was founded by Cardinal Suhard in 1941 setting in train the innovative movement of worker-priests. The famous call for urban mission, *La France, pays de mission?* by Henri Godin and Yvan Daniel appeared in 1943 to be followed by the Dominican foundation *Frères missionnaires des Campagnes*. 1942 saw the start of Daniélou and de Lubac's important patristic series '*Sources chrétiennes*'. 1943 even saw an encouraging and liberating encyclical, *Divino afflante spiritu* for biblical scholars, as well as the birth of the *Centre de Pastorale liturgique*. Priests in prison camps had discovered much more about the pastoral and religious realities of their flock, inspiring a renewed interest in mission. Congar, returning from five years in Colditz was to write:

Anyone who did not live through the French Catholicism of 1946-7 missed one of the most beautiful moments in the life of the Church (Congar 1974: 60-61).

By 1948 Jacques Maritain can say:

France is light years ahead of other countries...but one knows that it is opening the ways of the Lord, and that the rest of Christendom will follow where France has gone (Greenacre 1996: 17).

7. The Saulchoir School

The person who, with Congar, influenced Liégé more than anyone else was the Dominican Marie-Dominique Chenu, whose properly historical approach to medieval theology released it from Counter Reformation rigidity (Kerr 2007: 17ff.).⁴⁵ Eight key principles undergirded his approach, all articulated by Chenu (1985) in his *Une école de théologie: Le Saulchoir*. Reynal (2004: 29) judges that Liégé was 'one of those who wanted to follow the programme to the letter'.

⁴⁴ It helps establish the context for Liégé's ministry as a scout chaplain to note that whereas in 1929, four years after the joint founding by a Jesuit and Dominican of the *routiers*, a branch of scouting for 17 to 22 years olds, there were 600 *routiers*. In 1948 there were 12000

⁴⁵ Under him the Saulchoir was famous but finally too innovative for Rome. In 1942 Chenu was dismissed.

First there was respect for a pluralism of methods so that each discipline might use those most appropriate to its particular science. Next, there was the assumption that the knowledge of a school of theology is more than ‘a collection of detached pieces’; it is an ‘organism of thought’, ‘an architecture of knowledge’ (Chenu 1985: 122). Third, with Aquinas it gives more attention to the articulation of problems than to the making of ready conclusions. Fourth, it is open and responsive to its own times, paying close attention to the problems and anguish of contemporaries. Fifth, the actual contemporary life of the church is what defines its theological location: its primary theological place is its actual experience. Here Chenu is building on the sixteenth century Melchior Cano: the believer is to take into account ‘the whole positive life of the church’ - its customs, thoughts, devotions, sacraments, spiritualities, intuitions, philosophies ‘according to the full catholicity of the faith’ (Chenu 1985: 134).⁴⁶ Sixth, it drinks from its own primary sources studying directly the great teachers of Christian thought. As Dominicans, seventh, theology is drawn crucially from the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas. Last, it uses the ‘historical method’ established by the Dominican Marie-Joseph Lagrange and later taught by Gardeil: it is essential to study documents, including Thomas and other medieval documents in the light of the cultural and intellectual context in which they were written (Reynal 2004: 31).

Such a programme seems unremarkable today. In the 1930s it was radically different from the normal seminary approach that followed the threefold scheme of *probatur ex Scriptura*, *probatur ex Traditione*, *probatur ex Ratione* which had the effect of reducing theology to schemas and proofs and ignoring major thinkers in their own right and the direct study of major texts. Chenu emphasized the ‘revealed given’ (*donné révélé*) calling it ‘an enveloping presence’, ‘a permanent presence like the sap of a tree’ (Chenu 1985: 131). He is fighting for an understanding that liberates theological ideas from being secondhand constructs, enclosed in doctrinal armour. The theological student needs to engage with the sources of the faith so as to be able to know and love them for himself. He is not merely marshalling arguments to use in defensive disputes (Reynal 2004: 30).

⁴⁶ Reynal comments, ‘Liégé was richly nourished on this immense menu and it will lead him later to explore the notion of ‘the action of the church in actual reality’ (*l’agir de l’Église en acte*)’ as he himself will coin the phrase (Reynal 2004: 30).

8. Background to Liégé's critique of catechesis and theology in France.⁴⁷

What about the negative side of the picture? For Chenu, Congar and Liégé there was still much to fight for. They saw most catechetical and theological teaching as moribund. Liégé despised the prevailing context of dry Christian moralism. He attacked it as complacent, rationalist, over-secure, self-congratulatory, superiority-filled and smug: its knowing-all-the-answers ethos lacks conviction. He deplored its ethic of respectability, a word which contradicts the whole gospel. He denounced as irresponsible and superficial a conformist morality of mere obedience to rules and commandments. It was a contradiction of true faith which struggles, faces problems, is always open and inquiring and lives in constant process of renewal. It is never a *possession*. Liégé fulminated against cold, undoubting, acceptance of spiritually idle orthodox truths. He regretted the church's tendency to impose its truths over other truth, even scientific truth (Liégé 1960a).

What is the context here? As the twentieth century began, catechism referred to four realities. It was a book of Christian truth presented as questions and responses. It was an event; the curate's catechism classes. It was the group undergoing instruction. It was an institution; the way one prepared for first Communion. The catechist was the instructor.

The official French catechism in use during this period was the 1947 edition, a revised version of the unified 1937 catechism which had brought together material from a number of diocesan handbooks (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981). It showed how Christian religion contains truths to believe, commandments to observe, and sacraments to receive. It contained six hundred and seven questions and responses without further commentary. Number 287, for example, gave the reasons for the prohibition of the duel (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 27). Its feel is 'exterior'; over against you. This is your duty. This saves your soul. You must submit to this. 'There is little mention of God's plan in creation or the economy of salvation' (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 27). Ninety one of the questions begin 'what is ...?' (a miracle, *la gourmandise* etc.). Its mode is juridical. It stands in an historical vacuum. It is 'ahistorical', making no reference to the

⁴⁷ Catechesis (*catéchèse*) is a rich and wide concept. It has New Testament and Patristic roots. In the contemporary scene *catéchèse* refers to all adult Christian learning and instruction, not just that through Sunday sermons. It refers to a dialogic method of teaching religion. It designates the "*prologements sacramentaires ou communautaires du catechisme des enfants*" (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 10).

development of dogma, context or progressive revelation (Adler and Voegeisen 1981: 29) It transcends history. It is abstract, claiming it had to be: to be exact, to avoid being blurred. It was concerned to avoid all passion and pernicious subjectivity. It had enormous confidence in itself and the words it chose. It never doubted that there could be a gap between a word and its meaning. It never thought of 'context' as an issue (Adler and Voegeisen 1981: 30). It was as if the formulations mastered the divine realities, forgetting the essentially analogical character of theology. It mistook words for realities. It confidently offered four proofs of God's love: the contingency of creation; the presence of order in the universe; universal belief in God and the moral law (Adler and Voegeisen 1981: 31).

No mention is made of the context of revelation as to do with God's love. The famous response about who God is ('God is pure spirit, infinitely perfect, eternal, Creator and Sovereign Master of everything' (No. 22)), is cold. It is an intellectualist presentation of God using cold reason. It does not evoke passion. Qualifications are precise, abstract, with no affectivity or personal dynamism. There is no aspect of the 'face of God' (Adler and Voegeisen 1981: 32).

There is a total absence of any critical spirit with regard to language. Aware of a background of nominalism, Deism and Enlightenment criticism, it was concerned to emphasise *reason*. The *résumé* of the life of Christ is an exception and not entirely bloodless. The problem for this approach at this date was that in continuing to rely on the device of offering 'proofs of God' it lacked plausibility.

The life and miracles of Jesus are given as proofs of his divine condition. The Gospels are a repertoire of facts to believe about Jesus. Other biblical works are not mentioned. Gospel means 'the doctrine' rather than the books. Indeed the bible is not considered as the 'Word of God' but as the source book of doctrine, merely, along with Tradition (Adler and Voegeisen 1981: 34). So, for example John's text on the remission of sins becomes the message 'be penitent and regular at Communion'. Matthew on common prayer becomes a guarantee of indulgences (Adler and Voegeisen 1981: 35). And the *institution narratives* are taken from the liturgy rather than from scripture. Jesus is not central, though mentioned in one response out of five. But he is not significant in himself, in his words and actions. The accent rather is on the

'mystery of the Incarnation' or 'redemption' (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 35). In the Passion, Christ is passive; it is but a question of his will. History is mere anecdote; the timeless mysteries are essential.

Worthy reception of the sacraments is important. But it is a question of a cult to be done, not a common or celebrated life. It is reductionist. Belief becomes a legalistic practical imperative. In the 1937 manual Christ is not truly 'man'. Religion becomes cult plus obedience. It is a matter of will and reason, never of affectivity. The key thing is to 'hold as true' the long list of truths from beyond our experience (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 38). Faith is conviction, not illumination: believe what God said, not *in* God. The faith of Abraham or Aquinas is lost. Aquinas wrote *Actus autem credentis non terminatur ad enuntiabile, sed ad rem* (S.Th.2a 2ae) (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 39). 'Faith is no longer *une rencontre* (a meeting or encounter) or *une démarche* (a first step) but a collection of convictions' (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 39). So, for example, the resurrection is an important proof, not a sign, the summit of salvation history and the revelation of God's love. It is a miracle. And that it all happened in history is taken as read.

The church is presented 'as the place in which all this submission can happen' (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 42). It is the place where you can do what the priests, especially the Pope, tell you. It is essentially hierarchical. Outside the Church there is no salvation. Jesus had all this organised from the outset. That is why he prepared Peter. The Kingdom or the Good news are secondary to Jesus Christ's founding of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. So too the Holy Spirit's task is 'to help the apostles establish the Church' (No. 141) (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 43).

This critique of Liégé's generation is not that what this catechism says is entirely wrong but that it is one-sided in its image. Sacraments are a means of grace to help the faithful be virtuous. We are to pray because God has a right to our homage, because Jesus told us to and as a way of getting the necessary graces.

9. Conclusion

The aim of this Chapter was to show how the context in which Liégé started his work was, 'on the one hand, so generally vibrant and creative, ripe for his theological originality and, on

the other, why he needed to be so polemical and critical of the status quo'. We needed to understand 'the various tributaries feeding the river of his inspiration and motivation and which also shaped the possibilities and horizon of his theological world'.

By briefly outlining the myriad developments in French thought, literature, spirituality and theology during the century prior to Liégé's birth we have been able to see what a fecund theological context he grew up in. By focussing on the moribund state, to him, of catechesis before the 1950s, we have been able to glimpse something of the theological reforms hoped for by the young Liégé, and which he would play a part in bringing about. But what were the education, involvements and ministry of this man? This is the concern of the next Chapter.

Chapter Four: An overview of Pierre-André Liégé's life and ministry.

Introduction

This Chapter is divided into four main sections. Only as a whole do they offer a rounded portrait of Liégé's ministry. Section one aims to show the family and educational foundations and influences that shaped his theology and early writings up to 1950. Section two covers seven interlinked areas of his ministry: Rome's conflict with him and the Dominicans generally during the 1950s; his teaching of preaching; his involvement in innovations at the ICP; his involvement in mission; his role with the Dominican journal *Parole et Mission*; his chaplaincy to the Scouts; and his output as a moral theologian. Section three covers his involvement with the Second Vatican Council, the watershed of his ministry. Section four covers the years after the Council when, though still held in suspicion by some senior ecclesiastics, he is himself a senior figure with major responsibilities.

Section One: Liégé's formation as a Dominican theologian

1. Family Background and Early Life

Pierre Louis Napoléon Liégé was born on the 22nd June 1921 at Coiffy-le-Bas, Haute-Marne.⁴⁸ His father, Louis, was a native of the village and Louis' parents are buried in the churchyard. Louis himself, who died in 1982, aged 82, and his wife are buried in Langres. Louis and both his younger sons were horse-dealers.⁴⁹ Liégé's mother, Suzanne Le Comte

⁴⁸ I was told by a community member at Couvent St. Jacques in Paris, a former pupil of Liégé, that he was nicknamed Napoléon by his students but nobody knew why. It was only when I visited his sister, Nelly Liégé on 17th July 2001 (Reynal (2004: 50) has 19th) at her Baby Boutique in Langres that I discovered for myself that it was amongst his names and learned many of these other facts about his family life which are the primary source for the data here.

⁴⁹ Nelly Liégé told me that her 'papa' even came to England to buy horses.

(1900-1980) came to the village to be the schoolmistress and married Louis not long after. They had four children of whom all three sons died before their parents.⁵⁰

Nelly Liégé (2001) showed me photographs of her eldest brother.⁵¹ She insisted that the life he lived was 'impossible'. He rarely spoke about his brothers. Neither did he speak about his poor health; she only learned he had been ill and operated on from a German cousin. Nelly spoke about her brother with deep pride and respect: 'He did an enormous number of marriages. He travelled enormously', she said, repeating herself three times. Nelly never knew the house where Pierre was brought up.⁵² Despite her abundant pride, Nelly has very little theological understanding. Her brother wrote with an '*écriture intello*' (high intellectual style of writing). Nelly is firmly down to earth. Does she have any particular memories? 'Not really', she says, 'he was *'un grand bon homme, très chaleureux'*. She knows that 'he gave conferences on everything under the sun'. She kept his last diary and 'all the pages are packed with appointments'.⁵³ He studied and wrote 'all the time'. He travelled 'all the time'. 'He took the train and plane like I take my car'. He was often in Lille, or Metz or Strasbourg. But wherever he was he always sent postcards to his parents. He would drop in regularly for a day or two. She mentions it was an *abbé* who first attracted him to faith. His father was against any idea of ordination at first. He had no religious commitment, though her mother

⁵⁰ Pierre was the eldest. Jacques (1923-1965) was tragically electrocuted, aged 42, whilst trying to mend a friend's washing machine. Jean (1929-1982) died shortly before his father of pancreatic cancer. Having given their three sons the names of the disciples present at the gospel accounts of the Transfiguration, the Liégés chose to call their daughter, born July 4th 1937, by the distinctly unbiblical name, Nelly. My interview with Nelly on 19th July 2001 took place in Nelly's shop, a Baby Boutique, in Langres. It is like an old fashioned ironmonger; stock everywhere, accumulated over decades. Yet it thrives with its yellowing documents, lists and assorted containers. Nelly is clearly respected as the local expert in the field. She takes many custom-made orders. I heard her being assertive, challenging a customer's choice and swiftly saying, '*allez, hup!*' to despatch her customer because 'someone is here about my brother'. Yet she has a good relationship with her customers, being committed, if stern.

⁵¹ Photographs in her collection include the following: Pierre with his grandparents, with his mother, at his first communion (a family group), as a young priest with his infant sister, with the priest who was responsible for his conversion, with the scouts on camp, as a chaplain to the Polytechnicians, in Canada, in Rome during the Council with Mgr Elchinger, Bishop of Strasbourg, in Paris, on holiday with Coudreau in Switzerland, at Le Saulchoir with Chenu, and at Bastiolle with a clergy group in 1950. I have copies of twenty-two of these photos, destined for a 'Liégé archive' at Cardiff University library.

⁵² It was a smallholding with no electricity. The washing was done in the river some distance away. The house is now destroyed.

⁵³ Nelly has plenty to say about his death. She complains he died too young. He had been unwell for years but 'he had a remarkable courage. He never said he was ill and he never complained. It's a pity, in life we don't talk of these things and then death comes too quickly'. Nelly explained that in 1979 he did not come to Langres as was always his custom for 'the February feast' (Candlemas) because he was ill, and then suddenly the Prior phoned to say he had died. It means a lot to her that Pierre baptised her eldest son.

had a 'moderate' one (she believed '*moyennement*'). But her father 'accepted it in the end'.⁵⁴ Nelly was very clear how much 'Pierre Louis Napoléon' had meant to Mgr. Schmidt, Bishop of Metz, to Jossua and to Coudreau.⁵⁵

2. Early Studies

Liégé began school in the village of Raçonnières with his mother as his teacher. She had moved on there from Coiffy-le-Bas shortly after her first son was born. From there he went on to school at the *Lycée Diderot* in Langres, then the *Lycée Cuvier* in Montbéliard. He shone in his studies. From there he went to the *Séminaire* at Montmagny, near Paris. This childhood in the mountains of Bourgogne gave him 'a sort of earthy, rural solidity' and a knowledge of the rural scene: He could name all the differing fruit trees in a garden even in the middle of winter (Rendu 1980: 44). When he was eleven, in 1932, he was sent by his vicar, Father Gérard to a choir Retreat at Maranville which impressed him.⁵⁶ For one year, at sixteen, he joined *la Route*. Why did he choose the Dominicans? There is little hard evidence. Régnier (1979: 147-149) suggests he tried the Benedictines first but was advised the Dominicans would suit him better because they 'allied contemplation with action'. The Dominicans and the Jesuits were the in the forefront of French intellectual life and Liégé was a thinker. Perhaps, as a Socialist, he preferred the less *élite* ethos of the Dominicans to that of the Jesuits. It seems we shall never really know. On 22nd September 1938, aged 17, he entered the novitiate of Dominican Order at Amiens under the supervision of Father Périnelle (Richard 1979).

3. Dominican Studies: Their Theological Influence

⁵⁴ Nelly's physique and voice echo Liégé characteristics familiar from other descriptions of her family and eldest brother. It is strongly reminiscent of Liégé's voice on recordings. She is confident. Her voice is firm, clear and strong. She is resilient, powerful, almost sharp in her manner.

⁵⁵ With great interest and focus she asked what Coudreau and Jossua have said to me about her brother. It is clear she likes hearing her brother praised.

⁵⁶ It was led by Jean Vilnet, Bishop of St. Dié and Father Jeanson.

His temporary profession, taking the name Pierre-André, followed on the 23rd September 1939 at the *couvent d'Étiolles* and his solemn profession on 23rd September 1942, also at Étiolles.⁵⁷ Liégé received a Thomistic education in the school of Féret, Chenu and Congar.⁵⁸

This was a Thomism in which St Thomas was experienced as 'our teacher', as someone who would furnish the student with the intelligence required to confront 'the entire human problem of our times' (Reynal 2004: 53). 'For Chenu, St Thomas is not a text but... a living master' helping the student engage with contemporary struggles, as concerned to pose questions as to resolve them (Reynal 2004: 53). Donneaud, writing on the Saulchoir in different periods, shows how its style of Thomism came during this era to see St. Thomas as 'a model more than a master, justifying by his spirit a passing beyond his doctrine': (Donneaud 2002; cited by Reynal 2004: 56) He adds 'Chenu and Congar are the emblematic figures who express this period in its maturity, along with an H.-M. Féret, then a P.-A.. Liégé' (Donneaud 2002; Reynal 2004: 53). Liégé also worked 'to form himself. He 'worked a great deal. When he began to teach he had formed his own very personally distinctive voice' (Reynal 2004: 53).⁵⁹

Liégé explicitly acknowledges his debt to Chenu, both to his teaching and 'his theological being' which had, 'from the start, pointed me towards this pastoral thought so necessary for today's Church to establish. I say this feeling an immense gratitude in that it was here I found my way of serving in the Church and, as it seems to me, my Dominican way' (Reynal 2004: 56, citing Liégé in Geffré 1990: 93).⁶⁰ Liégé adds his gratitude for learning from Chenu a theological approach that 'however technical', 'never loses contact with the mission of the

⁵⁷ For an explanation as to why Liégé was never called up see Reynal (2004: 52). See the same page for an explanation of how the 'Chenu ethos' endured throughout the war.

⁵⁸ For excellent introductions to Chenu and Congar see Kerr (2007: 17-51). Henri-Marie Féret (1904-?), professor of history at the Saulchoir (Kain) from 1930, subsequently influential in liturgical reform, sacramental theology and the economy of salvation. Associated with the review *La Maison-Dieu*.

⁵⁹ Reynal is quoting from an interview with Father Rettenbach, Liégé's Novice Master.

⁶⁰ Liégé, writing during Vatican II, makes such a clear distinction in so few words, between the then prevailing Roman theology at that time being foiled by the Council and the approach associated with Chenu that it is worth quoting: [one approach offers]..a theology which, in being purely doctrinal, has become doctrinaire, forgetting its true concerns and function, assimilating Christian truth to an ideological truth. (...) There is another theology that wants to stay one with its gospel origin in order to spell out an existential truth which shows the meaning the living Word of God has for man, wrought via the enthusiasm of the Good News and engaged in the adventure of divine salvation in Jesus Christ. (...) This theology is never cut off from pastoral action (Reynal 2004: 56).

Church and the life of the world'. Reynal observes that this 'never losing contact' becomes for Liégé 'to be fully present', a quality which, as we shall see, Liégé will be much admired for (Reynal 2004: 57).

Liégé was also quintessentially a disciple of Congar even though Congar was away, mostly in Colditz, from September 1939 to May 1945.⁶¹ Congar taught during Liégé's first and sixth years.⁶² From that autumn term they were faculty colleagues and co-contributors to innumerable edited books, journal articles, conferences and round-table 'colloquies'. Liégé absorbed Congar's writings, as his repeated references to Congar in his own work reveals. Congar admired Liégé, whom he called 'the best of my disciples'(Coudreau 1980: 128). At Vatican II he worked to have Liégé included as a *peritus*. He wrote a tribute to him after his death.⁶³ Jossua bears witness to their closeness in his book about Congar: 'Father Liégé (who is in certain respects so close to Father Congar whose disciple he is)' (Jossua 1976: 60).

Liégé's studies were extended by the decision to stream him as a future university-level teacher. This entailed his studying for the degree of *lectorat*, and an additional cycle of study, which profoundly marked his future work: he went to Tübingen (1948-1949) to explore 'kerygmatic theology'.⁶⁴

Monseigneur Baussart ordained Liégé on 3rd June 1944, also at Étioilles where, apart from his time in Tübingen he resided until 1951. He had read for his licence in philosophy at the Sorbonne and his *lectorat*, completed in 1946, was from the Saulchoir (Liégé 1946a). From then he taught at the Saulchoir, interrupted only by studies at Tübingen with Franz-Xavier Arnold (1898-1969), who greatly influenced his subsequent pastoral theology.⁶⁵ At the same time he absorbed the thought of Professor J.-A. Jungmann (1889-1975) of Innsbruck as well as encountering that of Barth and Bonhoeffer (Coudreau 1980: 130; Reynal 2004: 19).

⁶¹ Reynal cites Coudreau quoting Congar as saying 'the bloke (*le gars*) who understood me best was Liégé' (Reynal 2004: 53).

⁶² He presided at the Jury of his *Lectorat* at Easter 1946.

⁶³ See Congar (1980: 23, 128) and the twenty-three indexed Liégé references in Congar's Journals of the Council (Congar 2002).

⁶⁴ Fouilloux (2001: 21 note 13) explains the 'lectorat' as "the final study of dominican formation, conferring the grade of reader in theology and permission to teach in a *studium*". In current Dominican formation it has been replaced by doctoral studies.

⁶⁵ As he acknowledges in Liégé (1957a).

4. *Tübingen Studies: Their Theological Influence*

There are two important points for this study about the Tübingen School: It influenced Liégé; it influenced nineteenth and twentieth century Catholic theology, but not British practical theology. In Liégé's historical accounts (below) of pastoral theology it (with the Innsbruck School) features prominently, but in British accounts these schools are not mentioned.

The best known name from Tübingen is Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838), 'very certainly the most important ecclesiologist of the nineteenth century' whose achievement lifted ecclesiology from its 'very juridical and very institutional' rut and framed it in a 'theological and supernatural vision of the Church' (Reynal 1998: 319).⁶⁶ Influenced by the Enlightenment, German Romanticism, and study of the Church Fathers, his theocentric and pneumatological ecclesiology was contrasted with Trent: 'The Church is before everything else the fruit of Christian faith, the result of the living love of the faithful gathered by the Holy Spirit' (Reynal 1998: 319). His thought emphasises 'the union of the divine and the human in the Church' and is Christological in always linking the church community strongly 'to the institution of the incarnate Word' (Reynal 1998: 319).

There are three other important Tübingen names: Johann Michael Sailer (1751-1832) who did much to combat the rationalism, moralism and utilitarianism of Enlightenment thinking by 'placing the Church's centre of gravity and activity on preaching and a focus of the word of God' (Reynal 2004: 43). He was more concerned with effective catechesis and homiletics than with the 'how' (Reynal 2004: 43). Against scholastic theology, he refocused on the kerygma.⁶⁷ Möhler's teacher was Johann Sebastian Drey (1777-1853), 'recognised as the

⁶⁶ For Congar's view of the importance of Möhler in ecclesiological renewal see Congar (1980). See also Kerr (2007: 15, 20, 191),

⁶⁷ Reynal (2004: 44) quotes Arnold (1957: 61-62) on Sailer with this point in *Serviteurs de la foi*. To summarise Arnold: From this perspective Christianity appears less as a doctrine, something to be taught, but more as an event, a story, as salvation history. The Christianity Sailer wanted to be preached was not one of 'dead concepts' but of 'something living which could be grasped and taken to heart'.

founder of fundamental theology' (Reynal 1998: 145).⁶⁸ He later places Revelation rather than reign of God in the theological centre. From him Möhler developed the 'global and profound' conception of the 'living tradition' that was to form one of this School's major contributions to modern theology (Reynal 2004: 145). These ideas were taken up in various renewals.

What about pastoral theology *per se*? Johann Baptist Hirscher (1788-1865) was described by Arnold as 'the first master of pastoral theology at Tübingen' (Reynal 1998: 223). Convinced of the importance of catechesis and its need of renewal, he advocated exchanging Enlightenment moralism for preaching and catechesis based on faith. He wanted to promote the human realisation of faith as event, history, a divine economy for salvation, over Christianity as doctrine. So he produced his own catechism (Reynal 1998: 223-4).

Once Liégé was steeped in these ideas, the 1937 and 1947 French catechisms inevitably seemed moribund.

Arnold takes up where Hirscher leaves off. And, for France, Liégé takes up where Arnold has trod. But when Liégé arrived in Tübingen to take up his studies with Arnold, two other figures were also beacons in that university: Karl Adam (1876-1966) was one. He 'confronted the catholic tradition with a new problematic born of phenomenology and religious psychology' (Reynal 2004: 46). More directly influential upon Liégé was Romano Guardini (1885-1968) who played a celebrated role in the international liturgical movement after the war. In 1923 he had taken up a Chair in Berlin of *Katholische Weltanschauung*, a position requiring an exceptional range of interdisciplinary study including philosophy, theology, literature and the human sciences, that was suppressed by the Nazis in 1939. His later career was spent in Munich, but from 1945-1948 he taught at Tübingen.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ 'In his introduction to theology he offered "a philosophical exposé of Christianity" around the central idea of the reign of God' (Reynal 1998: 145).

⁶⁹ Reynal conducted an interview with Liégé's friend, A. -G. Hammond which impressed Reynal for the affirmation Hammond gave to the impact of Guardini's personality on Liégé rather than that of Arnold whom he does not mention. (Reynal 2004: 46). Reynal is struck by the way Liégé took up Guardini's theory about the relation of theology and culture, specifically his theory of 'polar opposition' (Reynal 2004: 46). 'The problem is to know reality both in its totality and concretude at the same time' (Reynal 2004: 46). This involves observing its complexity from two opposing but not contradictory 'poles' which must be held in tension (Reynal 2004: 46). Reynal observes that Liégé was marked by this theory and always took care 'to apprehend reality in its

Whilst in Germany Liégé was also marked by the kerygmatic theology of the Innsbruck School. Associated with the names of F. Lakner, Hugo Rahner (Karl's brother), F. Dander and J.-B. Lotz, its founding father was the Austrian Jesuit, Joseph Andreas Jungmann, professor of pedagogy, catechesis, pastoral theology and liturgy at Innsbruck from 1925, later influential in shaping the liturgical reforms of Vatican II. He emphasised a more deep understanding of the place of prayer and of the pedagogic, communal character of the liturgy than was prevalent (Reynal 1998: 251). Kerygmatic theology aimed to be a lively accompaniment to the prevailing scholasticism, so disconnected to people. It was too criticised to flower in its own terms.⁷⁰ Reynal points out that historians have since acknowledged its influence on catechetical and theological renewal. It contributed to a more open climate in preaching and liturgy (Reynal 2004: 49). Reynal points to historians viewing the Belgian Jesuit, L. De Coninck, and Liégé as 'the inheritors of this movement in francophone countries' (Reynal 2004: 49).⁷¹

What is it important to understand of Liégé's formation as a theologian?

Certainly his discipleship of Chenu and Congar, whose work he absorbed, interiorised and made his own. Secondly there was the reforming spirit of the war and post war years, illustrated in words like '*foisonnement*' (swarming expansion), '*efflorescence*' and '*féconde*' in the writing of the times.⁷²

concretude' and to hold 'two poles in tension' (Reynal 2004: 46). For more on Guardini's theory, Reynal points the reader to R. Gibellini, *Panorama de la théologie au XXeme siècle*: (1994: 247-253).

⁷⁰ See Reynal (2004: 48-49) for more on this controversy and more bibliography.

⁷¹ They are J. Comblin and E. Vilanova.

⁷² Congar himself, returning to France after the war years notices the difference. The famous passage, quoted above (page 46), declaring the years 1946-7 'one of the most beautiful moments' continues:

Through a slow delivery from wretchedness, one sought in the great liberty of a faith as profound as life to reunite evangelically with a world with which one had not been as engaged as this for some centuries. Having been a stranger for five years to the very considerable work that had been done at home during the war, I was however given a sense of these new directions right away: the biblical movement; a liturgical movement conceived in a pastoral not ritualistic sense; a renewal of Christian community; mission - indeed, worker priests; a searching amongst the clergy for a theology to illuminate the most authentic quests of the apostolic life....such were the lifelines of a reformism which certainly had its dangers but which was healthy in its roots and in its claims. In bringing to it my contribution I set myself to studying it in its principles and the conditions in which it was so happily developing (Congar 1974: 60-61).

Reynal comments: 'In France, the Faculties of the Saulchoir were, with the Jesuits at Fourvière, one of the principle places of these theological renewals...Liégé, during his studies, was marked by them' (Reynal 2004: 61). Indeed, according to Jossua 'he was one of those who best showed "the fecundity of these renewals"'. Reynal writes that they are what allow us to understand the extra miles Liégé gained beyond his Thomistic formation (Reynal 2004: 61). He notes that Liégé, in biblical studies, will go on to draw out 'the fundamental categories' of 'holiness', 'conversion' and 'paschal mystery' and his significant involvement in liturgy as an experience, ecumenism, mission in the face of unbelief, pastoral renewal and Congarian ecclesiology (Reynal 2004: 61-62).

Congar speaks of a vast clergy conference in 1946 having a joyous, tonic-like and brotherly atmosphere. He goes on:

In these singularly fecund years there is not a conference, pastoral retreat, or conversation between priests or seminarians where you do not find, in one form or another, an attempt to tackle questions which are raising the awareness of all ministers of the Gospel who want an efficacious and authentic pastoral approach: preaching *less* formal, *more* real; catechism better adapted to prepare Christians for life; liturgy *less* routine and mechanical, which is truly the worship of a community; forms of parish life *less* conventional, *more* dynamic, *more* authentic and apt for the real needs of people, etc....(Congar 1950: 24f.).

This could be a manifesto for everything Liégé and his generation of colleagues were to fight for. His predecessors at the Saulchoir, like the biblical theologian, ethnologist and sociologist Antoine Lemonnyer (1872-1932) or the generalist theologian, philosopher and social scientist, Antonin Sertillanges (1863-1948) had done much to pave the way. His teachers, Féret, Chenu, Congar and their team, exemplars of those who had absorbed the fruits of the renewals outlined in the last Chapter, had been already striving for such reform since the days of their first teaching (Kerr 2007: 22f.; 35f.).⁷³

5. Early Writings

⁷³ For similar optimistic, enthusiastic writing of this sort see Aubert (1975) or Guyon (1961) quoted by Reynal (2004: 26-27).

Liégé's bibliography comprises ten entries from 1946 -1950. Reynal, in a thesis of more than 215,000 words, gives ample attention to them, more than possible here.⁷⁴ The range of themes treated includes Liégé's response to *Humani Generis* (1950); Thomism and the theology of faith (1946b);⁷⁵ the shift from apologetics to fundamental theology (1949a); salvation outside the Church (1946); the mystery of the Church (1949b); the Christian interpretation of historical events;⁷⁶ and Revelation and the communion of saints (1949b). From 1951 - 1956, towards the end of which Liégé starts to establish his pastoral theology, there are one hundred and four entries of which forty eight are articles for *La Route des Scouts de France* and five for *L'aumônier scout*. This period includes nine substantial encyclopaedia entries, one book, twenty-six academic articles, and assorted edited-book contributions, write-ups of conferences and other articles.

This summary reveals that in his first ten years as a Dominican academic, Liégé both attended to some of the most pressing current theological issues, and yet wrote profusely for the scouts. These challenges inspired his creative most theological contribution: from a fundamental and kerygmatic theology, through a theology of pastoral catechetics, to pastoral theology.

Section Two: Liégé's ministry: prophetic and controversial engagement in teaching, mission, chaplaincy and society.

This section oscillates between Liégé's internal Dominican involvement and his external ministry. The first part is turned outwards towards Rome. In the second he is a Dominican teacher. In the third, at the *Institut Catholique*, he is turned both inwards and outwards. In the fourth he is turned outwards in mission. In the fifth he is promoting a Dominican journal. In the sixth and seventh, he is turned outwards as a chaplain to the scouts and a moral theologian.

1. As a Dominican in conflict with Rome: a Ministry of both Trials and Successes

⁷⁴ See Reynal (2004: 38-42, 61-97). However see Appendix One for a brief analysis of these writings.

⁷⁵ Reynal (2004: 63, note 106) comments: 'His analysis shows great clarity and rigour and a magisterial knowledge of St. Thomas' theology of faith'.

⁷⁶ A crucial issue after the war, especially among the young - see Reynal (2004: 76-81).

Rome's conflict with the Dominicans in the 1950s is a fascinating story, told in a well-known seven hundred and eighty four-page book by François Leprieur (1989), *Quand Rome condame*. Liégé occurs twenty six times in the Index. It is foreshadowed by Chenu's dismissal in 1942 (Kerr 2007: 20).⁷⁷ From the start of Liégé's career there was a broad coalition of conservative theologians, religious communities and influential politicians ready to denounce him and proclaim his new teaching a danger to Faith. Given the Vatican's attitude and the official enquiries it was ready to make, this was effective. Conflict would be an integral part of Liégé's life until the Second Vatican Council, the years 1957-1962 being especially turbulent.⁷⁸

Much of the initiative against him went on in secret (Reynal 2004: 147). Yet it is feasible to illustrate Liégé's willingness to enter the theological fray, for example by supporting Montuclard.⁷⁹ Liégé's approach was, from the outset, one with the critics and reformers. Educated the Saulchoir way, exposed to the theologians of Tübingen, himself an original thinker, he developed his own way of doing theology. In the prevailing ecclesial climate he was bound to be amongst the suspects.⁸⁰ But Liégé was adept at securing his position,

⁷⁷ For more on Liégé's involvement in this conflict from 1952–54 see Appendix Three.

⁷⁸ Lemoine names as the 'avant-garde ecclesial youth movements' Liégé was particularly associated with, *Jeunesse de l'Église* and *La Quinzaine* both of which were condemned by Rome. Other youth movements Liégé was involved with were 'more classical' and not condemned, namely, *Centre catholique des intellectuels français*, *les Équipes Notre-Dame* and *l'Action Catholique*. (Lemoine 1997: 7)

⁷⁹ Youth movements played a crucial role in the social and ecclesiastical history of mid twentieth-century France. One of them was 'Youth of the Church' (*Jeunesse de l'Église*), founded by the Dominican Maurice Montuclard (1904-1988) with a Marist colleague at Lyon. The Lyon location is relevant since during the war it became, through its numerous refugees, 'an extraordinary intellectual microcosm' (Reynal 2004: 76 citing W. Baudrillart, being cited by Lindberg!). They included Gabriel Marcel, the Dominican, Sertillanges, and de Lubac, as well as Emmanuel Mounier, founder of *Esprit*, who was 'very close to this movement' (Reynal 2004: 76). Its journal was outspoken and inevitably controversial. Its first edition (1942) was entitled 'Has Christianity emasculated Man?' Its third edition (1944) featured 'large extracts' from Mounier's devastating attack on complacent Catholicism, his then forthcoming book, *L'affrontement Chrétien* (Reynal 2004: 77). By 1950, the Archbishop of Bordeaux and the Bishop of Nice were among others who wished to see 'this Religious [Montuclard] reduced to silence' (Leprieur 1989: 172-3). By 1953 Montuclard was obliged to leave the Dominicans and then condemned to lay status (Leprieur 1989: 699). Yet within this controversy's orbit Liégé (1948b) chose to publish his first article in a journal with 'a far greater circulation' than his previous articles (Reynal 2004: 80). He critiques an article by Montuclard but then concludes with solid support and 'warm accord' both Montuclard and the movement (Reynal 2004: 80).

⁸⁰ Leprieur fully explains the background to what Congar called 'the zone of mistrust' on the part of Rome that surrounded the Dominicans during the 1940s and 1950s. They had been far too creative (Leprieur 1989: 21). Leprieur emphasises three points: It was the Dominican Cerf publications that had founded *La Vie intellectuelle* in 1928 and *Sept* in 1934, publications concerned with the question of why the mass of French people were indifferent to Christianity. It was Cerf that published *La France, pays de mission?* in 1943 (les Éditions de l'Abeille,

constantly using official texts to support his points (Reynal 2004: 117).⁸¹ He was no reckless rebel. Matters began to come to a head in 1952 and were not resolved until autumn 1954, following the ‘grand purge’ in which Chenu, Congar and F  ret were censured but, remarkably, not Li  g  . Reynal judges the best way to recognize the ‘great success’ of Li  g  ’s ministry by the time he was thirty three was by this escape from the censure which fell upon his colleagues. It was, writes Reynal (2004: 117) ‘because of the fecundity of his ministry, recognized throughout France’ that bishops numbered among his supporters as well as his detractors.

What precisely were the complaints against Li  g   so far as they can be known? Here the primary source is Congar’s *Journal*:

Fr. Li  g   spoke to me about his trial in Rome....The Father General communicated to him the complaints imputed to him. At the end he had to give an account of himself and sign a certain number of declarations which were then sent to the Holy Office. Just about everything was revived! Even things that Fr. Li  g   thought were quite unknown, like the fact that he had given a fraternal *transeat* to *Ev  nements et la foi*. (Congar 2001: 229-230)

Congar groups the complaints under four headings:

1. Alarming priests by raising too many pastoral problems. Such ‘problems’ must be reserved for specialists; it is permissible to raise theological questions in academic journals or scientific conferences. But in the general pastoral way of things, you should remain with what is certain, traditional and which does not stir up worries.
2. Progressist tendencies: collaboration with *Quinzaine*.⁸²
3. A tendency towards accepting ‘*Formgeschichte*’: i.e. that faith is the expression of the life of the community.

who published it being a subsidiary of Cerf in Lyon), Boulard’s sociological investigations into the rural church and the story of Michonneau’s parish initiatives. Secondly the Dominicans had produced the Saulchoir with its ‘critical, historical style of theology’ developed by Chenu (Reynal 2004: 151). Thirdly, they had founded the radical *Mission de Marseille* in 1941 to take on economic and humanist issues. Leprieur (1989: 19) cites, amongst other evidence, the words of Wladimir d’Ormesson, France’s ambassador to the Vatican, as to how much French initiatives in general played ‘an eminent role’ in the Catholic world during these years and how much this ‘annoyed’ Rome.

⁸¹ For example those of Pius XI, Pius XII or Cardinal Feltin.

⁸² Bi-monthly left-wing, progressive journal, strongly disliked by the Curia: see Leprieur (1989: 152)

4. ‘*Situationsethik*’: a rejection of the split between venial and mortal sin (again he has to sign a paper on this issue). So also must he agree not to adopt purely an apologetic of Sign but also one of Proof. (Congar 2001: 230) ⁸³

But the conflict continued. After Suarez’ death in a car accident, the new Father General, Browne, seven months into his role, decided to visit France. Again we owe to Congar an account of Browne’s meeting with Liégé:

22.XI.55. I saw Fr. Liégé who this very morning went for his visitation with the Fr. General. It lasted two hours. With a fatherly insistence that bordered on obstinacy, the Fr. General interrogated Fr. Liégé exhorting him to follow his own and the only way: Thomism = *the* truth; we have only to follow, broadcast and orchestrate the sayings of the pope (...).

To speak endlessly about the Eucharistic community as Liégé does, is not to do justice to the pope’s pronouncements on 2nd November 1954 on the status of private masses. The Father General had with him the edition which in the end never appeared of ‘Bible and Mission’ (...). This is not in the norms...

In his articles in *La Route*, *L’Aumônier Scout*, etc., Fr. Liégé does not comment enough on papal pronouncements (...)

Fr. Liégé speaks of faith in a manner different from *Humani Generis* and the First Vatican Council (...)

The Fr. General reproached Fr. Liégé for writing that Christ became Lord by his resurrection and glorification when it is the hypostatic union that actually makes Christ Lord... Fr. Liégé referred him to Romans and 1 Peter; but as far as the Fr. General is concerned, Revelation in its true meaning was definitively and adequately specified and fixed by scholastic theology (...) (Congar 2001: 404-405)

On his failure to comment enough on papal pronouncements, Congar tells us that Liégé responded cuttingly, ‘what? does he want a commentary on the papal words to the scooter enthusiasts?’ (Congar 2001: 405, note 30).⁸⁴

Congar reports the Father General’s summing up as he heard it from Liégé:

he must conform himself more to the thought and words of the pope. May he send to the Fr. General personally everything he writes so that in a fatherly way the Fr. General can help him to correct himself (Congar 2001: 405).

⁸³ Congar’s advice to Liégé was ‘to confirm in writing that he will remember this and that indeed the points are already burned into his memory’ (Congar 2001: 230). It does not appear Liégé took the advice since Fouilloux can find no such document in the Liégé archives (Congar 2002: 230, note 44).

⁸⁴ Pius XII had addressed the Vespa-Club of Spain in October 1955.

Congar also speaks of how the Saulchoir students were non-plussed and unafraid to tell the Fr. General so:

Fr. Dupuy told me about his visitation. He, also, spoke about me, saying: we don't understand it. Frs. Liégé and Congar are among those from whom we have learned the most and we have never seen anything unorthodox about them. What's one to make of it? (Congar 2001 410).

Liégé will never be able to escape suspicion in certain quarters. Despite Congar's protestations he, like Chenu indeed, will never be a true *peritus* at the Council.⁸⁵ He will be summarily dismissed as a participant, although having been deeply involved in the preparations, at the 1974 Episcopal Synod in Rome on evangelization.

In 1958 he was a candidate for election as prior of the St Jacques convent in Paris. The new provincial, Kopf, seems to have steered it away from him. Perhaps it was as well. Leprieur (1989: 483) judges that, had he been elected, it would without doubt have worried the curia. But by 1958 Liégé will have encountered other conflicts: within the *Institut Catholique*; in his work with the Scouts; and in the 1957 crisis in catechetics, in which, once again, Liégé, unlike his colleagues, survives dismissal.

It might be conjectured that it was partly because, unlike Congar, Liégé always managed to stay in post during the 1950s, that when the climate changed and Congar was dramatically recalled, sufficient resentment and bad feeling still attached to Liégé that only direct papal authorization, never forthcoming, could have enabled his being allowed to receive more senior conciliar responsibility.

2. Liégé as a teacher of Preaching

Patrick Jacquemont's Chapter on Liégé the preacher is illuminating. It shows his radical, reforming, improving approach (Jacquemont 1980: 68-72). He innovates a new method, a new venue and a new structure for learning. He pays attention to pedagogy, warmth of

⁸⁵ Chenu was a theological advisor to French-speaking African Bishops (Kerr 2007: 20).

engagement, detail of content, theological rationale and style. He commits himself strenuously to the task.

Liégé was the one most involved in Dominican preaching formation for around twenty years at both the Saulchoir and Étiolles, until he handed over the task to Jacquemont himself in 1970. Jacquemont reminds his reader that in the 1950s there was no sermon at Sunday mass at the Saulchoir, a community of more than an hundred Dominicans, because study was not to be interrupted. A new prior was appointed who began to make changes. Preaching practice started to take place during a meal in the refectory. A *correcteur* made comments on technique. It began to be recognised that this was not enough. Liégé, a young professor of apologetics but already confirmed as himself a fine preacher, was spotted as the best person to develop this training and was asked to take charge.⁸⁶ He drew up a list of students, two a week, which allowed for one preaching each during the three years of philosophy, and once during theology – ‘not much, but all the more precious for it’ (Jacquemont 1980: 70). It was a highly prized session, which some students looked forward to and others dreaded as a fearsome ordeal. Liégé chose the texts and themes. There might be a commentary on the gospel (it was the time of rediscovering the place of the homily) or a focus on a particular liturgical feast. The sermons took place in the church facing the brothers. Liégé sat in the front row, very attentive, taking notes. Then he asked a student for an assessment – this was *très formateur* because every student knew it might be him! Then Liégé commented. Some were shocked by his public remarks: clear, rigorous and conforming to his idea of preaching. He had ‘comprehensive warmth and delicate discernment’ ‘*pour faire apparaître les limites*’ (to help you see the right horizons) of a sermon, either for form, length, clarity or content, theological balance or exaggeration.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ When he himself stopped teaching at the Saulchoir and went to live in the *couvent* of the *Annonciation* in Paris he came back on Tuesdays for this course just before Vespers.

⁸⁷The talk about it went on during dinner, except that Liégé and some others never used to have dinner on these evenings. Later students down to preach in forthcoming weeks discussed what progress had been made since they had agreed their outline with Liégé, always done a month before the due date. And then more discussion ensued, often moving far beyond a simple sermon analysis. Brothers would come back after the evening office to talk of what Liégé was doing in his work or of church affairs or the Council. Liégé went back to Paris by the last train without ever asking for someone to go with him.

Once a term Liégé gave a lecture linking pastoral theology and preaching.⁸⁸ These subjects included: types of preaching; the history of preaching; the privileged place of the homily; the limits and possibilities of sermons of circumstance, with their traps; and the need for preaching beyond just the Eucharist. Liégé's primary insistence (very necessary before the Council and since, comments Jacquemont) was on the priority of the Word of God. Jacquemont (1980:71) asserts that Liégé had discovered Kittel's *Dictionary of the Theology of the New Testament* at Tübingen. He therefore insisted on a rigorous study of scripture 'but his own special charism was to incite us to give preaching concrete expression - a contemporary rendering of the Good News' (Jacquemont 1980: 71).⁸⁹

Liégé spoke of *parenétique* preaching: words of exhortation inviting the people of God to 'live the Christian life' (*vivre en chrétien*). There was an association between the ministry of the word and the building up of the church. At this stage however Liégé did not give priority to the ecclesial character of preaching as he did later.⁹⁰ On the other hand he often spoke about Dominican preaching. Jacquemont (1980: 72) remembers him asking in 1956, 'what's Dominican preaching?'. And his answer? 'Preaching at once both doctrinal and missionary' and to show that to be missionary in a world in which the face of faith is often denatured it is necessary to 'demystify' and '*démaquiller*' (take off the make-up) the false faces of God so that Jesus Christ receives due attention. At this time it was this need to be critical and to be involved in the '*contestation*' (dispute or debate) about the church that Liégé was developing most when he talked of theology. Lemoine (1997:2) points out that much of Liégé's preaching is preoccupied with the relation between the church and the world: A good example is the famous 1961 *Carême* (Lent) sermons at St Sulpice in Paris in which Liégé speaks of the 'contagion of the gospel' and reminds his congregation that 'God doesn't force the gates' but that the church 'must seek with those who seek' and that when the Church finds a new way of being in the world it can lead to a recovery of Christian faith.

⁸⁸ And we are many who have held firmly on to their notes from these sessions (Jacquemont 1980: 70).

⁸⁹ Until the middle of 1957, when the novices went to Lille, the novitiate was at the *convent St Jacques* in order that formation should take place in the midst of a living apostolic community. Though their formation were very centred on the novice master, at least they saw something of what was going on in the heart of Dominican life in Paris. This exposure only lasted a year. They then went to the Saulchoir to be entirely devoted to their studies. It was a closed academic world. All the teachers did was teach.

⁹⁰ 'No doubt', comments Jacquemont (1980:72), 'he'd too much '*étouffé*' (suffocation) in the church of Pius XII'.

For Liégé preaching was primarily a call to conversion, a missionary word leading to baptism. The result of catechetical preaching opening on to the Eucharist should be to ‘get up and walk’ (*lève toi et marche*).⁹¹ Liégé’s share in the future preaching of many is still a reality...still for us a “*ferment*”’ Jacquemont (1980:72.)

3. The institutional background to the development of Liégé’s pastoral theology: his teaching at the Institut Catholique de Paris

This conflict dates from 1950. It was a clash both of theological disagreement and local institutional politics.

a) The origins and development of a new institute

In 1950 François Coudreau was asked to create a new chair in catechetics at the *Institut Catholique* in Paris. Liégé judged this to be a momentous event and offered to join Coudreau in the work involved.⁹² It led to the formation of a new *Institut* in which Liégé’s pastoral theology was to thrive until his death.⁹³ In the first year, the course that most caught the

⁹¹ A good example of what Stephen Pattison calls Liégé’s attempt at ‘decoking’ – the idea that if only the tarnishing material can be cleaned away, Christian faith would readily communicate to many.

⁹² For more detail see Coudreau (1980: 127- 152).

⁹³ Because so much theology and professional collaboration flowed from it, not to mention twenty-nine years of friendship, the invigorating story of Liégé’s meeting with Coudreau (1980: 127 –133) is worth telling. In 1939, the Jesuit retreat house at Bastiolle, Montauban, had a new superior, Fr. Peyralade, who introduced a ‘spiritual month’ for priests and laity to join in prayer and reflection which became well known. It was famously presided over by Cardinal Saliège. In August 1950 the theme was ‘The Priest and the Crisis of Faith in the Modern World’. Coudreau, a Sulpician, at that time teaching dogmatic theology at the seminary in Clermont-Ferrand, had enrolled for the session because he particularly wanted to hear Congar’s lectures. When he arrived he learned that Congar, unable to come, would be replaced. He decided to leave immediately and would have done so had not Fr. Peyralade ‘succeeded in getting me to stay by assuring me that Father Congar was sending the best of his *disciples*, a certain Father Liégé, and that I would not be disappointed’. (Coudreau 1980: 128). We know from the notes in Liégé’s Archive what he spoke about: The Word of God, a summons concerning the whole human destiny. The Faith, encounter with Jesus Christ or entry into the mystery of Christ. Elements of the psychology of Faith and Conversion. Current motives for unbelief. The difficulties that believers have. The need to preach Jesus Christ (Reynal 2004: 177).

A few days before Coudreau had received a letter inviting him to take up a new chair of ‘catechetics’ at the *Institut Catholique* in Paris. It was supposed to be within the faculty of theology. Though still a secret, Coudreau had established such a *rapport* with Liégé that he decided to take him into his confidence. Coudreau tells us that Liégé was shocked and his reaction immediate: ‘this is a decisive event, a major foundation; if you want me to, I’ll join you’ (Coudreau 1980: 129). Liégé knew the theological politics of the *Institut Catholique* better than Coudreau. That is why he was shocked. It was probably less of a surprise for him than for Coudreau, though they shared the disappointment, to learn on arrival in Paris, that the staff of the faculty had refused to accept the creation of this Chair:

imagination, and most strongly divided opinion, was Liégé's programme of *théologie kérygmaticque*. It was the first course to attend to catechetical teaching at University level that engaged a student public. Certainly the Bishops did not foresee the problems such an initiative would pose. Tackling head on the problems involved in thinking about Religious Education, Liégé began to show that the triple renewal in biblical, liturgical and pedagogic studies then under way had radical consequences far beyond their usefulness for a new catechism. Liégé was articulating all the issues and problems concerning the transmission of the Faith. Above all, he questioned theology. He dared to suggest that it was the role of praxis to do just that. He called for theological renewal based precisely on confronting it with praxis, with issues and questions of current concern. He raised the question of the integration of the human sciences into theology. But he not only raised issues, kerygmatic theology proposed solutions. Kerygmatic theology brought a perspective which reflected on such fundamental issues as

the Act of Faith and its originality, the Life of Faith and its outcome, Revelation and its nature, the Word of God and its impact, the Tradition and its various *loci*. The Christian Mystery and doctrine, catechesis in pastoral practice, Evangelisation in its objectives and stages (Reynal 2004: 180).

Coudreau (1980: 131) acknowledges Liégé's 'audacious' course as the 'kick-off' for the future success of the institute and that it was he who 'got to grips with the direction the institute needed to take' (Reynal 2004: 179). Conflict would come. Meanwhile excitement prevailed.⁹⁴

If it was a question of 'catechetical content', the Faculty already covered this, and a supplementary Chair would serve no purpose; if it was a question of 'pedagogic technique', then this was neither the role nor the mission of a Faculty of Theology (Coudreau 1980: 129).

Blanchet, the Rector, was not to be thwarted. The new academic year was upon them. With students already enrolled. He knew how dearly the Episcopal Commission on Religious Teaching wanted to see such a project at university level. He himself knew the need. Only that February, with Cardinal Suhard's encouragement and collaboration, they had mounted what Coudreau calls 'a kind of test' by offering a three week course on problems of catechetical renewal for which around fifty catechists had enrolled and, also part of the test, Coudreau, Joseph Colomb and Léon-Arthur Elchinger, the three invited speakers, had been able to prove themselves (Reynal 2004: 178). He immediately decided to create an *Institut Supérieur d'Enseignement Catéchétique*, within the orbit of the Faculty but organised autonomously. The first year went ahead with Coudreau able to organise four courses: Liégé, with his 'kerygmatic theology'; M. Besson, psychology; Coudreau himself on pedagogy; and Jean Daniélou, teaching the history of catechesis (Coudreau 1980: 129).

⁹⁴ Now it was necessary to ensure the compatibility of the teaching programme with the norms and standards of the university. By the spring of 1951 Liégé and Coudreau were ready to launch their *Institut Supérieur Catéchétique*. The final 'construction' (Coudreau's word) took place in a single night in which 'Liégé and I worked with fervour' culminating in a joyful celebration of the eucharist at dawn' (Coudreau 1980: 132). The Rector accepted their proposal. The project was broad-ranging with fifteen rather than just four courses for 1951. All the lecturers approached accepted to teach with enthusiasm, among them 'significant names that will

The distinctive originality of this project lay in the role it ascribed to practice (*la pratique*) (Coudreau 1980: 133). There was a good deal of persuading to do to inspire commitment to the task of reflection on concrete experience. The course set aside a whole day a week to work with children, adolescents and adults to study catechesis in practice. This was a considerable challenge, not least to teachers, obliged to work for the first time with their students on the ground. Coudreau is explicit that it was the force of Liégé's conviction, his compelling theological arguing, his 'attentive and effective regular participation' and his 'stunning lucidity' of analysis in the work of evaluation that enabled the course to triumph over 'all the suspicions and all the laziness.' (Reynal 2004: 181). Coudreau's claim, highly significant for this thesis, is that it was Liégé who thus 'opened the way of *la théologie de la praxis* whose development we are so aware of' (Coudreau 1980: 133).

Liégé's course caused a sensation. The very name *théologie kérygmaticque* was unknown and unexpected. It both surprised and attracted (Coudreau 1980: 130). Students came in considerable numbers and so did observers. The assigned lecture room was too small. Attention to the reality of pastoral problems involved in the transmission of the Faith touched a nerve.⁹⁵

make their mark on the quarter-century to come'. The curriculum was arranged under three main headings each with one overseeing teacher:

The evangelical message, its content and ways of being expressed - this was focussed on Liégé's course but included biblical and liturgical catechesis; formation as a believer - this centred on Brien's course of Christian anthropology but also included psychology, sociology, symbolism; pedagogy of the Faith - the art and science of catechesis, led by Coudreau and grouping together catechetical pedagogy, fundamental pedagogy and catechetical practice, and the psycho-pedagogy and history of catechesis (Reynal 2004: 181).

⁹⁵ Hear one student's assessment (that of Michel Duhamel) after seven years of studying philosophy and theology but who after ordination continued for two years (1955-57) at the young *Institut Catéchétique*, which he describes as 'then only a small star, but rising, its creators watching its progress with communicative conviction':

We felt we were at the confluence of university level religious learning and engagement with pastoral practice that was constantly questioned, analysed and renewed. The confluence of these two currents constituted a new river, 'catechesis', whose originality had, without doubt, never before been brought to light, and which we burned with wanting to advance. I worked really hard during those years for it was necessary to make some sense of what would constitute an effectively accomplished pastoral task where the contributions from the different disciplines we were acquiring, fitted together with Holy Scripture and the gifts of the Tradition. For us the human sciences which have flourished since then, were still in their infancy and the centre of gravity still remained the catechising of the child. Even so, I believe I was given some insights, in the style then prevailing, which helped me to live in the today of the Church (*l'aujourd'hui de l'Église*) (quoted by Reynal (2004: 179) himself quoting from Institut Catholique de Paris (1975)).

Thus 'instruction in the catechism' was becoming the 'art and science' of catechesis, then a new discipline. Now, at least in France, the word is a commonplace and has, just as a word, become banal. But then, this crossroads of what in French is called the *sciences religieuses* and the *pratique pastorale* was the connection that would become Liégé's *théologie pastorale*.

b) Internal opposition to the new Institute

The spontaneous rejection of the new institute by the Faculty of Theology in 1950 has already been mentioned. Writing in 1975, Daniélou wrote:

When Fr. Coudreau founded the *Institut Supérieur catéchétique* he asked me to teach the ancient history of catechesis. The subject interested me a lot and I accepted. But I was not too keen (*pas très chaud*) on the idea of a kerygmatic theology which would have had a different content from speculative theology (Reynal 2004: 179).⁹⁶

Coudreau wrote, 'The Faculty of Theology did not appreciate the birth of an *Institut catéchétique* that, without intending to be, appeared as "the house opposite"' (Reynal 2004: 183). He goes on to express the nub of the matter:

Very quickly the catechists realized that catechesis presented real theological problems: to make the move from merely explaining doctrine to expressing the revelation of mystery (...) was bound to raise theological issues. More and more, catechists were turning into theologians (...) This is what lay at the bottom of their suspicion, rivalry and contempt. There were both institutional and personal conflicts between the theologians who espoused the one or the other theology (Reynal 2004: 183).

Rivalry might have been endured. Contempt and scorn was bound to issue in conflict.⁹⁷ The internal opposition was transformed, over time, into 'theological emulation', with more

⁹⁶ Jacques Audinet (2001) says there are many anecdotes to illustrate their fighting, 'like dog and cat'. In particular he remembers the famous occasion of the first Board meeting of the ISPC after the crisis of 1957. Several key teachers have been removed from their posts. The young graduate Audinet had been invited to teach and was present at this meeting to examine the situation in which the faculty found itself. At a certain moment Daniélou vigorously pointed his finger at Liégé and said, 'It's your fault, Father, because you are a Fideist', at which point all the lights went out (conversation with Nicholas Bradbury in Paris, 16th May 2001). For more on the conflict between a scholastic approach and the one Daniélou seems to see Liégé as representing see Kerr (2007: 1-16).

⁹⁷ In April 1952 the faculty of theology demanded 'the suppression of this innovating and dangerous institute'. Mgr Blanchet was obliged to ask for a response which Liégé provided in fifteen pages 'with the rigour and

shared teaching (Reynal 2004: 184). In Audinet's words 'the celebrated kerygmatic theology which, right from the start, the new institute had made its ensign, found its way, by various routes, into the Faculty of Theology' (Reynal 2004: 184).

c) The catechetical crisis of 1957

The steadily growing conflict between a wide alliance of French conservative forces and the catechetical renewal, with Joseph Colomb in the midst of it, reached crisis point in the middle of 1957 (Reynal 2004: 185).

It touched Liégé's *Institut* directly. Afterwards Cardinal Gerlier said, 'we have succeeded in saving the institutions but not the staff' (Reynal 2004: 186). Coudreau, Joseph Colomb, Françoise Derkenne and Féret, all teachers from the outset, were dismissed by the Vatican from their posts. Fr. Gélinau (the composer) was reprimanded. But in François Coudreau's account it was Liégé who was the most severely attacked because at the heart of all the difficulties for the conservatives lay the fundamental and pastoral theology that had begun with his original course in *théologie kérygmaticque* (Coudreau 1980: 135). His writings and activities were being closely watched.

Extraordinarily, once again he himself had not been dismissed. He nevertheless submitted his resignation to the Rector of the ICP who refused it. He began his course in October 1957 with an energetic protest on behalf of his colleagues and a commitment to continue his own teaching along the same lines. He was, predictably, recalled to Rome but defended himself in such a way as not to lose his position.

d) The vital link between catechesis and pastoral theology

clarity that might be expected of him', leading the Rector to stand firm. The new Institute would continue, and on the same lines that it had begun. The document deals with the fundamental theological issues but also with the process issues: it finds it 'curious' that the Faculty's alarm 'grew with the development and success of the institute' and asks whether there might not be 'a secret relation of cause and effect'. It notes that whereas the content of the teaching has not changed since Coudreau was teaching it in the first year, two things have changed: the number of students has doubled...and the Chair-holder has become a Dominican' (Reynal 2004:184).

Before the storm of 1957 broke, but as it was mounting, Coudreau had been asked to lead a sub-commission of the *Commission Nationale de l'Enseignement Religieux*, to respond to the request of some bishops. This involved a conference which took place at Bagneux in December 1956. Its proceedings were published, ironically, in July 1957, under the title *Vers un catéchuménat d'adultes* (Reynal 2004: 187). The main speakers included Daniélou, a patristics scholar; Noirod, a canon lawyer; Rétif, a missiologist; Chavasse, a sacramental theologian; Liégé; and the person whose name will always be most associated with catechetical renewal, Colomb. These last two were billed as addressing '*la Théologie pastorale*' (Reynal 2004: 188). In fact Liégé's input was entitled 'The Building-up of the Church and the Catechumenate', his first article devoted entirely to this issue (Reynal 2004: 188).

In the summing up, Mgr Lacointe, Bishop of Beauvais, presiding on behalf of the French bishops, said that Liégé and Colomb 'have installed in our hearts some most current concerns, most solidly founded on *la Théologie pastorale*'. This expression, still quite new, with Liégé there at the forefront of its use, was thus made somewhat official at Bagneux, however menacing the skies (Reynal 2004: 189).

4. Involvement in a variety of initiatives around mission

Liégé gained the reputation of having contacts 'right across the firmament' (*tous azimuts*) (Refoulé 1980: 11). He was associated with the *Quinzaine* and was close to the movement, *Jeunesse de l'Église* (Leprieur 1989: 152). We see him numbered amongst those Dominicans (along with Chenu, Congar, Féret and Roguet) who spoke at the seminary of the *Mission de France* in Lisieux, and known as 'the missionary crossroads of France' until its closure in the crisis of 1953. So it is not entirely true to see him, as Leprieur does, as not directly involved with the worker-priest movement: until 1953 he participated in sessions of reflection precisely with these priests (Reynal 2004: 154). He wrote several times and spoke alongside Gabriel Marcel and others for the *Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français* (Reynal 2004: 154). He became deeply involved in another Suhard initiative, the *communauté paroissiale* of Saint-Séverin in Paris with its famous Advent Lectures. He 'played an important role' in the *Mission du quartier Latin*.

From 1950, he belonged to an ecumenical group of Catholic and Protestant theologians which met 'regularly' in Paris and to a 'tripartite group of Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant students', for which he was the Catholic spokesman (Reynal 2004: 155).

5. *Parole et Mission: 1946-1954 and 1957-1973.*

As an ecclesialogist, Liégé helped transform missionary theology's status from a thin, in-house issue for missionaries, to a serious subject. The vehicle that most enabled this was *Parole et Mission* of which he was a founder and which he continued to 'inspire' until its final demise (Henry 1980: 100).⁹⁸

Cerf publications had wanted a *cahier* on Mission from 1942. In 1946 a plan was drawn up and 'Liégé was naturally mobilised' (Henry 1980: 101). A formidable team was involved.⁹⁹ Liégé immediately drafted an article outlining a rationale and four key areas for research.¹⁰⁰ This thinking shaped what emerged in 1953.

The small group of Dominicans working on this project felt 'afflicted' by 'the wretched state of contemporary missionary discourse and reflection' (Henry 1980: 103).¹⁰¹ By 1953 a review with the title *Épiphanie, revue de catéchèse missionnaire* was proposed. This title soon became *Bible et Mission*. For Liégé it was important to make a clear distinction between the words 'missiological' and 'catechetical', the first being to do with evangelical action addressed to unbelievers or to a situation of unbelief, aimed at leading them to confess Christian faith. The missionary brings the first message of salvation, the initial kerygma. Catechesis is rather to prepare someone already converted for baptism.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ An instructive account of the project is given by A.- M. Henry OP (1980: 100-123). All the data in this section is taken from this account.

⁹⁹ Henry mentions fifteen names, among them Fr. Monchanin, known across India, at that time returned for a short period, Fr. Abd-el-Jalil, Dom Lou and Jean Daniélou.

¹⁰⁰ The plan is reproduced by Henry (1980: 102-3).

¹⁰¹ Given their Order's involvement and interest the world of mission, they thought it ought to be making a positive contribution to the thinking about this vital subject. A 'study centre' was dreamed of. Fr. Avril, the Provincial, who had already incorporated a Cairo house into the Province wanted to open one in Karachi so that 'for the greater gain of our understanding of Islam the Province would have had outposts in the Moslem world from Morocco to Pakistan, well beyond the Arab countries' (Henry 1980: 104).

¹⁰² Henry (1980: 106) admires Liégé's way of defending such distinctions with *finesse* and firmness as an example of 'the brightness of his spirit and his clarity':

The first edition of *Bible et Mission* was ready by Wednesday, 9th June 1954. The content was prepared for printing, including what would have been Liégé's first major article on pastoral theology.¹⁰³ Two days later the new Provincial appointed to replace the dismissed Avril stopped publication.¹⁰⁴

In 1957 another Provincial arrived: 'The horizon changed colour' (Henry 1980: 108). The review could be thought of again but it was felt a new title was needed. The word 'Bible' risked implying Christian faith was a religion of the book.¹⁰⁵ Henry (1980: 110) writes that of the four Directors, Liégé was 'the foundation stone on whom we all spontaneously leaned for support. We were never without his sturdy reliability'.

The first edition was published on April 15th 1958 and included a major article by Liégé (1958a). Henry comments, 'it wasn't a manifesto. That was not his *genre*. It was a programme, an orientation' (Henry 1980: 111). Four directors were insufficient. It was decided to arrange regular meetings of experts to help tackle the relevant themes. Liégé had the idea of calling

He loved to define things and to hold *absolutely* to this meaning. Nothing made him more ill at ease, and sometimes grumpy, than the 'salad' some debates became when they strayed from the initial purpose of the meeting. By the same token, nothing was more precious, in this respect, than his interventions. He always addressed the heart of a subject. When your head is made as well as his was, the demands you make on others are both liberating and stimulating (Henry 1980: 106-7).

¹⁰³ Why? 'No one ever said'; just a few hundred copies were distributed among friends. Henry (1980: 108) comments, 'the years of the tunnel had begun. Mission, worker-priests, ecumenism, even catechesis had become suspect'.

¹⁰⁴ Lemoine (1997: 31) (in this footnote Lemoine does not name the article but his reference is 'Liégé archives, (Dossier 200)') refers to a 1955 article in *La Route* on religious freedom which met with serious opposition. Lemoine shows that Liégé's points are virtually the same as the Council makes in *Dignitatis Humanae* ten years later. Defending himself, Liégé complains in his letter to the Master of the Order of the 'great apostolic malaise' that is 'handicapping the church'. Lemoine (1997: 31-33) adds further examples of Liégé's troubles with the authorities: He refers to Liégé's 1959 defence of his work with Coudreau; he specifies Liégé's difficulties in 1956 and 1957; he quotes Jossua, from a personal interview in which Jossua calls Liégé 'the resistance' against the 'terror' of Ducattillon and reminds Lemoine that some of Liégé's articles were simply refused for publication. In view of their place in the presentation of Liégé's pastoral theology below it is worth mentioning that Lemoine (1997: 32) notes his major articles on faith (1953a; 1956b) were praised by the hierarchy.

¹⁰⁵ J. Thomas thought of '*Parole et Mission*'. The word '*Parole*' was 'totally uncustomary' in catholic circles (Henry 1980: 109). This title was original, though its usage soon caught on.. The Father General was horrified and asked for it to be called '*Doctrine et Mission*'. For him '*Parole et Mission*' sounded Protestant. A struggle took place. The team consisted of Henry, Liégé, J. Thomas and N. Dunas. They did not want '*Doctrine*' at all. Whereas '*Parole*' implied a divine initiative, *doctrine*' was of human formulation. This was a critical distinction for Liégé. A long letter was written to the Father General. It stressed the use of the word *Verbum* in the writings of the Order since the eighteenth century. This brought out his 'dominican patriotism' and he conceded (Henry 1980: 109).

them *colloques* (symposia). This term stuck, as did the method, which continued for more than twelve years:

If a few were not so successful, the majority gripped (*passionèrent*) their participants. Even today they remain a marvellous memory. One studied, one discovered, one affirmed one's convictions. But this was not enough. The exigence of P. -A. Liégé forced the little assembly to come forward with, not directives, but the most clear pastoral (missionary) conclusions it was possible to make (Henry 1980: 111).

A theology emerged that was new for many, particularly in thinking about the actual practice of the life of the church. It was a theology both concrete and experimental, but it also gained its critique by reference to the *Parole* of God. Liégé himself chaired or directed innumerable *colloques*, but this in itself made little difference because he was always present and the habit swiftly set in by which he would be asked to conclude them, which sometimes became '*un exercice assez sportif*' (Henry 1980: 112).

The themes of the *colloques* were very varied and frequently published. Liégé's contributions were of outstanding importance, as were his written and often major articles. Some of them, like the leading article in April 1969 on 'the risk and gain of missionary dialogue' were, in Henry's view, seminal (Henry 1980: 113). There were two sources of resistance.¹⁰⁶

Reynal comments, on *Parole et Mission*, that its theological aspirations were achieved: it integrated exegesis and biblical studies into missionary theology. It related contemporary issues of faith to theological principles. It saw mission in sociological as well as geographical terms. 'Above all', it linked thinking about overseas mission to the missionary issues within France (Reynal 2004: 174).

6. Liégé's involvement with the Scouts: 1947- 1957

In 1947 Liégé became chaplain to the 'Rois Mages' group of the *Routiers-Scouts de France de l'Ecole polytechnique*.¹⁰⁷ In 1951 he was appointed national Chaplain to *la Route*. In Chapter seven (sections 3 and 4) below it will be seen that chaplaincy and theological innovation

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix Four for more details, including the themes of Liégé's articles.

¹⁰⁷ For an account of this famous branch of the Scouts, see Schaeffer (1949).

belong together during this period. As it is very interesting and informative, but too long for the main text, a summary of Paul Rendu's account of this ministry (Rendu 1980: 40–59) is given in Appendix Two; they worked together on *La Route* from 1951–57.

7. Liégé, the moral theologian

Michel Legrain (1980), Vice Rector of the *Institut Catholique* at the time of Liégé's death has written on Liégé as *le moralist*. He starts by stressing that Liégé never thought of himself as 'a theoretician' of *la morale*. But Liégé's pastoral theology 'englobed Christian existence in all its dimensions' (Legrain 1980: 186). He was led into ethical issues by his close contact with movements such as *Equipes Enseignantes*, *Vie Nouvelle* or *Foyers Notre-Dame*. He worked closely with individuals and families in turmoil or facing 'the most delicate of problems' (Legrain 1980: 186). He never shied away from this. Legrain judges that Liégé's responses are striking by their openness, their grasp of the concrete situation and their strictness, their rootedness in the gospel; for example, an article he wrote in *Le Figaro* (Liégé 1974a) on euthanasia and a pamphlet on abortion (Liégé 1974b; 1975).¹⁰⁸

Liégé was not a sententious moralist, walled in by fixed mental categories (Legrain 1980: 187).¹⁰⁹ In the name of the gospel he sought compromise within what he called *l'espace éthique*. Whereas most moralists generally evaded risks, Liégé walked straight into involvement with the most difficult topical moral issues. In *Allez Enseignez* (1979: 63) he had written: 'Ethical space does not first consist of obeying directives but of recognising directions and walking towards them'. Legrain suggests he offered 'oxygen' and 'room to manoeuvre', 'unveiling one of the keys of his great liberty of thought and expression' (Legrain 1980: 187). 'Never, faced with the official declarations of the Magisterium, was he content with a sweetening or literal response' (Legrain 1980: 188).

He was free of everyday conventions and conformity, whether to doctrines or behaviour. Certainly in theology he was more 'classical' than '*novateur*' except where he found the

¹⁰⁸ Publishing Liégé (1974a) and (1974b) seems to be the reason for his exclusion from the debating chamber of the 1974 Synod (Refoulé 1980: 186).

¹⁰⁹ Rather, 'he was a man *du grand large* with a striking and forceful manner of expression'.

arguments for a shift of thought convincing (Legrain 1980: 189). His first response was in favour of received doctrine not through lack of imagination, or through habit, but because he had a real confidence in the rich tradition that had nourished his church.

Liégé was not someone to accept the general demand for ‘rights’ and ‘liberty’ and found himself ‘provoked on innumerable occasions to explain the true nature of Christian liberty with its necessary constraints’ (Legrain 1980: 189). Christian freedom affirms spirit above the perpetual demands of matter simply as the most apt resource for accomplishing the ends of the Christian way of life. It is freedom to choose this direction for life. Sticking to this way, even in the face of persecution or imprisonment, is true freedom.

Liégé’s approach is personalist, underpinned by an appeal to the New Testament. The Christian way is completely original. It is not, like much of the Old Testament, a blind obedience to external command. It is not the fruit of reason or common sense. Christian discipleship is about becoming a ‘creature’, indwelt and animated by the Spirit of Christ (2 Cor. 3: 17/ Gal 6: 5/ Romans 6: 14): the commitment to love liberates; it puts other constraints or limitations into the shade. Such was his new advice to couples preparing for marriage (Legrain 1980: 191).¹¹⁰

Section Three: At the Second Vatican Council

¹¹⁰ Liégé was constantly pointing out how contemporary Catholic practice shrivelled up authentic Christian life into a legalistic parody. Though, equally, he warned against idealising the early Church. And he was not unrealistic about human nature: with St Paul he knew that even for the baptised there was inner division; the law of the members warring against that of the Spirit (Liégé 1978). He disliked attitudes that replaced such an outlook with something more legalistic, moralistic, mistrustful or suspicious. Legrain judges that Liégé’s own formation in these matters was greatly influenced by his studies at Tübingen. After the nightmare of the War, it was a time of trying to find more convincing and appropriate theological stances than had prevailed hitherto. It was a time when new moral studies were proliferating. Liégé himself wrote a good deal on this subject during the 1950s. He was deeply critical of the prevailing ‘moralism’ which he regarded as reductionist, without any connection to the mystery of the love of Christ. He contrasted the transformed ‘mystical’ moral order given by faith in Christ with its opposite, the juridical moral order. Yet his was a practical, down to earth approach for quite ordinary, unexceptional people or married couples. It is necessary to decide, then to act. There is always the risk of getting the wrong priority. Such a risk is built in. It is no reason to do nothing in the face of complexity. Legrain (1980: 199) writes that, with a loyalty and courage that even his detractors recognised, ‘Liégé was not content merely to speak: he engaged’. Provoked by a crowd of friends known and unknown into the most complex conflicts, he took time to listen, to consult. Then he examined the matter as best he could with his intelligence so full of belief and his praying heart, and only then did he give his advice, even if it went far from received doctrine, always very clear and with care not to come over as provocative in attitude. His judgement, however, especially when it was amplified by the mass media surprised certain people – as was the case with his interventions on torture, contraception and abortion (Legrain 1980: 199).

Liégé was in the first team of French theologians who so influenced the Council. Paul-Joseph Schmitt (1980: 18), then Bishop of Metz, wrote, ‘No one will ever know what Vatican II owes to him’.¹¹¹ It is appropriate for Schmitt to write this, for much of Liégé’s contribution to the Council was hidden from direct view and found expression only in the utterances of Schmitt, particularly, but also Elchinger, Bishop of Strasbourg.¹¹²

Vatican II dealt comprehensively with the theological issues Liégé had promoted. Most of the change ‘legitimated and encouraged’ by the Council was what Liégé had been teaching for years (Lemoine 1997: 30). It was an astonishing realisation of all his expectations, demands and hopes.¹¹³

It was the turning point in his life. From his *lectorat* onwards he had fought for the church to accept the modern world and to escape from medieval Christianity. He had stood for the profound theological renewal and pastoral awakening that informed him and his circle but which Rome rejected. Suddenly, John XXIII’s call for *aggiornamento* and Vatican Council gave birth to an immense hope in Liégé and others. It was such a significant event that a further section on this has been included as Appendix 5. Coudreau, in an interview with Lemoine (1997: 26), refers to his *jouissance conciliaire* during this period. He was not disappointed. The Council surprised him in the change it wrought.

Liégé saw the Council as, firstly, ecclesiological, provoked (like all councils) by particular needs of the new missionary situation of the end of Christendom. At a conference, Liégé (1963c) argued for a pastoral Council uniting faith to the ecclesial mystery. He saw a need to restore certain balances: between people and hierarchy, universal and ministerial priesthood, between papal primacy and Episcopal, between monarchic and collegial unity, ‘between the Latin and the universal Church’ and between all manner of powers and practices concerning church institutions and liberty (Lemoine 1997: 27). He is clear that radical pastoral change

¹¹¹ *Nul ne saura jamais ce que Vatican II lui doit.*

¹¹² This becomes explicit, for example, with Congar’s entry for 17th November 1962 where Congar explains that what Mgr Schmitt has said in Council is ‘of Liégé’ (Congar 2002: 226).

¹¹³ Lemoine (1997: 111) judges that the Council helps us understand Liégé and that his commentaries are invaluable in understanding the Council.

must be on the agenda going a long way beyond doctrinal conformism. Liégé belonged to the 'reformist' group as is clear from the way he expresses his own opinions in commenting on Council affairs for the French public in the press, notably in the catholic daily paper *La Croix* to which he contributed frequently (Lemoine 1997: 30).

Liégé was personally invited by the Pope to the Council 'as an *ad nutum* theological expert'(Lemoine 1997: 27). He was further appointed as theological consultant to Mgr Schmitt, Bishop of Metz and Mgr Elchinger, Bishop of Strasbourg. Lemoine (1997:27) quotes the letter from Mgr Schmitt on 2nd October 1962 appealing to Liégé 'very specially' for his expertise concerning 'all the problems relative to the Constitution of the Church and its mission'.

Liégé played, in Jossua's phrase (1980: 30), 'a not negligible role' at the Council but had to suffer 'more than a snub', sharing the fate of Chenu never to be an official *peritus*. Lemoine (1997: 52) says that Liégé participated, sometimes greatly, in the editing of Council texts. Schmitt (1980:18) complains that despite his own attempts to enable Liégé to be a full participant in the conciliar assemblies, the suspicion in which he was held prevented this. Various entries in Congar's Council Journal (2002) throw further light on this and confirm his own high assessment of Liégé's abilities. But for 30th March 1963 he writes in the context of lamenting Liégé's absence from the inner circle of 'Conciliar Fathers', 'I had already pointed out to the council, many times, that the French bishops were not attributing to Father Liégé the credit he merits' (Congar 2002: 360). Again, for 2nd October 1963, he complains of a recent failed attempt to have Féret included, 'It's a pity because worthless nonentities have been let in but first-rate men like Féret, Liégé and Martelet remain outside' (Congar 2002: 424). But there are small victories. For 17th November 1962 he credits Liégé for the content of what Mgr Schmitt contributes 'with a lot of conviction' to a significant debate on the liturgy (Congar 2002 : 226). And it is clear from three Congar (2002 as dated) entries that Liégé significantly influenced certain key texts such as *de ecclesia* (30th September and 10th and 11th October 1963) and a text on the priesthood (12th October 1963). Again, for 3rd October Congar (2002: 426) writes that Cardinal Marella has taken Liégé as an expert in

the Commission on the government of Dioceses. Congar shows us a number of tantalisingly brief glimpses of Liégé's general participation at the Council.¹¹⁴

His real contribution was not made in the official commissions. He lived on the Viale Romania with Hans Küng, many French bishops of whom the most remarkable were Schmitt, Elchinger and Boillon, and a dozen American bishops (Jossua 1980: 30). He multiplied his contacts and worked intensely hard for his friends, especially on the subjects of evangelisation and religious liberty.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Among them, for example, he mentions a walk with Liégé to Rocca di Papa on 7th October 1963 with Féret, Oscar Cullmann, H. Roux and Mgr Phillips. Another walk, this time to the Lido at Ostia on 13th October 1963 was with Liégé, Feret, Chenu and four Taizé brothers including Roger Schutz. Of more theological interest he refers to a weekly meeting to discuss conciliar strategy convened at the Rédemptorists by Mgr Elchinger to whom of course Liégé was chief theological advisor. One of these meetings, for 11th October 1963, concerned especially with liturgy, Congar summarises in twenty three lines mentioning the names of most present, among them Liégé, Dom Butler, Rahner, Ratzinger, Grillmeier and Daniélou (Congar 2002). Melloni (2000: 62) also describes this group:

As the Domus Mariae Group, so also other groups laboured through the long afternoons as the Council came to life. The group known as the Conciliar Strategies, which Elchinger brought together, was not new as far as its members went. Volk (and his auxiliary), Musty, Guano, Garrone, Butler, Philips, Rahner, Féret, Häring, Liégé, Grillmeier, Martelet, Smulders, Martimort, Laurentin, Ratzinger, Semmelroth, Daniélou, Congar, and some others formed a team that had already been active the year before in preparing opinions contrary to the preparatory schemes. In the second period, however, they moved with greater ease, having mastered some aspects of the assembly's work (the importance of the first interventions in a debate; the difficulty caused by the presence of *modi* in votes; the need to make sure that there were conciliar interventions on various subjects).

A similar glimpse of Liégé's behind the scenes involvement is given by Famerée (2000: 160f.) in the next Chapter section VI subtitled 'Numerous Meetings on the Fringes of the Assembly':

Alongside these private conversations in the walkways of the assembly, numerous meetings were held in Rome: from informal contacts among fathers, experts, and journalists to the most official meetings of the conciliar commissions.

In footnote 143, that pertains to this passage is written:

Then too there were various more or less informal 'pressure groups or study groups,' such as the one called The Bishop of Vatican II; this group, due to the initiative of Canon F. Boulard, in cooperation with Bishops A. Muñoz Duque and L. de Courrèges, met twice a month at Saint-Louis des Français and brought together about fifteen bishops. In the list of those invited on November 5th 1963 we find the names of members of the Commission for Bishops, P. Correa León, J. Gargitter, N. Jubany Arrau, and J. Teusch - but also R. Etchegaray, C. Colombo, P. -A. Liégé, F. Houtart, J. Medina, and K. Wojtyła. See Boulard Archive, Diocesan Archives of Paris, no. 4A1, 24b, and 26, a note dated October 30 1963.

It is interesting, if fruitless, to speculate on what Liégé's relationship with the future popes might have become had he lived as long as Wojtyła and Ratzinger.

¹¹⁵ Jossua (1980: 30) remarks that his postcards were, overall, rather hard in tone, and reticent. He regretted the futility of fussing about liturgical rubrics and feared for the death of John XXIII. But there were also the 'mad hopes, joy at a relative victory' in the struggle for religious freedom and pleasure in times with Pères Féret or Congar, or an evening out for a meal at Ostia on his feast day with his episcopal friends.

The archives show Liégé to be grateful to the most conservative cardinal Ottaviani, and that he saw there were 'honest' men in the conservative camp. Liégé was not impressed with Paul VI at first: he seemed anxious and seemed to pay too much attention to the conservatives. Liégé worried that his training was so classical. Lemoine (1997: 28) describes these criticisms and how they were shared by Chenu and Congar. The archives

The whole experience never ceased to be a significant and radiant memory for him: The church was attempting to discover its true gospel. Even better to a great extent it achieved this articulation and was able to decide how to go forward. Now, thought Liégé, it was just a question of doing it (Jossua 1980: 31).

Section Four: The Years after the Council

Jossua (1980:31) argues that the key to interpret Liégé's standpoint in the last ten years of his life is to understand the deep sense in which the Council had granted his wishes. The Council did what Liégé had been asking of his Church all along. It should now be put into practice. There was no need to go beyond it.¹¹⁶ Lemoine (1997: 49ff.) and Jossua (1980: 31-32) both insist that this was the stance Liégé adopted for the rest of his life and that it explains why, though to many he appeared to stiffen, in fact he did not. He remained Conciliar. He was loyal to his priorities of thirty years before. He wanted an 'adult' faith for all, a church made up of people of faith, encouraged by ministers of real service, politically free and unburdened with over-attachment to temporal institutions, free to bear witness to Christ. This seemed newly possible to him after the Council. It seemed obvious to him that everyone should work together to achieve this.

The Council had paid great attention to *balance* in its deliberations. Like Chenu and de Lubac, Liégé was frustrated by those who wanted to put everything back into the melting

also show both that Liégé was consulted in the formation of many documents and also that he himself consulted experts to get his own mind clear, for example, Pierre Benoît OP, an exegete. Liégé was trying hard to get a grip on a perspective that was historical, hermeneutic and faithful to tradition.

Evidence for Liégé's role in communicating the emerging message of the Council is provided by Grootaers (1997: 547): He gives the 'great unsatisfied public curiosity' in the face of insufficient newspaper coverage of the Council as the reason 'that soon made a success of the many lectures given by the 'front-line combatants' on temporary home leave'. Then he writes:

Some of these ventures went further, already seeking to go more deeply into the message of Vatican II, and the first precursory signs of the 'reception' that would follow. A model case was the International Study Days that *Informations Catholiques Internationales* (Paris) organised in May 1963 for packed audiences; the general theme was 'The Mission and Freedom of the Laity in the World' (Grootaers 1997: 547).

Here there is a footnote (no.99) which says: 'The breadth and ambitiousness of this project may be judged from the names of the speakers during these two days'. He then names the nine men concerned of whom Liégé is the last. The footnote adds: 'The papers of this meeting circulated in book form under the title *Mission et Liberté des laïcs dans le monde*, ed. G. Hourdin (Paris 1964)' (Grootaers 1997: 547).

¹¹⁶ The view shared with Chenu (Kerr 2007: 21).

pot or sought to radicalise the issues further (Kerr 2007: 21; 77). His horizon was enlarged over the rest of his life but he was not open to much that was emerging in the post-conciliar church.¹¹⁷ He fought hard against anarchy and conservatism, both in danger of being taken to excess.¹¹⁸ He found himself in confrontation with friends, brothers and students.¹¹⁹ Not

¹¹⁷ By 1974 Liégé's view is that there are as many dogmatic theologies as dogmatic theologians; the subject is in disarray; it needs to re-root itself in fundamental theology. Its task is to reintegrate facets of the Christian mystery into the plenitude of the mystery in such a way as to reveal contemporary meanings. Liégé is now concerned that dogmatics should follow the hermeneutic method. In fact he does not much use this term; but this is his meaning. His ideas here are close to those of Claude Geffré. Lemoine (1997: 51) comments that there is nothing new about this method; it can be traced through, for example, Plato, Dilthey and modernism. Lemoine is claiming, without detailed analysis, that Liégé and Geffré are innovative here in wanting, after the Council, to apply this method to Catholic theology. Their insight is that neither scripture nor tradition can escape from a 'constitutive process of interpretation' (Lemoine 1997: 51). For Liégé, this involves all the different '*paysages dogmatiques*' to interrogate each other throughout history and tradition to establish what, in the light of today, remains intact. His sense is that it is currently 'a cacophony' and that these *paysages* are difficult to reconcile. Lemoine draws heavily on a conference involving Liégé in December 1974 (archived in the Dominican Dossier 84) for Liégé's views at this time. Liégé sharply criticises Küng at the conference. Liégé wants a re-balancing in the aftermath of the Council. He is worried that there is a danger of 'drowning'; for example, that the pascal sacrifice will be lost in the splendour of resurrection; or the church's authority will be lost in 'fraternity'. Coudreau's view is that Liégé feared a lack of discernment after the Council about modernity. He did not want the Church to become its prisoner. He thought that the filter of modernity was as bad as the scholastic filter. He did not want any philosophy to be the prism for theology. Coudreau (Lemoine 1997: 53) agrees: 'theology is the cultural expression of faith and not its philosophical expression'.

¹¹⁸ It is clear from the 1969 archives (Lemoine 1997: 64) that Liégé is disturbed by current Church conflict. He judges that whereas before the Council conflict was difficult to have at all because it was an *église-citadelle*, now in the new situation of '*une église du terrain vague*' conflict has become as if 'essential and permanent'. Liégé would prefer to see an *église fraternelle qui reinventerait un nouveau style d'autorité selon l'évangile*. He links the word *con-testari* with witness. In the New Testament it is about an irruption of lucidity against injustice or untruth; linked to Jesus Christ's witness. Liégé wants to see conflict orientated on the gospel not on an *église politique*. It is proper to fight against authority when it goes against the gospel; if its doctrine is without humanity or if it excludes the poor for example. Liégé offers a theological view of the post-68 situation: Church conflict must not be like political conflict. It will exclude violence, such as occupying churches. It will be conciliatory following the examples of Paul and Peter.

Change is another theme examined by Lemoine (1997: 65ff.) from Liégé's writings in 1970. He does not want a free-for-all credo, but he does accept pluralism. The key changes required have to do with establishing a proper role of laity and creating new structures that include but reach beyond the parish. Having 'escaped from the *citadelle*', Liégé argues for 'a polyphonic not a cacophonic church'. Spontaneity is not an adequate criterion for action. Authority cannot be abandoned, as some would like. Some use the new pluralism as an alibi for doing anything. It is not a political democracy that is to be built but a Church in which all can participate and whose key word is communion. Liégé accepts the need for local theology and for local legislation with less detail from the top; but he warns against the confusion of the essential with the accessory. It is not right to give up all interest in orthodoxy as if you only have to focus on orthopraxis; the need is still for a unity of faith centred on Christ so as to stop it being 'just bits and pieces of theology'. Faced with the volatility of post-68, Liégé holds to a big picture: politicking is acceptable under certain conditions but requires self-control and disinterest: for the Christian it is about helping the world towards charity, peace and justice: it is 'political charity' and needs to be on guard against badly motivated church politics such as trying to preserve the status of clergy.

In any case, argues Liégé, who, for example, was in public debate with R. Garaudy and J. -P. Sartre in a conference on Marxism and the human person in late 1961, the Church's priority is not to engage in in-fighting, necessary though it is to struggle with internal issues (Lemoine 1997: 69). The important priority is the struggle with atheism. Liégé now uses essentially the same arguments as before the Council though the context and vocabulary have changed with, for example, the 'death of God' school and 'Christian atheism'. Liégé emphasises the need for the Church to be as much mystical and contemplative as engaged in the world. Liégé

every Dominican was, or ever had been '*progressiste*' like Liégé (Lemoine 1997: 34). He had always had many enemies.¹²⁰ Conflict continues even after the Council.¹²¹ On the other hand Liégé was consulted on serious matters by even more bishops.¹²²

Having taught at the Institut Catholique continuously since 1950, only in 1969 was Liégé finally invited into the faculty of theology. His influence was swiftly felt. On 29th July 1970 the Dean, *M. l'abbé* Louis Gognet, died suddenly. On 24th October Liégé was elected in his place 'with a unanimity that bore witness to the confidence the Faculty had in him' (Briend 1980: 262). He became absorbed in the ecclesiastico-university world which from then on adopted him and held him in high regard. It marks a striking turn-about since the early days in 1950. Liégé was now responsible precisely for the integration of the new institutions now spawned at the *Institut Catholique* with the older ways of the theological Faculty. He was to be its last Dean. For, after three years of work at this task of integration, he was midwife to the birth, on 20th June 1973, of the UER *l'Unité d'Enseignement et de Recherche de théologie et de sciences religieuses*, of which he was elected the first Director. Cardinal Marty was later to claim that Liégé had 'saved' the Institut Catholique (de Couesnongle 1980: 35).

accepts the idea that a certain God is dead and 'we willingly go to his funeral along with the atheists' but he sees the death of God proposals as a sort of religious adolescence that has not rejected, because not discovered, the true God (Lemoine 1997: 70).

¹¹⁹ He was too idealist for some of his Dominican brothers. When he was prior of the *Couvent Saint-Jacques* in Paris, for example, from 1967-1970, with Congar under him, tensions arose: he was not always understood and his radical approach was sometimes too much for his independent-minded and not always tolerant brethren. He was too firm and too tough for many. A contemporary comments, 'It was a difficult time. You'd bump into brothers in the corridors leaving with their packed cases!' As another put it, 'it was necessary to 'save the furniture'' (Jacquemont 1999).

¹²⁰ He was, in Jossua's words to Lemoine (1997: 31), 'the target of the reactionary elements of the church and his Order before the Council'. Lemoine mentions the supportive correspondence between Congar, Chenu and Liégé. Even Ducattillon shows some awareness of this. On January 31 1956 he writes to Liégé, 'it is clear that you suffer from not being understood by the higher authorities either of the Church or of the Order'; Liégé wrote 'exact' in the margin (Lemoine 1997: 35).

¹²¹ In 1963 the complaints have to do with some teaching in Canada, though in the end, having warned him to be watchful of his teaching, the Curia come out in Liégé's favour (Lemoine 1997: 32). Even in 1965 Liégé has to be defended by the old Provincial (Fernandez) to the new one Kopf that he is in fact sound and indeed the victim of a campaign of calumnies by the French integrists. Liégé was often misunderstood or deliberately misinterpreted by French journalists, for example in 1963 he was victim of some venomous attacks and responses which Lemoine (1997: 33) quotes. On the other hand Liégé himself could attack; Lemoine mentions his assault on 'the feeble theology of certain bishops', for example, some writing on priesthood by the bishop of Orléans.

¹²² Lemoine mentions the bishop of Grenoble and, importantly, the help sought of Liégé in 1969 by Cardinal Villot in preparing the post-conciliar Synod. Cardinal Marty of Paris wanted the *Institut Catholique* and specifically the theology faculty to help prepare for the Synod in Rome on the priestly ministry. The bishop of Metz asked Liégé directly to prepare the dossier on the *ministeriel sacerdoce* (Lemoine 1997: 73) Lemoine describes Liégé's particular contribution, which shows through, though the final result was 'mixed' and in some respects is criticised by Liégé.

In these years Liégé develops an involvement at national level, with the issues of sexual ethics, abortion, divorce and remarriage and the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*.¹²³

Six years after the Council Liégé views its outcome so far as ‘half fig, half grape’; the Church is now fully engaged with the world, which is good, but all is ‘too human’ and he sees an indigence of spirituality and true prophetism (Lemoine 1997: 70). Just over six months before his death, Liégé, interviewed in *la Croix* (15th July 78) says that the Council only showed up what had already changed or was changing: it faced up to the new ideas and to new questions. It did not itself invent the questions. What is regrettable, he asserts, is that it has not been applied deeply enough and not enough effort has been made to explain it (Lemoine 1997: 70).

These years were a time of disillusion about the Church among the young. Liégé does not blame them. He blames the parents, pastors and theologians for not responding to their needs by failing to teach them to pray. He says ‘the after-Council terribly lacks spirituality, contemplative life, prayer, any mystical effort or really deep seeking after God’ (Lemoine 1997: 70). He also complains of the ecumenical state of affairs. Some rushed naively, underestimating the work; and some are defended against the openness required.

Yet Liégé remains positive, giving in 1978 for example a cycle of six conferences in Besançon on ‘the identifying traits of the religious life’ in as robust a way as ever (Lemoine 1997: 72; from Archives Dossier 23).¹²⁴

¹²³ Lemoine (1997: 56-64) details a good deal here showing how, to all these matters, Liégé brought his historical perspective, a cultural and critical perspective, a circumstantial perspective and a theological one. He paints a picture of Liégé as a man of pastoral care consulted by all and sundry.

¹²⁴ He suggests five hallmarks for authenticity: a contemplative and radical decision for God in Jesus Christ; a life of total fraternity; a school of freedom; a sense of grace and availability; an explicit witnessing to the reality of Christ and the gospel. He sees it as a manner of life for now but lived in the radical anticipation of the world to come. As ever he argues that authentic religious life can make a compelling case for itself against all arguments, except weak ones that are in fact against a false God. He emphasises poverty, chastity and obedience, all interpreted in a positive way deeply rooted in freedom. He argues that the contemporary preoccupation with freedom is naturally linked with what life in God answers more deeply: the resurrection is total freedom and so naturally to respond to it is to meet our deepest needs (cf. Gal.5.13; John 8.36). He adds that the religious life is also an apostolic witness, a sign and it is public.

Conclusion

This Chapter aimed to contextualise Liégé's life, education, ministry, academic achievements and professional involvements sufficiently to describe his theology in the next. Its separation of issues into sections was a necessary artificiality to manage the material. The Chapter could have been greatly expanded, but this introduction must suffice for present purposes.

Chapter Five: The Theology of P. -A. Liégé

Introduction

1. What Chapters 1 - 4 showed about Liégé's theology

Part One has already introduced Liégé's theological interests. What has been learned so far? The context that provides the parameters for Liégé's thought has been described: the legacy of the nineteenth century and a variety of revivals and renewals provided a fertile soil from which his theology could grow. Specifically his formation through the Saulchoir School influenced him strongly. It emphasised a rigorously historical approach; respect for different individual disciplines but to be integrated as coherent theological architecture; the living Word of God; and human experience and the life of the contemporary world and Church. Liégé's studies in Tübingen deepened his knowledge of fundamental and kerygmatic theology, salvation, ecclesiology and pastoral theology. His early teaching confirmed his interest in Revelation, the theology of faith, catechesis and evangelisation.

2. The aim of this chapter

This Chapter aims to expand on Liégé's description of these theological themes, and to outline his method, to set the context for his pastoral theology. Since this was not an add-on to his theology but grew out of it, it is important to understand what his core themes were, to note what pastoral theological questions are implicit within them and how these trigger Liégé's more developed pastoral theology (Adler 2004: 30-34).

3. The core themes of Liégé's theology

The core themes of Liégé's theology are faith, the Word of God, the theological inheritance of the Church and the life of the Church. Of course these belong together in Liégé's worldview. Yet this Chapter will separate them, better to understand each strand. Their fundamental connection, and to the theme of salvation, also briefly outlined in the Chapter, should not be forgotten.

2. The Liégé Quadrilateral ¹²⁵

All Liégé's theology can be framed within a quadrilateral whose points are labelled, *Parole de Dieu*, faith, theology and life of the Church. All Liégé's reflection takes place within the quadrilateral metaphorically described by these poles.¹²⁶ This approach shapes his assumptions and questions, and drives his passion.

John's prologue is Liégé's starting point (Liégé 1952b: 38). God acted, communicated with humans and invited us to respond (Liégé 1952b: 18). God's initiative was to come amongst us in Jesus Christ. Jesus taught and incarnated God's character and articulated the 'Good news' of God's invitation. This is no mere prophetic teaching. It unites with the events of Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, ascension and the event of Pentecost. Jesus' life and teaching are the light shining on the paschal events to reveal their divine meaning. The paschal events create reciprocity with Jesus' life and teaching to reveal its divine meaning. This dynamic is fundamental; both poles are needed (Liégé 1961a: 9).

This divine initiative is the *Parole de Dieu en acte*. It presupposes the human capacity to respond in freedom. The appropriate response is faith. To have faith is to hear this '*Parole*' and say yes to the invitation (Liégé 1961a: 9). Faith, rightly understood, is a total response of the whole person.¹²⁷ God's invitation is to give up one's self entirely to the relationship with

¹²⁵ When first studying Liégé, I gathered from Audinet that Liégé's key themes were faith, theology and the life of the Church. I called this the 'Liégé Triangle'. Jossua insisted that I should add 'Word of God' in its own right, hence the 'Liégé Quadrilateral'.

¹²⁶ In my judgement, his writing is so vital because the dynamic between them is ever-present and often explicit; there is nearly always the sense that for any single theological point to be made adequately, it must always be placed both the context of living faith and the practice of Church life.

¹²⁷ Liégé's (1946a: 10-19) understanding of discipleship begins with his understanding of baptism. The New Testament offers a 'rich sacramental symbolism' to express the 'multiple aspects' of the 'divine work of spiritual regeneration' (Tit. 3. 5-8; 1 Peter 1.3, 23) 'operating in the soul of the baptised': a new creature coming out of a sacred bath, dead to sin (Acts 2.38; Col. 3.3) and resurrected in God (Rom.6.10) (Liégé 1946a: 11). Baptised in the Holy Spirit (Acts 11.16), the Spirit takes possession of the new creature, sanctifies it (1 Cor. 6.11; 1 Peter 1.2), makes it its temple (Rom. 8.9 f.; 1Cor. 3.16; 6.19) and gives many gifts (Acts 2.38). Above all this germ of divine life (1 Peter 1. 23/ 1 John 3.9) makes it a child of God and gives it the heritage of being baptised into Christ (John 3.5). (See also Rom. 6.3f. for the baptised's participation in the redemptive mystery of death-resurrection and Gal.3. 27; Rom.5.12 f. for deliverance from Adam's sin. 1 Peter 4.3 and 1.7 point to the task of sanctification. Rom. 12.5; 1Cor. 12.13 f.; Gal.3.27-28 speak of incorporation into the unity of the body of the saints of which Christ is the head (Col. 1.18; Eph.1.22 ; 5.23, 30).) The baptised embarks on a journey of transformation, rooted in the mystery of sanctifying grace and leading to faith, hope and love (1 Cor. 13.13; Gal. 5.6). Liégé (1946a: 13)

God and subsequent collaboration with God on behalf of what Jesus called the Kingdom (Liégé 1961a: 9). It is to live filled with Christ and the Spirit, emptied of self yet joyously fulfilled in deepest personal freedom. This is neither a simple nor instantaneous matter. To say yes in faith in response to the kerygmatic message is not yet to be deeply converted. This is a lifetime process which demands one's all unto death as a daily collaboration with the Holy Spirit in responding to the circumstances of life by and in the way of Christ. Faith refers not just to initial conversion but to the lifetime journey of deep personal conversion, formation and up-building into Christ (Liégé 1961a: 13).

God's plan is that the human response of faith should occur in community context. It is not a question of individuals responding in isolation from each other (Liégé 1953b: 6,7).¹²⁸ The community of faith is presupposed and required for God's plan to be fulfilled: the Kingdom is an inherently corporate enterprise. Christian faith is inherently corporate (Liégé 1954a: 16). The revealing of God's character and purpose (the initiative of the *Parole de Dieu*) requires a community of faith. This is the Church, best understood as an eschatological sacrament (Liégé 1954a: 17). In the life of the Church, God's initiatives through the *Parole de Dieu* are lived through and worked out.

One divine gift to the Church is the language and capacity to articulate something of the initiative of the *Parole de Dieu* and the human response of faith as it occurs within the community of faith (Liégé 1961e: 176). This is the enterprise of theology, the place where God's initiative and character, God's will and grace, the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom find expression in language.

writes that the 5th Century Latran Baptistry inscription expresses this view beautifully: 'he was born for heaven, to a divine people, engendered by the fecund Spirit of these waters. Mother Church gives birth to these waves – the virginal fruit conceived by the virtue of the Spirit' - 'All earthly life is to be a progress, a growing into Christ' (1 Peter 2.2; 2 Peter 3.18). He quotes Augustine's remark that Mother Church 'each day prepares the nourishment for your souls'. The staple of this nourishment is the Eucharist (John 6.53). In sum, the properly holy catholic Christian may be portrayed thus: they are regenerated by the faith and the baptism received by the Church. They are already saved in hope and live conformed to the nature of a child of God and a member of Christ finding the vigour and their progress of their spiritual life in total dependence on the Spirit, participating in the grace-giving cult of the Church (Liégé 1946a: 19).

¹²⁸ Liégé (1953b) writes: 'The substance of the Church is truly to be the people of God' and he spells this out in terms which would have sounded a new note in 1953 but which became commonplace with the Council.

In sum, the *Parole de Dieu* invites a faith shared corporately in the Church and articulated in theology. Thus the four angles of Liégé's quadrilateral are in necessary tension with each other and belong together.

3. Liégé's Account of the *Parole de Dieu*

Liégé's interest in this notion can be gauged by his own deep study of it. He draws his understanding from the three sources of biblical scholarship, general theology and philosophy especially from ideas appearing during the 1940s. He acknowledges these sources, indeed, is concerned to make them known to the readers of *Parole et Mission*.¹²⁹ Of course Liégé's own ideas were influenced both by his Dominican formation and his studies in Germany.¹³⁰

Notwithstanding Liégé's position as an innovator at the theological frontier, his first and longest explicit writing on the *Parole de Dieu* is necessarily conservative in nature (1952b).¹³¹

Liégé argues that Christian religion, unlike naturist or cosmic religions which start from man's fear of impersonal and mysterious forces, proceeds from a benign initiative, a *Parole*, addressed by God to man (Liégé 1952b: 17). God is personal, an 'I'. In the Old Testament this manifestation is not of 'knowledge' but of a living presence at the heart of a people. It can take the form of actions rather than words as such: Isaiah 53.1 asks, 'to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?' and the answer is the prophets who interpret these actions

¹²⁹ Liégé (1958e) offers a bibliography of the most influential recent writings in German, French and English on *La Parole de Dieu*. Sixteen are from biblical scholarship, eight of which are Protestant; sixteen are from general theology of which seven are Protestant; twenty are drawn from writings on 'the ministry of the *Parole de Dieu*' and are more pastorally oriented, three Protestant, eleven German; eight are on the philosophy of the *Parole*, two of them Protestant.

¹³⁰ Aidan Nichols OP (1989: 14), writing on Congar, states, 'Congar's understanding of revelation begins from the concept of the Word of God, a tribute at once to his own Dominican and Thomistic training; to the inter-war renaissance of biblical theology; and, more obliquely, to the influence of the great 'neo-orthodox' Protestant dogmatician, Karl Barth'. Though in the bibliography referred to in the previous footnote, Liégé credits Barth (1933) with being 'the point of departure for the renewal of the theology of the *Parole de Dieu* in Protestantism and beyond', and he continues to quote from Barth right to the end e.g. Liégé (1979a: 50), Reynal shows that Liégé is more influenced by Arnold than Barth and that it is a misunderstanding to call Liégé a Barthian (Reynal 2004: 85-88 207-299).

¹³¹ Written for a major Catholic publication, Liégé contributed Chapter 1: 'To the sources of Christian faith'. It is in three sections: *Parole de Dieu* and Tradition; Scriptures and apostolic traditions, presence of the living gospel in the Church; The eyes of the Tradition.

from God's perspective for the history and life of his people. It is not words as such that God gives, rather a revelation of what he is in himself, what he is for his people and what they are to be for him. God reveals what Jeremiah calls 'the intents of his heart' (Jer. 23.20) (Liégé 1952b: 19).

For those who hear the Word it is an attack, an instruction, an efficacious revelation which expects to be accepted and which converts. It is a word that knows it is to be welcomed (Liégé 1952b: 19).¹³² Henceforth the *Parole* is the reality of Christ as the definitive revelation of God's plan and its fulfilment: revelation is closed (Hebrews 1. 1, 2).¹³³ The Church announces Christ in eschatological context, waiting for the final fulfilment. Doctrine arises from this but verities about God are secondary to someone being seized by the Person of God, the living God (Liégé 1952b: 21). In the New Testament, even more than the Old, the *Parole* is affirmed as sovereign, powerful and effective for all who welcome it in faith. To believe the *Parole* and guard it in your heart is already to have interiorised it to the point of being incorporated into the mystery of Christ (Liégé 1952b: 21).¹³⁴ The action of the Church fails to express the *Parole*. So where is the *Parole* to be found? It is an ever-present reality inhabiting the situation in which man seeks to find ultimate meaning (Liégé 1952b: 22).¹³⁵ The content of faith remains the same but has to be transmitted. So a Tradition develops. The *Parole* is found in Tradition. But this easily becomes habit, conformity, too static and too passive, always something to be condemned as degraded. The authentic Tradition is found

¹³² He quotes Isaiah 55. 10-11 to illustrate the point: 'For as the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return but water the earth making it bring forth and bud and gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth. It will not return to me void but will accomplish what I please and prosper in whatsoever it was intended to achieve'.

¹³³ Liégé preliminary general conclusion is that the *Parole de Dieu*, 'this word on which we Christians have staked our life and our death', is found 'in the living and present Tradition which constitutes the realistic consciousness (*la conscience réaliste*). He supports this point with about twenty New Testament references (Liégé 1952b: 20).

¹³⁴ Important texts to illustrate are 1 Thess. 2.13; Heb.4.12; Acts19.20.

¹³⁵ There is a strongly philosophical feel to this writing showing Liégé's Dominican formation. It abounds with distinctions, such as that between what is affirmed and what is formulated (Liégé 1952b: 37). Liégé evokes a sense of the whole Tradition He quotes Augustine as if still alive. He reminds readers of 11th, 12th and 20th century heresies resisted by the Church. He quotes Vatican 1 documents, themselves full of quotations, for example, from St Vincent of Lérins (5th century). He conveys a strong sense of faith as a unity. It is innocent of cultural relativity and ancient writings are not contextualised. The framework is timeless: God chose the Jews and communicated with them, came himself in Jesus, sent the Holy Spirit, inspired the scriptures and founded a Church to proclaim this gospel till the *eschaton*. This is not one perspective among many but final truth.

when the living Church is faithful to the love of Christ (Liégé 1952b: 23).¹³⁶ There is a subjective aspect to the *Parole* – the power to recognise and affirm it; and an objective aspect, its content. What is this? Liégé (1952b: 27) takes as definitive a key text from Trent (4th session, 8 April, 1546).¹³⁷ Scriptures and the apostolic traditions are judged in the light of the living Tradition (Liégé 1952b: 25).¹³⁸ Elsewhere he writes:

In the beginning was the glory of God and at the end of time will be the eternal community of glory, in Jesus Christ. This Church God has aroused in history by inserting himself into history and so manifesting his glory, by his Word and by his Son. It was the Word which was the ‘sure promise’ of the old Covenant affirmed in Leviticus 26, ‘I will be your God and you will be my people’ (Liégé 1953b: 7).

¹³⁶ Liégé illustrates this from Irenaeus, ‘*non per litteras tradita, sed per vivam vocem*’. He mentions Möhler of Tübingen from a German Romantic perspective and Cardinal Franzelin in Rome and a very different milieu as others, this time from the 19th century, who see ‘the notion of a living Tradition as the present source of the faith of the *Parole de Dieu*’ (Liégé 1952b: 25). Finally he mentions Blondel with reference to his philosophy of action.

¹³⁷ This points to Scripture. It claims that the *Parole de Dieu* is expressed in unwritten traditions such as cult, or practices founded by Jesus or the Apostles under the inspiration (*la dictée*) of the Holy Spirit and then faithfully transmitted in the life of the church since its origins. This applies when it is a question of essential matters of faith and customs, like the sacraments, not to ecclesiastical fashions.

¹³⁸ Are these *complementary* (Liégé’s italics) to the *Parole* or is Scripture the whole *Parole*? If the mystery of Christ is thought of as a living entirety (*un tout vivant*) and not as a collection of principles to believe and practice then the apostolic preaching captured the whole of the mystery, as the Fathers understood; the mystery always being interpreted within the church. So when the Church establishes a new dogma, it is implicit in the Tradition, as is the case with Pious 12th’s definition of the assumption of Mary. Accurate and faithful guardianship of true interpretation of the *Parole* is guaranteed by the infallibility of the Roman Church which Liégé (1952b: 30-44) supports with quotes from Vatican 1. Liégé presents this ‘traditional’ Catholic teaching in a sympathetic way. It exudes Catholic loyalty but remains humane and warm, always apologetically steering clear of and denying the juridical aspects, explaining why they appear juridical but are not. Liégé is not here writing with his own inspiring voice, just explaining the tradition as a teacher. Nevertheless he owns what he is writing and frequently expresses himself with his inimitable passion. It is easy to imagine a Chapter on this subject being written with a much stronger dogmatic feel both more dryly and coldly.

‘The historic Church of Christ, the anticipation of his eternal Kingdom, begins with the Word’ but ‘the apostolic Word is not however the first gift of God’ (Liégé 1953b: 13). Liégé argues there is a way to understand those who still wait for the Word as already having ‘a link with the world of salvation’. But for those called by it, the *Parole*, a ‘judgement of Christ’ is a seed, to be received into the depth of the heart (Liégé 1953b: 12, 13). The Church has the apostolic *Parole* for its primordial sacrament, whereas the ‘interior *Parole*’ is the presence of grace and power in the Church and constitutes its ‘spiritual being and its life’ (Liégé 1953b: 13).

Liégé treats the theme of the *Parole de Dieu* in eight other writings up to 1961 (Liégé 1952a; Liégé 1954b; Liégé 1954c; Liégé 1955a; Liégé 1955b; Liégé 1957d; Liégé 1957e; Liégé 1961a; Liégé 1961e). In the last of these he describes the *Parole de Dieu* as ‘act of God’ (Liégé 1961e: 170). Drawing from Deutero-Isaiah, St John and Saint Paul he identifies the *Parole* as ‘fundamentally the revealing act of God’ (Liégé 1961e: 170).¹³⁹ He asserts that this act of the *Parole* ‘engages the whole personality of God living in his revelatory intention’. He continues:

According to the realism of the term ‘*Dabar*’, it is God himself who is pushed forward to be made present in history and there to constitute his interlocutor. Our anthropological distinctions between heart, spirit or action cannot be applied to the Act of the *Parole de Dieu* without a loss to its totality. This is why the *Parole de Dieu* is both noetic and dynamic; revealing consciousness/conscience and creative love, light, power and judgement. The classic definition of Revelation, ‘*locutio Dei ad homines per modum Magisterii*’ shows really well the impoverished state to which the notion of the *Parole de Dieu* has sometimes been reduced. Isaiah put it very much better: [and he quotes Isaiah 55. 10-12 in full] (Liégé 1961e: 170-171). This is why the Act of the *Parole de Dieu* reveals the whole picture of God’s glory and living personality: God at the heart of His will and His action in human history which also becomes holy History and Kingdom. And as the divine design is revealed with intensity so also the Face of God is unveiled (Liégé 1961e: 171).

¹³⁹ Dominating and summing up all the *Parole*’s immanent manifestations in history, it is ‘the Act (Liégé’s capital) by which God decides to make himself present in history in an intention of glory’ (Liégé 1961e: 170). This is what Ephesians 1 calls the pre-existence of the mystery hidden in God even before creation. Liégé continues, ‘when we affirm that the formal ground of faith is God’s own self-revelation we mean that the believer is found by grace in communion with the transcendent act of the *Parole de Dieu* in accordance with the *Parole*’s historic manifestations.’ He wants to distinguish the strong sense of ‘*Parole de Dieu*’ (Liégé’s italics) from the ‘*paroles sur Dieu*’ (Liégé’s italics) authenticated by God’ (Liégé 1961e: 170).

Having considered the *Parole* as Act, Liégé now turns to its manifestations: the transcendent Act of the *Parole* is only accessible to us by its immanence in the diverse historical manifestations that constitute revealed History (Liégé's capital) (Liégé 1961e: 171).¹⁴⁰

Liégé next turns to Jesus Christ as the plenitude of the *Parole de Dieu*.¹⁴¹ Liégé (1961e: 171-173) makes four points: In his action and preaching Jesus fulfils the prophetic signs of God's coming into history (Mark 1.15). Second, by his Resurrection Jesus revealed definitively and fully the intention of God's glory signifying human destiny and the divine power unto eternal life. As in the Old Testament the *Parole de Dieu* is manifested in an Event pregnant with revelation. But it is a personal event of which Jesus Christ is the subject and of which the divine meaning is announced by Him. Paul put the Resurrection at the heart of his kerygma and Liégé quotes Col 1.25-28 in full as well as Acts 20. 28. Thirdly, the *Parole de Dieu* which is Jesus Christ in his paschal Humanity has a universal significance, the start of an accomplishment in humanity. Henceforth revelation expands to more people but is not improved on or made more explicit in history. Pentecost is encompassed in the Event which is the *Parole* of Jesus Christ. Liégé quotes Rev. 14.6 and Rev. 15.3. Fourthly, in Jesus Christ human awareness is shown, to the limit of what is possible here on earth, the mystery of God himself. Jesus shows this in his manifestations of glory, his person, his works, his words and by his Pasche. He is the *Verbe*, the Logos, the substantial Prophet, no longer merely an intermediary. He is the eternal Witness to God's plan and the nature of God's deity. Liégé quotes John 3. 31-35. As a consequence of this personal identification of Jesus with the *Parole de Dieu*, the Father constitutes him as the Judge of the living and the dead. The *Parole*,

¹⁴⁰ He has three points to make (Liégé 1961e: 171): The *Parole de Dieu*, total and perfect in its divine source, has taken the form of multiple and progressive interventions, united by a their single revelatory intention. Secondly, these manifestations take the form of events and of conscious content: '*God speaks by acting; He acts by speaking*' (Liégé's italics). 'He is expressed as a Person is expressed in concrete communion which is not limited to the mediation of explicit ideas. He is unveiled in the historical awareness of a community and by means of events the content of whose revelation and meaning it was the responsibility of the prophets to make explicit.' Thirdly, 'revelation progresses without doubt in so far as the *Parole de Dieu* finds itself more engaged in the divine manifestations, making clear the meaning of sacred History.' But not every manifestation necessarily adds something new: 'God speaks even when He repeats Himself!'

¹⁴¹ It is by and in Jesus that the plenary Act of the *Parole de Dieu* is identified in sacred History: 'The revelatory interventions of God in the Old Testament do not equal the revealed intention itself' (Liégé 1961e: 171-172). Prophets are not to be identified with the divine spirit which inspired them. In the revealing Event of Christ, however, the manifestation of the *Parole de Dieu* will achieve its plenitude, summing up in order to pass beyond all that the Old Testament revealed (Hebrews 1. 1-3).

at the same time as being present in history, calling it forth and opening it up, is also its judge (Liégé 1961e: 171-173).

The *Parole de Dieu* in the Church is treated next: Since Christ is the plenitude of the *Parole de Dieu*, there is no further Revelation after the apostolic age; the apostles being the last 'prophets'. They were charged with expounding the full meaning of the *Parole de Dieu* in the Event of Christ drawing from Jesus' words and the charism of Pentecost. God continues to speak in and through the apostolic Church but Revelation is now Tradition.¹⁴²

Liégé quotes Acts 6.4 to underscore the importance of the ministry of the *parole* as the expression of the proclaimed *Parole*. This is more than a noetic proclamation because set in the context of signs (Liégé 1961e: 174). Liégé quotes Romans 10.17 and 8-10 to emphasise the rich sense of *Parole*. Liégé quotes Acts 12.24; Romans 1.16; 1 Cor. 4.15; 1 Thess 2.13 and Acts 14.8-19: The *Parole de Dieu* starts with its transcendent act, passes through its historic manifestations and reaches imminence in the believer's heart (Liégé 1961e: 174-175). He argues that the act of the church's ministry of the word lies between the Act of the *Parole de Dieu* which announces the mystery of Christ and the act of faith by which the believer glorifies the *Parole* of the Lord (Acts 13.48) (Liégé 1961e: 176). From the human viewpoint this is a process of the heart's total conversion to the living God, His coming recognised, call heard and *Parole* received (Hebrews 11; Romans 4.17) (Liégé 1961e: 176). The *Parole* which calls to faith necessarily possesses a revealed content (Liégé 1961e: 177, 178).¹⁴³

¹⁴² The Holy Spirit actualises the *Parole* through the Church as it guards the living, precise and active memory of Christ in his personal mystery and human communication. The living Tradition enables the Church's continuing prophetic ministry, not just a memory and a *magisterium*, but all the presence and saving power of the *Parole* in Christ and humanity. How is this expressed in the Church and world's daily life? If the full meaning of '*Parole*' is maintained then '*all that expresses the presence of God in Jesus Christ in the Church is derived of the Parole de Dieu*' (Liégé's italics): the proclamation of the Message, signs of grace, celebration of the sacraments and the reading of Scriptures. The whole Church is *Parole de Dieu* in that all it expresses has to do with what Jesus Christ is for it and does in it (Liégé 1961e: 173-174).

¹⁴³ God says, 'I am the living God. I give you Life if you accept Glory from me alone and recognise Jesus Christ as Lord'. The believer says, 'I place my life in your hands because you are the living God. You will reign over my life and I will collaborate towards your Glory' (Liégé 1961e: 177). From here faith ripens into communion as the believer deepens their felt knowledge of the *Parole*'s richness as humanly translated into Tradition, Pentecost continued. It is the progression the Council of Orange called from the *initium fidei* to the *augmentum fidei*. These are not to be understood as successive states, rather as dialectical elements of Christian faith, always founded on the *Parole*, indissociably dynamic and noetic. It is more than accepting beliefs or the *Parole*'s role could be reduced to 'teaching'. Rather it arouses an incessant conversion and an awareness of communion, connecting the Act of the divine *Parole* with a richly responsive faith; the dynamic aspect of the

Liégé's innovative theology of the Word provoked some opposition, notably from Strasbourg's Antoine Chevasse.¹⁴⁴

4. Liégé as a theologian of faith

1. Introduction – what this section aims to do

Liégé criticised his church's understanding and practice of faith. This section explains his views and vision of authentic faith, what is needed for its nurture throughout life, and its implications for a disciple. Finally, it briefly assesses Liégé's contribution to the theology of faith.

2. Placing Liégé in context as a theologian of faith: problems and issues about faith in the church of his day

Faith was not a marginal topic for Liégé. His theology of faith made him famous as a young theologian (Reynal 2004: 250). Rooted in fundamental theology, he developed it with an originality of vocabulary, for example 'implicit faith', 'faith-conversion' and 'adult faith'. These roused strong reactions (Reynal 2004: 270-275; 283-288; 294-298).¹⁴⁵ Emphasising the *Parole*, it portrays an incremental development from 'the mystery of the *Parole*' to 'the ministry of the *Parole*' leading to a catechetical theology from which his mature pastoral theology emerges (Reynal 2004: 251).

Parole arousing faith as conversion (Hebrews 4.12) and the noetic aspect nourishing faith as communion, illumination and wisdom (Ephesians 1.17) (Liégé 1961e: 177-178).

¹⁴⁴ Reynal (2004: 294-297) describes the controversy in some detail.

¹⁴⁵ Liégé distinguishes between notions of 'the faith of conversion' (*la foi-conversion*) and 'adult faith' (*la foi adulte* – later *la foi d'adulte*). Reynal hypothesises that Liégé's phrase is used in *Gaudium et spes* (Reynal 2004: 283f.). Reynal (2004: 289) sees Liégé's theology of faith as developed 'at the crossroads of apologetics and fundamental theology'. It sees faith as able to be developed from an embryonic faith (*foi-embryonnaire*) through the requisite steps to faith in its fullness (*la foi plénière*). It is a 'dynamic conception of faith', seen as 'event in the life of man' (Reynal 2004: 289). It is a vision of faith that 'determines that pastoral practice conceives itself as the history of the Word of God in the Church and in the World' (Reynal 2004: 289). It presupposes a theology of revelation.

Liégé's theology of faith is primarily forged in: Liégé (1946; 1952b; 1952c; 1953a; 1954d; 1959; 1960a; 1961c; 1961e; 1962d; 1968b; 1966 emacas course). His primary writings on the necessity and possibility of developing an adult faith are: Liégé (1952d; 1953b; 1955c; 1955d; 1956; 1957d; 1958b; 1958c; 1960a; 1961c; 1961f.)

His primary writings on how church congregations are to evangelise in their situations are Liégé (1975; 1979).



For Liégé doctrine was not a catalogue of truths. Faith is a relationship with Christ 'englobed' in a spiritual act and total gift, person to person, more rich than just 'holding something to be true' (Lemoine 1997: 19). Liégé's critique was that religion had drowned faith. He makes the same distinction that Barth classically made between faith and religion (Lemoine 1997: 20). For Liégé God's speaking made Christianity original.¹⁴⁶

What does Liégé mean by 'faith', since clearly for him it mattered above all else?¹⁴⁷ He explicitly distinguishes it from 'religion' (Liégé 1965a; English translation 1965b). He defines religion as 'the living relationship which man sets up with the divine' (Liégé 1965b: 432). It addresses four religious needs: security, the experience of the numinous, to pay homage, and mysticism:

Religion is a movement from men in the direction of the divine; faith (both Jewish and Christian) starts from God. For there is no faith that is not based on the Word of God addressed to men in the course of history and recognized by them. The believer sends back to God his Word after he has recognized in the Gospel an Event of universal significance which is a challenge and summons to the whole of man (Liégé 1965b: 435).

He continues:

Faith, which is determined by God himself in the actions of his Word, is directly presented as an enlistment in a personal dialogue with a God who has identified himself in the Event in which he is revealed. It is born in the heart of man; that is to say, primarily in the dynamism of his moral conscience and his liberty, involving his whole personality; it does not take its origin in the obscure needs of man in search of the divine.

In faith, the believer is not concerned with trying to bring the divine nearer to him by means of intermediaries or of rites, nor with examining the signs of nature like the religious man. For God himself has raised up one only (*sic*) intermediary who is at the same time the only complete sign of his presence and his plan: Jesus Christ in whom God has become close to us and has entered into human history.

¹⁴⁶ This is in opposition to Vatican 1 which had spoken of belief as adhering to Revelation because it revealed God's authority. Vatican II, as Liégé from the 1940s, will emphasise that it is because of the Word of God that humans can be called to faith (Lemoine 1997: 20). Lemoine sees Liégé as influenced by Otto and his *mysterium tremendum*. He gives no direct evidence for this.

¹⁴⁷ In later life, at the time when his colleague, Audinet (2001) went to the Sorbonne to take a sociology doctorate to give himself enhanced human science knowledge, Liégé remarked to him, of Audinet's concern that theology needed this equipment, 'what does it matter, as long as you have faith?'

In the same way, by faith, the personal history of the believer is inserted into a sacred history so that he may collaborate in the Creator's plan brought to fruition. Anthropology and cosmology find themselves caught up in a 'religious' dependence. Whereas the religious man searched gropingly for the link between transcendence and immanence, the believer escapes from the uncertainty of false ideas of transcendence and immanence.

Through faith, the relationship between the creature and God is interpreted anew from above, in the setting of a covenant, in which the ultimate meaning of this world becomes clear. The religious man, on the contrary, was more often than not reduced to attributing intentions to God, to forming an image of God which was made to his own image, or to the image of earthly realities.

Faith is unique and universal, as the God who calls us to faith is unique, as the Event of his coming is unique, as his covenant is unique. Its force does not consist in the way it corresponds with some particular situation of a group of men, as is often the case with religion, but rather in the power it has to give meaning to all human reality by reason of the Event of the coming of Christ.

Faith does not divide human reality into two parts: the sacred on the one hand and the profane on the other. God is surely not interested in the sacred only, nor is the sacred merely a privileged area of human existence. For, by virtue of the Gospel, everything human which is capable of entering into a dialogue with God is sacred, everything that can become part of sacred history is sacred: therefore, first and foremost in the category of the sacred must be placed the achievements of human liberty. These few points of comparison are sufficient to show that beyond the identity of a relationship between man and God, faith introduces a radically new element into the world of religion, even in the case of religion of homage and possession. Its *raison d'être* is the personal initiative of God in the history of the Gospel (Liégé 1965b: 435-436).

Faith's task is 'continual evangelization of religion, a continual encouragement to aim at the conversion preached by the Gospel' (Liégé 1965b: 437). Faith enables the discovery of what is authentic in religion, namely 'the dependence of the creature on God, rites and gestures that express the dependence, and the call to a liberation' (Liégé 1965b: 437). It is faith's task, for example, to ensure the sacraments are expressed as Covenant signs celebrated by the believing community commemorating Gospel events, not mere elements of a religious cult.

3. What was Liégé's vision of authentic faith?

Liégé (1956b: 1382) describes faith as a rupture, a passionately made decision, a risk, a welcome. God speaks. Humans respond in faith. Without God's initiative there could be no

faith. From Jesus Christ and the events of Easter and Pentecost, 'these arose a movement of life and spiritual renewal, a revolutionary universe within the order of human existence' (Liégé 1961a: 9). 'The Christian movement: a before and after in the story of the deep issues of humankind. A decisive step upwards, a leap towards infinity from the world of human lives' (Liégé 1961a: 9):

To become a Christian is to enter into this movement with every human potentiality, to allow its indwelling, to be directed by its energy, to be subject to its dynamism. And after that life is not what it was before. For this movement is a divine creation, God's bringing about his ultimate purpose, already in view when God first created (Liégé 1961a: 9).

Liégé (1953a) presents a formal account of faith for an important encyclopedia:¹⁴⁸ Faith, with fraternal love, expresses the reality of Christian existence; life eternal anticipated within time. It is a beginning, an achievement (*achèvement*), an inaugural act and the mode of being of a believer. There has been a debilitating Protestant-Catholic conflict between the faith of conversion and dogmatic faith, as if one were superior:

Have not we all been disappointed to read a classic exposition of faith which completely lacked the religious density either of Scripture or the believer's own experience? Despite the fact that it is supposed to be a matter of expressing a primordial and personal relationship with the living God, theology has been intellectualised, objectified and made abstract. On the other hand there are examples of people who, helped by modern religious philosophers, have discovered a faith of conversion which they find hard to match with the official Catholic Credo (Liégé 1953a: 469).¹⁴⁹

Liégé writes about faith successively as conversion, justification, illumination and penetration of the Christian mystery.

What happens on conversion? Before it, success and solutions are sought by personal endeavour. Conversion changes this. God intervenes, saying, 'Give me your whole life, your joy, pain, loves, relationships, effort, creativity, body, spirit, tragedies and death. I will give you a life which encompasses and infinitely surpasses your own efforts, a life that passes

¹⁴⁸ The account appears in two different volumes (1952b; 1953a). Kerr (1997) points to the importance of the new scholarly encyclopedias which started to appear from 1903 building on the opening up of patristic texts by Migne (1800-75) and built on by Daniélou and de Lubac.

¹⁴⁹ Note the almost Romantic tone. Kerr (2007: 15) refers to the Tübingen School as 'Romantic'.

beyond death and all bodily limitations. I will design your destiny which you will accomplish by faithful collaboration' (Liégé 1953a: 470). The convert accepts, not from weakness or fear, but because God offers more strength and vitality than comes with living autonomously.

Liégé's account of faith (1953a: 470-472) is biblically rooted, starting with Abraham's faith.¹⁵⁰ He emphasises the Hebrew root '*haman*' evoking the attitude of an infant carried in its mother's arms. 'Amen' shares this root, a cry of faith as sure, solid and true.¹⁵¹ Faith is founded on the Event Jesus Christ because through this God realised his promise to be God for the whole world.¹⁵² Liégé sees faith as personal engagement of the whole person made in freedom. It is not a risk in the sense of a bet, but in the sense that trust is placed in a promise of life which depends on God alone (Luke 9.24). Self-sufficiency is abdicated. Belief stems from the heart in the biblical sense, the centre of the personality, the seat of responsibility, engagement and destiny as pointed to in the parable of the sower (Luke 8.5-16). The *Parole* is an exterior announcement and a call (Rom 1.5-6), with power to stir both heart and mind (Acts 16.14). John speaks of an interior witness to the recognition of Christ which does not

¹⁵⁰ He quotes Romans 4.16-26 in full and mentions Hebrews 11. Abraham is the father of believers, but faith which is the gift, in the Holy Spirit, of the definitive covenant goes beyond this. The Christian is justified in the resurrection of Christ (Rom. 4.25) thus in the mystery of Christ. In conversion this mystery lives in him exteriorly, now Christ dwells in him (Eph. 3.16-17) interiorly (he gives further references). The believer possesses this within him by the power of the Spirit, which assimilates him to the Lord. It is not that he is the 'proprietor' of this indwelling but its stability is guaranteed by God's faithfulness to his Covenant. This gift and this presence Scripture calls faith. It happens in the heart, conscious centre of the personality. In modern theological vocabulary we tend to speak of grace, either sanctifying or habitual, to express this being rooted into the divine Reality. We reserve the term faith to denote the first of these powers, these *vertus theologales*, that is, the new existence in Christ. Scripture however guards a 'climate of totality'.

¹⁵¹ He quotes Isaiah (7.9), 'If you do not rely on me you have nothing solid to support you and refers to the image of God as Rock (Liégé 1953a: 471). In confiding all to God 'the rock' the believer becomes stable and assured. Abraham did not yet know to what extent the God he trusted was the Living and Faithful God. Only after the Resurrection can we know just how to the letter God fulfilled his promise to Abraham by giving us life eternal (Liégé 1953a: 471).

¹⁵² As St Paul wrote, 'if we do not evangelise, how will they believe?' To evangelise is to bring people round to the design of salvation shown by the *Parole*, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a message of joy, decisive for all destiny. It is necessary to take sides: either to recognise that Jesus comes from God and that his Event gives a divine meaning to human history, or to refuse to see any transcendence there. But how could God have more evidently made known his design for love and life to man? Mark 1.15 puts it succinctly, 'The times are accomplished - the Kingdom of God is here - convert yourselves and believe the Gospel'. Hence Paul builds his preaching on the resurrection (1 Cor. 15.14-15; Rom. 10. 8-11). Jesus himself says 'I am the resurrection and the life' (Jn. 11.25-26) (Liégé 1953a: 472).

interfere with human freedom.¹⁵³ At the conversion stage (1 Peter 1.21), the convert is joining with Christ as hope for eternal life.¹⁵⁴ Baptism ‘fulfils and opens out the work of justification’ (Liégé 1953a: 475). Faith and baptism are two modes of one incorporation into Christ. In baptism the convert is joined to the community of faith, hence the term ‘sacrament of faith’.¹⁵⁵

Liégé (1953a: 488f.) distinguishes between the faith of conversion and the faith of contemplation. Typically, he does this in the context of worship, drawing from the Missal, in the postcommunion prayer for the Vigil of Epiphany. This prayer helps him explain the move from faith of conversion to the virtue (*vertu*) of faith. It speaks of recognizing the Saviour as faith of conversion, and of apprehending it in Truth as the faith of contemplation. St Paul intimately links faith, hope and charity. But intellectual faith is important for theological integrity and is neatly defined by the Vatican Council (1789).¹⁵⁶ Without the

¹⁵³ Refuse and it is your own will; accept and it is grace (1 Thess. 2.13, 14). The Church has strongly maintained against the semi-Pelagians that the act of conversion is principally the work of the Holy Spirit. Liégé quotes twenty-one lines from the Second Council of Orange (529) to support this (Liégé 1953a: 473).

¹⁵⁴ Faith is, as the Council of Trent has it, ‘*fundamentum et radix omnis justificationis*’, *omnis* indicating it is not just a question of the first instant of justification. When the convert wholly gives himself to God in Christ, so God starts to realise his promise to the believer to render him just, implying purification and new life, a state of friendship with God, a stable gift of the Holy Spirit (Rom 5.1-2). By the same power that filled the life of Jesus with the Spirit of God and resurrected him, so the believer has become a participant in the Mystery of Christ ‘in interior solidarity with the risen life of the Lord’. Faith has introduced him into a new existence and a new world.

¹⁵⁵ Liégé asserts that the Church stands against all fideisms. He quotes eighteen lines of the Vatican Council of 1813 to support this. This is of particular interest given Daniélou’s gibe quoted above and Kerr (2007: 22-23). Liégé continues that the Church neither wishes to sacrifice the mysticism of faith to its humanism nor *vice versa* because the manifestation of the living God took place in a social form in history. The substance of faith is a matter of direct dialogue between the believer and God but not apart from the historical event of revelation. How could transcendental meaning be attributed to the event of Jesus Christ if were not a historical reality? But this attested historical reality neither constitutes the object nor the motive of the act of faith. It is only a condition of it. ‘Anathema’, says the Vatican Council (1814), ‘to the one who claims that assent to Christian faith is necessarily produced by the arguments of human reason’. John 20. 30-31 states Jesus did many signs and this Gospel shows ‘how careful Jesus was to accompany his preaching with signs’ (Jn.10.37-38; Acts 2.22) (Liégé 1953a: 477). Conversions happened around these signs. Throughout the Bible, God joins His *Parole* to signs (Heb. 2.4; 1Thess 1.5). A sign is an action or event, able to be experienced in the senses but charged with an intentionality; possessing, beyond its empirical status but in liaison with it, a second intelligibility pointing to an other and spiritual reality not immediately visible. Those who know how to decode it in depth will understand this meaning. All modes of human expression such as interpersonal relations, philosophy and language draw on the use of signs. So it is not surprising God does the same. Their role is to show that it is indeed God who speaks (John 3.2). Liégé links faith to signs as was fashionable in the Biblical Theology movement. See Lambourne (1963) for the same approach.

¹⁵⁶ Liégé quotes the relevant passage.

constant dimension of conversion, intellectual faith always runs the risk of becoming a purely formal orthodoxy.¹⁵⁷

All faith is in Jesus Christ: to affirm one aspect is always to affirm Him. Faith's mysteries are not like successive rings on a chain you add on. They are more like the efflorescence of a single bud, or the spectrum of colours within the refraction of light. There is only one mystery, an organic mystery integrating the *Parole de Dieu* into the unity of a living logic perceived profoundly by the believer. All aspects do not have the same importance. The hierarchy is determined by reference to the central Mystery of Jesus Christ. The believer sees and judges everything from this point of view. Nothing is truly profane because everything is promised a glorious summation in Jesus Christ (Eph.1.9-1; Col.1.20). As we successively see clouds then sunshine so the believer unites faith and human history. In Jesus Christ the human world and God's world are one. Faith does not discern God 'in himself but catechesis unfolds in stages; kerygma first, then further catechesis, developing organically' (Liégé 1953a: 492).¹⁵⁸

This unity does not mean the Credo's detail is unimportant. The rule of faith is needed. The church has always believed that one of its primordial tasks was to maintain the objective integrity of the doctrine contained in the *Parole de Dieu*. The Holy Spirit's task is to facilitate the interiorisation of the believer's faith; but the church's task is to guard the language of faith with precision.¹⁵⁹ Liégé goes on to revisit the role of the church *vis à vis* the *Parole* and frames this in a distinctly Liégé perspective by saying that it is acts of God not objectives concerning these actions that matter, for example, that Jesus Christ was made man not just 'the incarnation' as a notion. Catholic doctrine and philosophy are needed, however, to keep faith claims defended from fashionable philosophies, hence the need for papal encyclicals.

Liégé (1953a: 495-500) next considers the knowledge of faith, starting with faith as *vertu theologale*. He asserts that it is a matter of great importance to grasp what is meant by the term

¹⁵⁷ The world of faith comprises all that contains the object of faith (or material object in Scholastic terms).

¹⁵⁸ Liégé quotes Hebrews and Eusebius about the distinctions to be made here, and the difference between laity, concerned with matters of kerygma, and priesthood, concerned with catechesis.

¹⁵⁹ Liégé (1953a: 493) cites Gal.1.8 and Jesus' attributed words in Revelation 22.18-20 and six other references.

vertu theologale; not less than the active power, endowed to the believer, to act in communion with the living God. Revelation has to connect with the believer's interior world.¹⁶⁰

Next, faith is considered as knowledge of adhesion, of union, clinging or cleaving to. Conversion is continuous as the believer avidly seeks union with the love of Christ. Adhesion brings certitude, though not psychological certitude which can disappear.¹⁶¹ Faith is also knowledge of interiority. Liégé (1953a: 496-500) writes lyrically but concretely about the interior implications of faith, quoting abundantly from Scripture to extrapolate spiritual insights pointing to the practicality and glory of the life of faith.

4. Liégé's understanding of what faith needs for nurture and growth

Faith requires nurture through the phases of growing up. Liégé (1953a: 500-503) discusses the development of faith through childhood and adolescence. Only adult faith can be fully mature, but each earlier stage must be worked through. The child's faith seeks protection and lives in dependence but can see the invisible and symbolic, important to faith. In adolescence the need is for autonomy, exuberance, introspection and rationalism.¹⁶² Christ must be chosen freely. The faith of an aware adult tempers the easy optimism and humanism of youthful faith. It is one with human reality. It knows death; and experiences the tragedy at the heart of personal existence. It knows sin, so is more aware of what it means to accept a destiny with Christ in faith. It is not defensively preoccupied needing protection. Great peace accompanies a reality-accepting adult's faith. All life is lived with reference to Christ (Phil.3.7-10). As faith matures, it is more impregnated with hope and fidelity. The believer begins to be conformed to the Beatitudes; apostolic action deepens, becoming less dynamic, more radiant. Crises of faith for the adult will not be fatal if they are understood as crises of growth.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ He cites 1 Thess.2.13 and six references from Matthew, John and Paul.

¹⁶¹ He supports this with quotes from Thérèse of Lisieux, Newman and Hebrews 11.1.

¹⁶² The exuberance needs to grasp that the glory of God is a human fully alive. The introspection needs connecting with the personalisation and interiorisation of faith. The tendency to rationalism is easily overcome by showing that faith is about a relationship rather than accepting abstract enigmas.

¹⁶³ Sometimes God's action transcends these stages, as with St Theresa of Lisieux.

In a final section Liégé (1953a: 503ff.) examines attitudes contrary to faith; either the refusal to embrace it (incredulity) or defection (apostasy or heresy) or incoherence (formalism of belief). Incredulity, unbelief and unfaithfulness are closely related words. Faith can simply be refused, as in the dialectic presented in John between light and dark. Some refuse to believe for the same reasons that others are drawn to believe. Since one believes with the heart, it is insufficient faith or a poor moral disposition that leads people towards agnosticism, scepticism or dilettantism, unless it be an inherited intellectual malady, cf. 2 Cor. 4.3-4. Incredulity is affirmed in the face of Jesus Christ, and is rare in someone who understands the meaning of the signs around Him unless pride, sensual enclosure, or dishonesty causes permanent incredulity. This sin is grave and there is judgement for those who do not open their hearts.¹⁶⁴ Institutional warnings are needed, but faithful witness is preferable to coercive proselytisation. Credulity and apostasy are common and always to be deplored but often result from bad preaching. Liégé's personal condemnation is of formalism: It is a sick faith that has lost its luminosity and become abstract (Rom. 13.9-10; Gal. 5.6; Rom. 1.17).

Liégé (1953a: 513-514) concludes that faith must live and deepen, first, by prayer, a vital partner to penetrate, unify and root faith in fervour; then, by study of the *Parole* in scripture and church-life. Thirdly, in a continuous process of integration by whatever means possible to deepen the intensity of faith (1 Jn. 5.4). Beware seeing faith as either obedience or immanentism, a flowering of what was always there.

Clearly there is the deepest possible connection for Liégé between faith, grace, conversion and holiness. Faith implies the others. Christian life is, as for the first Christians, 'the divine adventure of advancement and growth, first lived by Jesus'; we must 'freely consent to God's call and enter into the movement of Christian grace' (Liégé 1961a: 9). It does not immediately transform existence, but is a fundamental renewal offering a solid hope (1 Peter. 2-10). Liégé liked to quote Bernanos, 'Holiness is an adventure, even the only adventure'. He goes on, 'To live as a Christian is to put one's existence into the ownership of Christian grace, so that it may be vivified by it: it is to enter the universe which is the fulfilment of creation' (Liégé 1961a: 11). Holiness is gained over a lifetime as we shape our eternal destiny

¹⁶⁴ Liégé (1953a: 504-505) cites seven biblical references to support this.

in co-operation with God. 'For a baptised person never to have wished to become holy would be a serious matter'. 'Jesus Christ lives in them [the baptised], adding their lives to his.... Divine vitality and energy is transferred from Jesus Christ to them and in them the grace of Christian revelation is active' (Liégé 1961a: 13). 'The incomparable value of faith lies in the fact that it brings one into communion of mind with God and the universe of his Word in Jesus Christ' (Liégé 1961a: 20). This is not a possession but an increasing assimilation:

Christian faith gives a meaning, a general direction to all human experience: a vision of the world and of destiny. It respects each realm of knowledge, each degree of scientific understanding...faith broadens the mind, makes it alert to fresh problems. It draws nourishment from the most critical questionings and fears none' (Liégé 1961a: 21)

Averting to Eph.5.10,17, Liégé writes:

God rarely provides ready-made results or effects a vocation at one stroke. He sows the seeds, sends out an appeal, decisively indicates the direction. But every believer must probe the details of his life to discover what the luminous centre of faith inspires him to look for and decide upon.¹⁶⁵ Thus the grace of faith widens each one's field of enquiry and augments his need to be faithful. I can no longer bypass certain human problems; I must shake off my apathy and shed the sort of life in which nothing happens. That precisely is the adventure of faith (Liégé 1961a: 21).

1. Conclusion

Lemoine sees Liégé as important in Catholic theology for reconciling two aspects of faith: as encounter with persons and as dogmatic belief (Lemoine 1997: 18). He also facilitated the acceptance of existential categories of faith. Lemoine (1997:20) judges that Liégé, Rahner and Barth between them contribute 'a page in the history of fundamental theology' in their thinking about faith.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ The translator offers 'prove': he must mean probe.

¹⁶⁶ These three theologians have much in common, claims Lemoine, thinking particularly of Liégé's long encyclopaedia articles on faith, his insistence on the historical character of Revelation, and the theme of communication which became 'auto-communication' in Rahner.

Liégé regards as fundamentally normative for Christians, the gradual sanctification of the soul in a movement from justification to glorification, from the tarnishing of the soul by original sin to a better resemblance of it to the divine, and thus a better hold on citizenship of the celestial city, as the Fathers described the great work of salvation. Liégé (1965a) denounces all forms and expressions of religion that are not faith. Whatever failure to live up to Christian discipleship there might be in practice, Liégé never wavers from his conviction that it is clear what it is and what it involves. This will be a point of first importance in comparing Liégé to the perspectives of much contemporary British practical theology in Part 4. Its strength is that it is drawn so closely from Scripture and Tradition.

5. Liégé's view of salvation

Liégé (1966c; 1967; 1968; 1969b) sees salvation is an issue of human unhappiness.¹⁶⁷ Man is impotent and needs healing in relation to suffering, finitude, moral conscience, fragility, determinisms and violence. Modern man has relinquished this recourse too easily, de-dramatising his existential awareness. What distinguishes Christian from pagan salvation is that pagan salvation connives with a world where God is not recognised. Forgiveness of sin is a gracious initiative of God in which man loses the initiative. Salvation is permanent conversion to the God of the *pasche* of Jesus Christ. Liégé emphasises forgiveness but does not reduce salvation to it, because it is also about fulfilment; both restoration and reconciliation, and the long awaited ripening of Creation. Jesus Christ is a unique Saviour because he is the one in and by whom salvation is advanced. The totality of the Event Jesus Christ constitutes the hour of salvation; the moment in human history when humanity received the possibility of successfully turning towards its destiny. Eschatology and creation are linked, providing hope for the ultimate transformation of the world (Lemoine 1997: 77-81).

¹⁶⁷ After the Council Liégé saw the task as that of deepening the general understanding of the Council document *Nostra Aetate*. In Liégé (1969b), using the language of dialogue, he offers what he says are urgent pastoral and catechetical applications: it is a question of the enlargement (exactly the same word and idea that David E Jenkins chose in addressing North Wiltshire parishes about Christian faith in the future in 1996) of the perspectives of Christian salvation, not limited to the forgiveness of sins.

6. Liégé's method

Chapter Three showed how his Dominican formation, Thomistic education, teachers Féret and Congar, and the eight principles undergirding Chenu's theological approach at *Le Saulchoir* influenced Liégé's method. It showed that Liégé attempts to be aware of and stay connected to the entire theological tradition, especially where it can be a resource to express contemporary faith. It also showed how important it was to Liégé to stay open and respond theologically to contemporary questions.

It is clear that Liégé's students understood him to be introducing a new way of doing theology. For them it was 'a new language' (Reynal 2004: 250). Partly this was because of his combination of sources. He draws not only on Thomism but on phenomenology, existentialism, personalism and Blondel's philosophy of Action. His search is for a catechetical methodology that can result in 'true transmission' of faith (Reynal 2004p.324). His method is 'synthetic' because he takes as his field of reflection the whole '*agir ecclesial*' (Reynal 2004: 348, 350). He uses a dialectical method deployed '*par mode de tension*' (Reynal 2004: 351). He is looking for a method which will 'justify the possibility of theological reflection imminent to the action of the church' (Reynal 2004: 351).

Reynal points out that Liégé's influential idea of pastoral theology as theological reflection on the building up of the church required a method tackling not just the permanent nature of the church but its actual situation: herein lies its originality (Reynal 2004: 399). His axiom is that church life must conform itself to the action of God in Jesus Christ. To monitor this, pastoral theology needs a 'normative (criteriological) function', a 'retrospective function' which ensures the capturing of the pastoral wisdom of the church's past, and a 'prospective function' which proposes future direction for church action (Reynal 2004: 399).

Liégé's method attends to these three functions at once. It presupposes a cultural, historical context. It proposes an analysis grounded in this, not in an ahistorical theoretical vacuum (Reynal 2004: 400). Liégé argues that the period of Christianity has given way to the modern period and that this transition period, being the one the Church is now in, provides the subject matter for analysis. The task is to critically examine the past to see how its influence

still irrationally weighs on the present and to consider what adaptations are necessary. Methodologically this requires both a socio-historical critique to examine cultural changes and a theological critique to examine the theological basis of 'the time of Christianity's pastoral approach': is it true? Is it theologically founded? (Reynal 2004: 401). Reynal sees the first originality of Liégé's method as (quoting Liégé (1968c)) 'to systematise the fundamental options and motives of the pastoral approaches of the era of Christianity' (Reynal 2004: 402).

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It is a four-stage process. First, it examines 'what happened' (*le fait et ses conséquences*). Second, it offers a socio-cultural and third, a theological critique (Reynal 2004: 404). In doing so it uses Liégé's own bases for authentic Christian faith (faith that has not been corrupted into mere religion; faith which stems from the distinctive Christian originality; faith which reflects the true face of the God of Jesus Christ; Christianity as decision and event; faith which emphasises religious freedom). Fourth, it suggests a 'prospective' outlook that considers what reorientation is required, for example, to pass to a properly missionary approach (Reynal 2004: 405). At the start of the 1970s Liégé inverted his approach. He started with ecclesial practice today and, especially the *points chauds* (hot spots) (Reynal 2004: 405). He no longer moves from the past to the present but from a present-in-crisis to a better future, explaining the cultural and theological reasons for the crisis along the way. His method changes because the task is no longer to justify change but to seek orientations in a time of drastic and ubiquitous change.

He proceeds to examine his hot spots in another four-stage process: First, its environmental and global origin. Then he looks at what has called this status quo into question. Third, he examines current options. Last he sketches possibilities for new practice (Reynal 2004: 406).

After 1968 Liégé offers a new definition of pastoral theology influenced by the political and liberation theology of Metz and Boff (Reynal 2004: 407). Now he calls it 'a theory of faith in and for the action of the church, developed in the today of its accomplishment (or of its practice)' (Reynal 2004: 407). Reynal states that Liégé sees this relationship as 'a two way

¹⁶⁸ In doing this nine headings emerge.

ticket from practice to theory and from theory to practice' (Reynal 2004: 407). How do you get between them?

To pass from practice to theory it is necessary to refine your knowledge of the practice by as full analysis as possible (historical knowledge) and the recognised meanings of this practice. How does it function and happen? [The important thing] is not to pass from brute practice to a theological conceptualisation. This involves a tour through the believing memory of the Church. It is necessary to re-interrogate the believing community in the most fundamental and basic givens of faith with the starting point, Christian intuition (Liégé 1976e, cited by Reynal 2004: 407).

To pass the other way, from theory to practice, you must understand that 'the theory of faith does not constitute a recipe for church practice' (Reynal 2004: 404). Rather the theory of faith must direct a creation, not execute a programme. This is why the different acts in which this theory of faith can be explained are: a critical instance, leading ultimately to decisions involving change: an instance of discernment; some directions for responding to pluralism.

Reynal (2004: 408) comments: 'this way of organising the theory/practice relationship... makes ecclesial practice a 'theological place' in Chenu's sense in *Une Ecole de Théologie*. Based on the affirmations of his teacher Liégé is given a method for exploring 'all the positive life of the Church', he sought to derive the revealed given in 'the present life of the Church and the current experience of Christianity' (Chenu: 1985: 124).

Reynal (2004: 408-414) gives an illustration of this method at work in Liégé (1968c, 1971d): First Liégé identifies the hopes of contemporaries, then the challenge this presents to Christians. He then offers an explanation of and justification for the best ways to respond to this, drawing on those criteria of truth which alone guarantee a theological dimension to the pastoral initiative.

Liégé's 1972-73 course at the ISPC, offered with Audinet, sees his methodology at work in relation to sacramental renewal (Reynal 2004: 418-426):

Stage One: *Status questionis* (in five parts)

- 1.1 Liturgical renewal at Vatican II: what happened.
- 1.2 The resulting crisis provokes a need for new praxis.

- 1.3 This requires a 'pastoral sacramental theory to accompany, justify and motivate the research into a new praxis'.
- 1.4 Indispensable examination of traditional normativity and the mediation of philosophy and the human sciences to elaborate this theory.
- 1.5 Hope for a truer Christian sacramental practice i.e. better conformed to the evangelical faith and more tuned to today's believers immersed in cultural mutation.

Reynal comments: 'Liégé seems to make appeal to an orthopraxis'. He 'conjugates' orthodoxy and orthopraxis 'in the same movement, a single theological step which starts with and sets out from practice and returns to practice' (Reynal 2004: 420).¹⁶⁹ Next Liégé offers:

Stage Two: A Five-staged process of pastoral reasoning

- 2.1 The shift to be dealt with: Recovery of the terms of the challenge to inherited praxis in the context of Christian practice today
- 2.2 What has been inherited: Remembering and explaining the former praxis
- 2.3 Current critical questions: Listening to and analysing the critical questions arising from the current cultural situation relevant to the current challenge to the status quo
- 2.4 The norms of faith: Re-interrogation of the traditional Christian norms which were expressed in the successive stages of the praxis and the discourse of faith
- 2.5 A reoriented pastoral praxis: Prospective of a changed praxis with new pastoral options

He adds:

'Five Comments on How this Works'

1. The endeavour of pastoral theology is a total process. Each aspect relates to every aspect.
2. Pastoral theology does not cash into immediate pastoral decisions but into perspectives on truth for the action of the Church in a given sphere. These perspectives must contribute to the overall unity of a pastoral project as finally owned by those ultimately responsible for it.
3. Step one examines facts, opinions and document; step two shows up every aspect of the history of the pastoral life of the church [in relation to the issue; the third step is more a socio-psycho-cultural analysis; the

¹⁶⁹ Here Liégé is very close to the approach of Don Browning.

fourth step is a critical study of doctrinal tradition; the fifth step concerns theological creativity.

4. The fourth step appeals to the previously [theoretically] acquired but not [necessarily] the existing theological understanding. It gives rise (*donner lieu*) to a critical elaboration in conjunction with step three.
5. The fifth step doesn't just 'adapt' the analyses of the third step to today's praxis: it takes its shape from the fourth step (i.e. theology)

Reynal (2004: 433) adds that Liégé's book (1975a) is explicitly presented as 'a method of reflection to establish the sought-for evangelical authenticity'. It shows he has read Rogers and Erikson and reveals more of his originality, especially his theory of '*cheminement*' (developments/progressions). Liégé (1975a: 51) sees us at a crossroads between, what is inherited creating the present crisis and the rediscovery of 'fundamental points' and the 'rediscoveries yet to make' for the church to be realised in all its fullness (*plénitude ecclésiale*) (Reynal 2004 with diagram: 438).¹⁷⁰

7. Liégé's Ecclesiology

Liégé's is a confessional church, an apostolic institution rooted in the scriptures, the rule of faith, the sacraments and the pastoral authority of the continuity of apostolic ministry.¹⁷¹ Liégé's pastoral theology is based on four ecclesiological principles (Liégé 1957a; 1962cc; 1966a; 1970d; Reynal 2004: 360-364).

The first is catholicity. God wants to join us in community. So he fiercely attacks as heresy notions of the church which see it as there to meet 'the religious, security and moral needs of individuals' (Liégé 1962cc: 16). For Liégé the church is a community in which individuals are present. It is a community that emphasises the diversity of human merits and excludes none. He envisages a '*pastorale* of the ensemble', pastoral care of the whole group (body) based on his understanding of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷⁰ See also Liégé (1978c), and (1979c), an article which Reynal (2004: 443) regards as exemplary and which Liégé would have developed if he had produced the book everyone hoped for.

¹⁷¹ It is a sacrament 'because it shows, here and now, the Event at its centre in which the living God and the risen Christ are found' (Liégé 1978: 52). It establishes its members in that Event. It is a gift of God through Christ and the Holy Spirit, to enable Christ to stay with us. Christ therefore shares its human risks with us, just as he risked choosing the unlikely combination of Peter and Paul (Liégé 1978: 52).

His second principle concerns the church as institution: the Holy Spirit gave the Kingdom of God an institution that can not be reduced to a merely human one (Liégé 1962cc: 17). It is an institution which changes and must change.¹⁷²

Thirdly, Liégé (1962cc: 17-18) names the principle of tradition. By this he does not mean a necessity to safeguard everything that has occurred. It means being faithful to what has been established once for all but adapted to the contemporary situation. The church must constantly direct itself to the riches it has already seen and lived. Both traditionalism and pastoral modernisms are heresies.

Finally there is the principle of the unity of mission (1962cc: 18). Mission is one in its origin and aim, to build the body of Christ, but it travels there by multiple ways, though always via the Eucharist. The ecclesiology Liégé was teaching in the 1950s was essentially Congarian, to be made official through the documents of the Council.¹⁷³

Liégé's ecclesiology is a product of its times. He starts with the question of what Jesus Christ's ecclesial project requires of us in the present circumstances. He answers this with a pastoral theology requiring particular forms of church praxis. For him, a primary task of pastoral theology is to prophesy against forms of supposedly 'Christian' allegiance that are in fact the trappings of culture rather than authentic faith (Liégé 1965a).

Liégé (1946a: 1)) locates his doctorate in ecclesiology for three reasons: it offers a perspective to synthesise the diverse aspects of theology that comprise the totality of the givenness of faith as far as rational knowledge is concerned; today, more than ever, the church is concerned about those who live 'on its margins' (missions expand; apostology seeks to discover its place within ecclesiology); Christian unity is increasingly important to

¹⁷² He calls it an institution relative to the reality of the Covenant, of the Kingdom. It has an eschatological underpinning. It is only true to its calling when the ecclesiastical system advances the Christian people in grace. The apostolic institution was wished by Jesus Christ as a means, the end is the Kingdom. It exists to generate sanctity, not for the sake of institutional power, an error of which he sees both Protestant churches and his own church as guilty (Liégé 1960-1961: 17).

¹⁷³ He was much influenced by three 'classic' works written between 1934 and 1941 by Caperan, Congar and Journet and in his courses over 'the last four years' at the Saulchoir (Liégé 1946a: 4). His ecclesiology is rooted in 'speculative theology', notably that of St Thomas, who has 'served as master' (Liégé 1946a: 4). But also he has needed 'the theology of the Tradition' in its 'double form', biblical and patristic. He singles out the ecclesiastical writings of Augustine, 'certainly the first master in the matter after St Paul' (Liégé 1946a: 4).

theologians and a more dynamic conception of the church is now coming into being (1946a: 1). These views place Liégé at the theological frontier, as does his critique the normative Council of Florence *dictum*: ‘no salvation outside the church’.¹⁷⁴

Lemoine (1997: 27) reminds his reader that Liégé specialised in ecclesiology from his student days and never abandoned his first preoccupations: Christ and the church are what he treats most along with *catéchèse*. Liégé often points to tensions that must be held together: the church is both eschatological and missionary; indefectible and conditioned by history; hierarchic and communitarian; traditional and reformable; holy and sinful; universal and particular (Lemoine 1997: 27). The church needs different ways of addressing different people (Liégé 1953a; 1958b; 1958c; 1978a)¹⁷⁵

Liégé (1957a: xii etc.) uses the phrase ‘People of God’ long before its popularisation through the Council. He anticipates *Lumen Gentium* in arguing for a modern, reformed approach to the world; the order of creation requires humanisation and the order of redemption requires evangelisation but both belong to one divine intention and will converge at the Parousia. In these endeavours the role of lay people is crucial, again, as Liégé argued and *Lumen Gentium* would decree.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ The lectorat’s sub-title, *The invisible belonging to the Church*, implicitly contains a theological solution to Liégé’s problem that was daring for its time, well before Rahner’s popularising of the notion of the ‘anonymous Christian’.

¹⁷⁵ The child confuses the church with the religious group of its birth and upbringing. Inevitably the authority of God is confused with the authority of parents. The adolescent rejects this in reaction. The adult has intellectual maturity and the right to receive precise answers to questions (1958b).

¹⁷⁶ As does the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity No.19.

PART TWO: LIÉGÉ'S PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Chapter Six: The Pastoral Theology of P. - A. Liégé.

1. Introduction

Marcel Viau (1987: 20ff.) is clear that the mid-1950s were a turning point for pastoral theology in Germany and France. His section on France is exclusively about Liégé, who 'inaugurated' the new tradition of francophone pastoral theology with his attack on the strictly dogmatic theology represented by Jean Daniélou (Liégé 1955b; Viau 1987: 22). In Viau's analysis, German influence on Liégé is demonstrated by his twin focus on pastoral theology's systematic character and on the church as a whole. He had grasped the imprecise, broken up nature of pastoral reflection in the French tradition, wanting it to gain rationality, to become its own discipline, and to offer a critical analysis of the church's action in the world. His placing *l'agir* of the church at the heart of pastoral theology was distinctive, *agir* (to act) being a verb not a noun. Viau (1987: 23) judges that this creativity did more than enunciate a principle; it was to make an enormous impact in the field of pastoral theology, still felt today.

Lemoine (1997:36) states that Liégé's pastoral theology functions as a prism to understand his whole theological approach. It represents his personal response to the indispensable adjustments needed to respond to the global context of the end of the era of Christianity and the church's confrontation with the modern world. The key to this was to 're-find a kerygmatic proposition and put into action a pedagogy of the faith needed because a truly catechetical discourse did not then exist': Coudreau believes this is Liégé's *intuition-maîtresse* (Lemoine 1997: 36).

Reynal (2004: 508) concludes that that Liégé successfully pioneered and initiated pastoral theology in France, establishing its scientific character as its own theological discipline and showing ‘how the *praxis ecclesiae* is a theological ‘place’ (*lieu*), or *locus theologicus*.

This chapter will describe the ideas lying behind these assessments, taking a chronological approach in order to track the evolution of Liégé’s thought. By the end of the chapter Liégé’s pastoral theology will have been sufficiently presented for discerning his vantage point in the comparative descriptions and discussion that follow in Parts 3 and 4.

2. Liégé’s Seminal 1955 Article

In January 1955 Liégé (1955b) published his famous article ‘For a catechetical pastoral theology’ in the *Revue de Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*.

In Part 1 he argues that pastoral theology is both autonomous and a dimension of all theology because all theology concerns *l’agir de l’église*, the action of the church, and pastoral theology’s task is to serve all that this means. It must link today’s questions with the givenness of faith, so the church may be built up and humans brought to salvation. Liégé starts polemically, attacking current catechetics as too pragmatic, untheological and lacking appropriate criteria: the relationship between mission and parish pastoralia is poor, and theology needs to be closer to the real life of today’s church (Liégé 1955b: 3).

The early church provides good models for pastoral theology, but subsequent church history does not, especially in the time of Maria-Theresa, where it became a technology of pastoral recipes. Yet modern pastoral theology has a distinguished history, Peter Canisius (1521-1597) being the first to use the term explicitly, the first manual being published in 1591 by the Bishop of Trèves.¹⁷⁷ The nineteenth century renewal began in Germany with the rediscovery of patristics in Tübingen (Liégé 1955b: 4).

3. Liégé’s First Definition of Pastoral Theology

¹⁷⁷ In his 1962-1963 course Liégé also mentions Pastor Leidel (1749) as the Protestant originator of pastoral theology and credits Biensfeld for the first manual (Lemoine 1997: 37).

Liégé emphasises the need for clarity around the various theological sciences annexed to theology, and offers his first definition of pastoral theology as ‘systematic reflection on the total lived life of the church in the time of its up-building’ (Liégé 1955b: 5).

The contemporary need is to recover St. Augustine’s skill in combining pastoral and scholastic (*savante*) theology, and establish more autonomy for pastoral theology (Liégé 1955b: 6). Liégé suggests three guiding principles: of ‘incarnation’ with Christ, the focus of salvation, but with the pastoral theological question as to how the church is to receive this divine action; secondly, of ‘*durée*’, meaning ‘within the terms (or duration) of history’ and implying that each generation must discover its own expression of the Gospel, and establish its adult Christian life, the life of the eschatological kingdom; thirdly, the principle of the ‘unity of mission’ to develop an authentic following of apostolicity towards becoming an authentic eucharistic assembly of the People of God (Liégé 1955b: 6-7).

The aim of pastoral theology is to fashion, by the mission of Christ, a prophetic, sacerdotal and royal people who participate in the glory of Christ, prophet, priest and Lord (Liégé 1955b: 7). So it is a primary theological task, and will of necessity be catechetical to animate church community life and authentic liturgical worship which prospers the unity of the People of God. It aims to unite dioceses, catechumens, lay people, society and the family (Liégé 1955b: 7).

4. Catechesis renewed

Renewed catechesis must be prophetic, helping move the Church towards sanctity. It is an oral, living affair, with the Holy Spirit as author, not just a process of passing information about God (Liégé 1955b: 8). It brings God’s glory through Christ into historic ministry. Its concern is the realisation of the Kingdom. It presupposes a theology of the Word as Act of God. It involves the double aspect of an interior joining of heart and Word (cf. John) and an exterior apostolic expression in society. The Word is also both noetic; it enlightens those who receive it, and dynamic, involving practical action (Liégé 1955b: 9). Catechesis announces the kerygma and calls for total conversion. It is Christocentric, finding ways to

ask the questions to which Christ is the answer, a process requiring alert wakefulness. Catechesis personalises dogma, important since dogma is so often misunderstood.

There are four essentials: The presence of the Word means catechesis is always a living human dialogue, never mere instruction. The Word is received as an act of faith by the whole person. That to which catechesis points is always a mystery, not mere proposition. Catechesis is always concerned with the truth of God's love (Liégé 1955b: 11,12). Catechesis must unify these four essentials, keeping a balance between them. It stems from the kerygmatic heart of the gospel, and must not become bogged down in peripheral devotional issues or in steering people away from theories of evil or heresy (Liégé 1955b: 13). Its calling is higher: it creates and is addressed to Christian community, not just to individuals in isolation (Liégé 1955b: 14). It is indissociably dogmatic, moral, and liturgical, uniting the behaviour and worship of the inner person, never abstract. While it needs to safeguard its traditional idioms, new ones must emerge. Its key words are Kingdom, life, glory, grace, *Parousia*, witness, world, mission, mystery and, especially the Word made flesh (Liégé 1955b: 15).

Kerygmatic and catechetical pastoral theology are essentially the same thing: the Innsbruck kerygmaticists had catechetical intentions (Liégé 1955: 16). The problem was the degradation of catechesis as instruction rather than conversion. The solution was to reanimate it with the kerygma. Liégé concludes that three tasks now remain: to continue to make catechesis less formal; to go beyond kerygmatic catechesis to what lies behind the proclamation of the gospel and grapple with the implicit missionary questions within and outside the church; and to study faith's content more closely so as better to apply it in today's world (Liégé 1955: 17).

5. Liégé's popularising of Pastoral Theology in France in 1957

The publication of a major work by F.X. Arnold in French translation as *Serviteurs de la Foi*, with an Introduction by Liégé (1957a) made Liégé's views much more widely known. What Liégé expands on is the history of pastoral theology, its subject divisions and three guiding principles. Liégé (1957a: viii-ix) starts by asserting the urgent need for a pastoral theology to coordinate the current renewal movements at risk of developing separately (Liégé 1957a: viii,

ix) . He means the biblical, liturgical, ecumenical and catechetical movements, together with the mission to workers and *Action Catholique*. For example, it is essential for the liturgical movement to influence mission. A *pastorale de l'ensemble* is required and only pastoral theology can provide it with sufficient underlying unity (Liégé 1957a: ix). Liégé is clear that the pragmatism of the curia is a serious current problem. Pastoral theology is not about pastoral techniques or sciences (he lists them). Good church action needs properly theological criteria and principles (Liégé 1957a: xi).

6. The History of Pastoral Theology

Backing his points with a bibliography, Liégé describes the seven principal periods in pastoral theology. The first is the Apostolic, the normative (Liégé 1957a: xi). Next is the Patristic period where St Augustine and the other Fathers, often Bishops, drew a rich pastoral theology from their daily life. He comments that there was no need then to systematise theology (Liégé 1957a: xii). Thirdly, comes the impoverished medieval period, too pragmatic, too much about discipline, too scholastic and university based, rarely explicitly theological and generally having lost contact with the People of God (Liégé 1957a: xii). Then comes the Tridentine renewal (which started before Trent). This lacked an adequate ecclesiology, was too often overly spiritual or ascetic and not about the *ensemble* (Liégé 1957a: xii). Fifthly, we have the Enlightenment with the first university, but insufficiently theological, pastoral Chairs, particularly under Maria Theresa (Liégé 1957a: xiii). In the nineteenth century the Tübingen School, influenced by German romanticism, 'saved pastoral theology's honour', returning to patristic sources and developing a richer ecclesiology enabling renewal in catechetics and liturgy (Liégé 1957a: xiii, xiv). He associates Newman with this era. Finally, the present renewal continues the Tübingen School featuring the kerygmatic theologians of Innsbruck. Jungmann, Lakner, Rahner and others have taken on this tradition which has also been continued in France by ecclesiologists like Congar, de Lubac, de Montcheuil and also by missionary pastors like Cardinal Suhard (Liégé 1957a: xiv).¹⁷⁸ This is the theology reflected in current liturgical movements and catechetical and parish renewal, religious sociology, *Action Catholique*, and the new youth movements (Liégé 1957a: xiv)

¹⁷⁸ He refrains from including himself!

7. Liégé's Second Definition of Pastoral Theology

Starting from his sense of the need to systematise the pastoral-whole to build church-life on the Word of God, and in the diverse domains where pastoral action is exercised, he proposes his second definition: *la science théologique de l'Action ecclésiale*, (Liégé 1957a: xv). It is a science because reflection needs synthesis, relative universality, and the seeking of laws and first principles. It is theological because it is supported by the Word of God, the plan of salvation, Jesus' founding of the Covenant, and all Christ gave to the church till his return. It is about ecclesial action, that is, the total action by which the church animated by the Holy Spirit expresses the will and saving mediation of Christ in human history. In a personalist philosophy one speaks of Action in order to specify a person's full intention and to show the essential finality of creative life. The church is also like a living Person whose animating Spirit is Christ. The church lives in dependence on the mission of the Lord to whom all power has been given (Eph 4.13,16). The church's only action is paschal Action, an expansion of Christ's Action (Liégé's capitals). And paschal Action works in continuity with the mystery of Pentecost, the Spirit and source of mission (Liégé 1957a: xvi). Liégé continues with a discussion of how pastoral theology relates to the rest of theology, especially scholastic theology. He sees this as a disputed question disagreeing about what autonomy to accord to the specifically pastoral function of theology. Canon law distinguishes between the two but without explanation (Liégé 1957a: xvii). Liégé rejects replacing scholastic theology, needed by the church's teaching authority but criticises those who think that some *corollaria pastoralia* make scholastic theology pastoral. Liégé wants to give pastoral theology the status speculative theology has enjoyed since the Middle Ages. He does not believe this implies independence from or a rupture with scholastic theology. He quotes Congar (1951) that 'the question remains open' (Liégé 1957a: xviii).

8. The Divisions and Principles of Pastoral Theology

In separating the divisions of pastoral theology, Liégé begins by stating that different issues form a starting point at a given time.¹⁷⁹ Integration of each of its aspects is a function of theology and from such integration one may seek a principle of unity and a division of

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Niebuhr (below: chapter 4.2.1)

pastoral knowledge. Pragmatic divisions as in the pastoral manuals are inadequate (Liégé 1957a: xviii). As John 20.21 makes clear, the unity of mission stems from Christ and from the Apostles' participation in his messianic mission. Matthew 28.18 implies a diversity as all nations are slowly made into disciples (Liégé 1957a: xix).

Through Christ, the Church inherits a tripartite mission, via the Old Testament, to be a prophetic, sacerdotal and royal People. This suffices as a principle of division. There must be a *Pastorale prophetique* to announce the Word in evangelisation and catechesis; a *Pastorale liturgique* to express the New Covenant's paschal cult; and a *Pastorale caritative* to address the issues of love in action and Church organisation, always dependent on the Lord (Liégé 1957a: xx).

The first principles of pastoral theology are derived from dogmatics, but pastoral theology examines them and brings them to life. Scholastic and pastoral theology need each other because all pastoral action presupposes a certain dogmatics, just as all human action implies a certain anthropology. This dogmatics should be explicit (Liégé 1957a: xxi). Behind all actions lie implicit questions like 'who is God that we should serve in this way?' or 'what conception of the Church lies behind this way of doing things?' which raise the issue of pastoral and dogmatic coherence. Liégé thus deduces three fundamental principles; Christological, ecclesiological, and the principle of the unity of mission (Liégé 1957a: xxii).

Negatively, you could demonstrate the Christological principle by describing consequences of the early Christian heresies across the centuries as non-critical action and weak pastoral thought. Positively, this principle shows the ontological coherence between God's action in the Incarnation and in the Church. Christology starts from the transcendent aspect of the Incarnation, namely God's decision to make the Word present in humanity, to bring about the coming of the Eternal into flesh. The theocentric orientation of all pastoral thought is founded on this, and the Holy Spirit continues to be in the Church, the principal artisan of all saving action and grace behind the entire Christian reality (Liégé 1957a: xxii, xxiii).

In Jesus, 'God found the perfect Servant for his Plan of Grace' (Liégé 1957a: xxiii).¹⁸⁰ He only sought the glory of the Highest. The Holy Spirit is no independent agent but links his action to the church as God links to Jesus. The church is the expression of the personal action of Christ, total collaborator of the Kingdom. There is no 'thingism' (*chosisme*), the anonymous administration of sacred things in church action, just a network of human relations united to the will of Christ. So there is no room for laziness or passivity as we see from the parable of talents or Luke 17: 10 (Liégé 1957a: xxiii). Christ's holy Humanity, by which God has chosen to associate us with the Kingdom, is never 'useless' (*inutile*) (Liégé 1957a: xxiii).

Christology protects pastoral theology against idealism: the growing up of Christ (Luke 2: 52) and the spreading out of saving events in the redemptive mission, give to ecclesial Action a sense of the length and the progress of the kingdom. Péguy called it the *loyalisme* of the incarnation (Liégé 1957a: xxiv).¹⁸¹

Next, he introduces the ecclesiological principle. Again its necessity is easily seen in the many obvious errors of history including clericalism, messianism, millenarianism, laicism and individualism (Liégé 1957a: xxiv). Ecclesiology needs the broad context of the whole tradition and must not be reduced to the narrow perspective, say, of reacting against Protestants. He adds that it is obvious that recent ecclesiological renewal has well served the pastoral. The main point is that pastoral action has an exact aim, to build the Kingdom, gather a priestly People, and build up the Body of Christ. So it will struggle against religious individualism seeking security of private salvation (Liégé 1957a: xxv). It has to fish (Luke 5.10), and to continue the Holy History. The church must beware institutionalism and canonicalism since its vocation is holiness in Christ, not institutional power. The ecclesiological principle is concerned to discern the authentic Tradition from fads and contingent practices. Pastoral theology must establish how faithfully to adapt appropriately,

¹⁸⁰ Liégé places capitals very liberally in the French.

¹⁸¹ This is a good example of the contrast between French and English mentalities: though these sentences are not hard to translate literally, their meaning almost eludes the Anglo-Saxon pragmatist. For his reference to Péguy, Liégé cites a Congar reference (1952) for comparison.

to guard against unmoving, fixed positions or a modernist spirit. It must unite freedom and truth as the Spirit is united to history (Liégé 1957a: xxv) ¹⁸²

Thirdly, there is the principle of the unity of mission. As there is one Lord, Spirit and Kingdom so there is only one mission, albeit multi-mediated. Hierarchic ministry must hold fast to the exhortations in Ephesians to build up the saints in love. But mission presupposes the diversity of the whole church (Liégé 1957a: xxvi). This principle returns pastoral thought to its Eucharistic pole. All Church life is eucharistic, anticipating the messianic banquet, so it must beware exterior cultism, moralism or any reductionism (Liégé 1957a: xxvii).

9. Liégé's ISPC Pastoral Theology Course in 1962 - 3

Lemoine (1997) and Reynal (2004) draw on Liégé's notes in the Dominican archives for his taught courses.¹⁸³ Much of the content of these overlaps but not all. In the 1962-3 course Liégé emphasises that Catholic theology cannot stay put in its 'intellectual sclerosis' 'cut off from the life of the church' (Lemoine 1997: 38). The need is for a theology no longer drawn from the terrain of Christendom and, in particular, which takes account of lay people and the complexity of realities on the ground (*réalités terrestres*) (Lemoine 1997: 38). This meant there was an urgent need to discover the coherence of salvation history, to find analogies of *comportement*, vital, personalist analogies rather than conceptual scholastic ones. The need is for a dialectic method rather than a deductive one, as *all l'agir passe par le Christ* making pastoral theology christocentric. Reciprocity between dogmatic and pastoral theology is needed to avoid confusion. Pastoral theology needs to study dogma and the magisterium but dogmatics needs pastoral theology's new research (Lemoine 1997: 38).

In this course Liégé specifies that prophetic pastoral theology is to speak 'in place of God' (Liégé's phrase), to mediate the proclamation (Lemoine 1997: 38) . Liturgical pastoral theology is to mediate celebration, and hodegetic pastoral theology is to lead, guide, educate

¹⁸² Liégé draws here from Congar (1950)

¹⁸³ Lemoine (1997: 36-48) draws particularly on the 1962-3 course and Reynal on the whole corpus of notes from courses in Paris and beyond (Reynal 2004, *passim*).

and put love into action (Lemoine 1997: 39).¹⁸⁴ Pastoral theology is theocentric: God is one who acts while the Pastor gives grace. Liégé warns of a ‘moral pelagianism’ reducing the church to an organisation and calculating its success in human terms (Lemoine 1997: 39). He links this with a ‘pastoral nestorianism’; the church’s tendency to divinise itself rather than remember it is driven by the Holy Spirit’s motor. God is Liberator, the Father who is not paternalistic, God of life, not just of souls, and God of history (Lemoine 1997: 39).

Liégé teaches that this implies a christo-conformity (Lemoine 1997: 39). God’s great mediation is the humanity of Christ. So salvation presupposes human collaboration.¹⁸⁵ Since God is the God of history the Church must adapt appropriately to the times. For example, it must to look again at pedo-baptism (Lemoine 1997: 39).¹⁸⁶

Pastoral theology has a critical function with regard to the past. It must shatter the ‘*pastorale* of Christianity’ which assumed a world inserted into the ecclesial institution leading, in the medieval period, to an overvaluation of institutions and loss of a prophetic *pastorale*. (Lemoine 1997: 40). Liégé condemns this as uneschatological, clergy-dominated and Nestorian, over-reliant on human force and not enough on grace (Lemoine 1997: 41).¹⁸⁷

The *exitus-reditus* of pastoral theology is the Word of God (Lemoine 1997: 41). For Liégé this has multiple meanings: as act of God and historical revelation, found in Tradition, Scripture and ministry. As act of God it is a decision which commits God entirely to man, comprising

¹⁸⁴ In this context Lemoine quotes Jossua’s joke (from his interview with him in 1996) that Liégé’s subdivisions are so numerous and complex that they make you think of a ‘new scholasticism’; amusing not least because of Liégé’s long struggle against outmoded Scholasticism.

¹⁸⁵ This vocabulary of collaboration is the same as Bishop David E. Jenkins used during his visits to the Yatton Keynell group of parishes, North Wiltshire, during the late 1990s.

¹⁸⁶ Liégé again asks for criteria of Pentecostal origin. Catholicity is one, since salvation is universal. This implies personal vocations are important but in a corporate, ecclesial context, not an individualistic one. Another criterion concerns the institution, since Christ wished the church to be apostolic, sacramental and educative. But the church can never be reduced to an institution. Grace goes before and after. So there is a need for distinctions: There is a divine-apostolic level wished by Christ and ratified by the Spirit. There is an ecclesiastical level, helped by the Spirit but not with the Spirit engaged in the same way. There is also an ecclesiastically temporal level, that of universities or syndicates. Then there is the principle of Tradition or Apostolicity which is linked to that of *semper reformanda*, constantly needed to avoid either modernism or traditionalism. There is also the principle of the unity of mission. This amounts to a call to bring the laity back into mission via their baptismal vocation (Lemoine 1997: 39f.).

¹⁸⁷ Even today educative institutions are lazy with regard to faith, being too cosily established

the whole identity of God's plan, an act of love revealed in history.¹⁸⁸ As revelation it concerns how God made known his Word historically through prophets, events and communities. It is progressive (cf. Heb 1.1). The 'event Jesus Christ' gathers all these past events and carries in himself the totality of God's revealing intentions.¹⁸⁹ He coincides with the event; he is the commentator on the event, which is himself, the *hermeneute par excellence*.¹⁹⁰ He is the fullness of revelation. He is the bridge between history and the eschatological state (Lemoine 1997: 41).

Though Christocentric, Liégé gives significant value to the Spirit in the revealing act. The Word is dynamic.¹⁹¹ It disturbs, converts, judges and has poetic attributes which distinguish it from a 'sacred metaphysic' (Lemoine 1997: 43).¹⁹²

Liégé defines Tradition as: 'the state of the *Parole de Dieu* when it passes from the stage of Revelation to the stage of the life in the church. God continues to speak in the same act, with the same content but in a new state, in a prophetic institution born of Pentecost' (Lemoine 1997: 43). It is lived and celebrated as well as spoken. Scripture is not identical to the *Parole de Dieu* but is as it were the archives of the pre-written tradition, an indispensable go-between for Tradition and Revelation in history. The ministry of the *Parole* is all that unveils it in the church by human communication.¹⁹³ Liégé now considers the evangelisation

¹⁸⁸ Note the existential vocabulary.

¹⁸⁹ Lemoine (1997: 42, note 129) comments that 'the event Jesus Christ' was highly fashionable as a *leitmotiv* during the Council. What he does not say is that Liégé has been using this phrase frequently for more than a decade.

¹⁹⁰ Lemoine (1997: 42) comments that this 'shows influence of the hermeneutical method in theology: indeed we see that Liégé's methods are historical, hermeneutical and existential'.

¹⁹¹ More existential vocabulary.

¹⁹² Lemoine interprets this phrase as another gibe at scholasticism and comments that these distinctions show Liégé's understanding of the different biblical genres. He mentions that Liégé never mentions Aquinas in this course. Liégé denounces the medieval concentration on Aristotle, cutting theology from the Church's life, scripture and the Word. Theology became *universitaire*, catechesis became scholasticism, baptismal life became morality, sacrament became rite, apostolate became proselytism and ministry was corrupted by a canonist mentality. "*Tout se dégrade*", concludes Liégé. Lemoine comments that Liégé has a stunning capacity to synthesise but at the cost of precision and nuance. Liégé was not alone in his attitude: Lemoine mentions a bishop complaining in 1942 that Liégé's teacher Chenu was too much discrediting the Middle Ages (Lemoine 1997: 43, 44).

¹⁹³ Here Liégé returns to his description of the two moments of faith. He is concerned about the split between the Catholic emphasis on faith as *tenir-pour-vrai* (holding it to be true) and the Protestant insistence that it is a meeting of persons. He says the misunderstanding here is in opposing subjective and objective. A re-reading of history is required, especially of Heb.11 and the 2nd Council of Orange in 529 which does not speak of two types but two moments of faith – the conversion or *initium fidei* and the faith of doctrine or *augmentum fidei*. Too intellectualist an idea of faith must be discarded in favour of a more Biblical one. There are two aspects to

of the modern world.¹⁹⁴ Evangelisation is a task for all the church not just the clergy. Within this corporate mission there is a need for distinctions between mission *ad gentes* (church planting) and pastoral mission in a parish or *action catholique* and between that and extraordinary pastoral mission such as missions and pilgrimages. Liégé concludes with an expression of the permanent tensions of evangelisation: conviction concerning salvation in and beyond the church and tolerance about the ‘scandal of unbelief; urgency with patience; salvation of persons with accomplishing the design of God’s salvation in society; profound evangelisation and more public evangelisation and the missionary presence of the church in the world, but separation from its paganism (Lemoine 1997: 48).

10. Liégé’s pastoral theology from 1964-1966¹⁹⁵

believing; a dynamic aspect, totally abandoning yourself to God, and an intellectual aspect, to know God in a more aware way. To believe is both ‘to lean unshakeably on God who has spoken and will never let go’ and ‘always to recognise more of who He is’ (Lemoine 1997: 45). There is a dialectic link between the faith of doctrine and conversion: the faith of doctrine is supported by a free dynamism which is a supernatural love. The *virtus theologales* amply described by scholastic theology today need the New Testament because faith is animated by hope and love is the result. Liégé, comments Lemoine, ‘himself constantly animated by the care to communicate faith to his contemporaries and to reconcile theological reflection and the life of the church, makes clear the correspondences between the two moments of faith and the efficacy of the *Parole de Dieu*. The *Parole* questions man in his imminence. This is its dynamic aspect. It illumines and draws out meaning, this is the noetic aspect of doctrinal faith’ (Lemoine 1997: 45). See also Kerr (2007: 27) for a brief discussion of the same issue.

¹⁹⁴ The 1960s inhabit a different context from that to which the Kerygmatic Innsbruck School responded catechetically. Today a theology of evangelisation is urgent because mission is needed for Christians who have not grasped authentic Faith (*les de-convertis*). It is concerned with announcing, converting and church-planting. Liégé is unimpressed with the phrase ‘*pays de mission*’ which is meaningful canonically and geographically but is not a pastoral expression. He would prefer to speak of old or young churches. Liégé liked the phrase ‘the church in the state of mission’ as being more pastoral. He judges that ‘old’ churches may often need replanting. The church needs to remember the *preambula fidei*; we have inside ourselves some idea of the kerygma, made ready by life-experience, conscience, a sense of justice, truth and love. These open towards the living God. Not everything can be rationalised. We need a greater sense of historical responsibility: faith presupposes a sense of human limits and failures. An evangelising starting point needs a modern perspective which takes responsibility and recognises unhappiness. For the gospel appeals to both head and heart. Serious difficulties concerning ‘conversion’ must now be faced. Liégé notes that the 19th century was closed to faith, a period of rationalism, scientism and positivism. He refers to the ‘structures of alienation’, the totalitarianism that kills liberty, the mass psychological conditioning of propaganda and the technological mindset that inhibits reflexion. This backdrop means today’s church must communicate afresh, abandoning ineffective practices. It must be poor, tolerant and friendly, not condemning. It must listen, translating its vocabulary into concrete terms that connect with today’s experience. It must start simultaneously from issues of God and man so that ‘the question of God is recognised in the question of man’. The church understands neither modern man nor the non-western world. It must abandon its wealth. It is over- institutional, its faith over-systematised, so it cannot evangelise. True Christian life is hardly known in the West where it is lived superficially and the Gospel no longer stuns. Instead of educating, it indoctrinates (Lemoine 1997: 46-48).

¹⁹⁵ Reynal draws more on notes from the ISPC 1965-1965 course. I draw on the EMACAS 1966 course. Liégé’s definition remains the same in these two courses. I can only apologise that the page numbers on the copy I read at the Redemptorists in boulevard Montparnasse, Paris xiv, which may be the only complete copy, were

The pastoral mission of the church is prophetic, liturgical and royal (Liégé 1966a). Liégé structures a 1966 course following this schema: general pastoral theology; prophetic pastoral theology, subdivided into kerygmatic then catechetical, itself subdivided into formal, epiphanic, paschal and pentecostal pastoral theology; hodegetic pastoral theology; finally there is a section entitled theology of the laity.¹⁹⁶ Based on Ephesians 4.11f. and canon 1365, Liégé (1966a) by now defines pastoral theology as ‘the theological science of pastoral action in the church’s here and now designed to build up the body of Christ’.¹⁹⁷ It is concerned with action because Christianity is not about ‘revealed truths’ or just a morality or a cult, it is based on an act of God in history.¹⁹⁸

The church’s calling is to bear witness to and continue this paschal action as a living body and a carrier of divine energies. Pentecost does not add anything to *l’agir pascal*, it simply launches the paschal community. Henceforth God’s intervention in history is always ‘today’. Sharing the same creator there is an intrinsic solidarity between the action of the church and the life of the world. In this context the action of the church refers to the action of the

mostly missing, but the relevant text can be found under the relevant subheading in the document. After page 26 the numbers reappear.

¹⁹⁶ For example, priests, now liberated from sacerdotal technocracy, are able to recover a more biblically prophetic role.

¹⁹⁷ *La science théologique de l’agir pascal dans l’aujourd’hui de l’Eglise, en vue de l’édification du Corps de Christ*. The idea of science is to be understood *lato sensu*, as university reflexion, abstract and rigorous (Lemoine 1997: 38; Liégé 1966a): It has reflexive functions (justification and criticism of principles), normative functions (the orientation of the act of salvation) and prospective functions (helping the pastoral *magisterium*). It is a theological science since the *Parole de Dieu* is its object and its norm. It is a science in being reflexion concerned with a global overview, with the totality of church action, with synthesis. It is not the kind of reflexion that can directly translate into advice about action in a concrete situation. It stands back. It does not give recipes. It is situated on a level of truth oblique to (*dépassant*) *les réalisations individuelles immédiatement concrètes* (Liégé 1966a). For example, pastoral theology reflects on what the liturgical mystery should be in the action of the church but it would not prescribe rubrics. It will specify action to announce the *Parole* but it will not prescribe a particular catechetical pedagogy. Pastoral theology looks for links, for coherence. It is academically serious. It correlates its thinking with other disciplines such as philosophy and makes alliances where appropriate. It draws on psychology and sociology but is not defined by them because it is fundamentally theological in being concerned to investigate what God, through his Word, asks of today’s church in its paschal action. Pastoral theology accompanies the church on its journey in this world. It will not be necessary in heaven (Liégé 1966a).

¹⁹⁸ Lemoine (1997: 37) and Reynal (2004: 66-68; 258) note how much Liégé took from Blondel’s philosophy of Action, influencing his use of *l’agir pascal*. This philosophy was a synthesis of willing, knowing and being. It is about the intentionality of action (Blondel 1893) *Agir* implies a totality; the whole church acts, not just its pastors. The church makes the *agir pascal* happen in history in as much as, in the paschal act, ‘God has recapitulated his *indepasable* act in history’ (Lemoine 1997: 37). It is the action of a people and an institution dependent on God’s action with no other purpose than to continue the *pasche* (Lemoine 1977: 37).

whole church, as a body, in which all members are active (Liégé 1966a: Lemoine 1997: 37-38). (Lemoine 1997: 37, 38).

Pastoral theology's functions are prospective, critical and retrospective (1966a).¹⁹⁹ Liégé's headings for pastoral theology have not changed since 1957 but have been considerably developed. It is prophetic in following the Bible as a book of announcement, a book in which God is made manifest. It is liturgical in that Christ's way is one of priesthood, of sacrifice. It is royal in that Christ as kingly chief pastor gathers a royal people and brings a community into existence. Correspondingly the church will be, all in a spirit of unity, charity and service, prophetic, liturgical and hodegetic (Liégé 1966a).²⁰⁰

11. The criteria for church action

What are the criteria for church action? John 3.21 is a key text here (Liégé 1966a). It is the one who acts out the truth rather than who merely knows it who comes to the Light. It is not good enough for the church to know truth from error. The issue is authenticity. When the church acts specifically, does it place itself in the sphere of truth or the sphere of the lie? Pastoral heresy is to do the wrong thing, to act against love, as serious as believing the wrong thing (Liégé 1966a).²⁰¹

To discover paschal criteria the church needs theocentric, incarnational and historical criteria. Each criterion must demonstrate its source in salvation history; what law follows from this for church action; and how this is to become practice (Heb.2.10) (Liégé 1966a). The Holy Spirit is not an auxiliary motor; it pre-vents everything (Acts 15.28). The church is the servant of the Spirit. All else is vain. Faith must be made alive. Never settle for atarvism.

¹⁹⁹ It is prospective in helping the church to act rightly, helping it make changes and get them into law: for example, the Canon Law of 1918 barely includes the laity, so now a new code is required. It is critical in helping to set criteria, to discern truth from lies, to escape the tendency to accept that this must be the way the church acts because this is the way the church has always acted, an inertia which allowed the church to forget collegiality from the fourth to the twentieth century. It is retrospective in critically examining the church's past action, just as the Council has severely condemned some of its action 'during the period of Christianity'.

²⁰⁰ *Hodégétique: hodogetria* - Greek meaning 'showing the way'. This word, another Liégé neologism, comes from the Latin *odegeo* and has a physical application, as a caravan is guided at the head of the line, and a spiritual sense, meaning the church as educator.

²⁰¹ He adds: The Spirit made the Council and its key insight is the church's remembrance that it is there precisely to continue the Paschal Event of God in history (1966a).

We do not find God through our hopes or needs but revealed in action in the Paschal Event. Thus we must rigorously critique the church as an institution to discover if it is still revealing the true God (Liégé 1966a; 1965a).²⁰²

Theocentric criteria ensure the church bases its life on its authentic paschal origin. Liégé (1966a) approaches incarnational and historical criteria by way of complaint: the church has so often failed to apply them. Instead of understanding the implications of the full humanity of Christ and so engaging fully with the secular world, the church has fallen into '*le chosisme*'.²⁰³ Or it has behaved like an automated machine, losing the essentially face to face nature of Christian life. Or it has been reduced to '*le miraculisme*'.²⁰⁴ It has also succumbed to monophytism in which the Word blocks out the human; and to Appolinarism, in which the Word blocks out Christ's soul and human conscience. This translates pastorally into an approach which pays insufficient attention to human development and leads to ultra-Catholicism and has led, in church history to 'treating adults as perpetual children or Christian infantilism' (Liégé 1966a). Liégé (1966a) states that until the Fourth Century pastoral care was habitually orientated towards adults: there was a 'perspective of progress' in which the Christian advanced towards '*une plénitude adulte*' by virtue of their baptism. Baptism was a seed that must blossom. This is the Pauline perspective; all his pastoral writing is about the growth towards maturity. The Gospels imply the same. After the stages of pre-evangelism, evangelism, catechesis and baptism the final stage of being a member of the eucharistic community is never a settled or completed stage because 'there is always the need for intensification of love' (Liégé 1966a: 34) if the Eucharist is to be fully an eschatological

²⁰² Here the context of the time immediately following the Council is clear: Liégé's apologetic for Council insights recalls the vestigial background of pre-Council primitivism, legalism and moribund conservatism. The Liégé-post-conciliar message is clear: the church and its faith must not be allowed to go back to sleep in the way it had in the pre-Council era. Thus it is faith that must always evangelise religion to make it a religion animated by the Faith and never a religion that has replaced faith. Devotional practice must similarly be scrutinised since as well as being 'perhaps one of the highest achievements of man' is 'perhaps also the repository of man at his most infantile, senile, sentimental and instinctive' (Liégé 1966a: 27; 1966d). So, for example, salvation is not something there to 'make you better', it is there eschatologically to bring about God's plan. It is not something we do but something we welcome. It is not about immortality but about entering into life with God. Thus sacraments are not the power to purchase salvation but signs of the Covenant which we celebrate. And prayers for the dead are not a primitive act but a celebration of the Kingdom of God and the Communion of Saints. Faith involves a pilgrimage not just with the body but with the whole person towards meeting the God of the Exodus people, towards a promised land, towards meeting the God of Elijah and Jesus, a pilgrimage towards conversion (Liégé 1966a).

²⁰³ Here meaning the corruption of Christian life into a matter of church services.

²⁰⁴ Religion based in impressive supernatural miracles.

sacrament of the *Pasche*, of unity and of world transformation. Such formation is bound to take time. And when it is forgotten and the church's pastoral care has gone awry 'it is an exteriorly Eucharistic community without living the reality of the sacrament it celebrates'. Then it must return to paschal criteria and reinstall what is missing. Sometimes it is necessary to restructure the community from the interior. It is the quality of '*la pratique*' which counts (Liégé 1966a: 35).

The criteria for a pastoral care of authentically Pentecostal origin are as follows: It will be collegial or community-based. It will not make fallacious distinctions between the pastoral care of the individual and the community, but the care of persons will always be integrated within community care. It is not just being friendly for the sake of it; the task is to live the Pentecostal Event. This means constantly deepening the evangelisation of the community by seeking to make all human and cultural realities go with the grain of the gospel. This presupposes a vision of being together (*visée d'ensemble*) to set forward the Kingdom with everybody involved. Liégé's vision is essentially corporate (Liégé 1966a: 37). The Christian community is a priesthood of all the baptised because we participate in Christ's sacrifice of offering the world to the Father in the way we evangelise, the way we say 'Amen' in liturgical participation, and the way we live our lives. And the authentic Pentecostal community will be deeply involved with the secular world just as it is, for example in industry. Liégé (1966a: 37) comments on such a community perspective to pastoral care, 'it is not modern sociologists who have invented this basis of *la pastorale d'ensemble* but the Holy Spirit'. As an institution the church is to take only the criteria of the Gospel; lust for power is not acceptable. The key questions for pastoral care in the church are: is it in dialogue with the world? Does it express a preferential option for the poor? Does it facilitate lay ministry? Does it fit with an overall pastoral vision? Does it encourage all that it means to be an adult, such as risk taking, responsibility and freedom? Liégé (Liégé 1966a: 46) tabulates a schema for ministry in a truly paschal church like this:

PASCHAL ACTION ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT MISSIONS

| | PROPHETIC | LITURGICAL | HODEGETIC |
|---|---|--|--|
| The institutional ministries of the clergy | MAGISTERIUM To guard and announce the Word of God | ORDER To preside over the action of Christian liturgy | JURISTICIION (teaching function) Guardian of unity and leader of the community |
| The institutional ministries of the baptised (lay) | WITNESS By words and in life | ACTIVE participation | EDUCATIVE RESPONSIBILITY AND SPIRITUAL ANIMATION of the temporal |
| Spiritual ministries | INTERIORITY of the Word of God (the kingdom of God is within you) | SPIRITUAL SACRIFICE (Romans: a living sacrifice) | EXAMPLE AND EDIFICATION |
| Charismatic ministries | CAPACITY to translate the Christian message | Improvisation of prayer and the action of Grace | SERVICE of men |

12. Liégé's pastoral theological perspective is that of the challenge to move from the time of 'Christianity' to the new missionary situation of the present time.

The church has always responded to its sociological situation. Now it must freely embrace appropriate pastoral structures and priorities for today using theological criteria. The 'Christianity' model ignored issues of conversion, the implications of adult baptism, the theology of the Word, mission and the mystery of God. Theology allied itself with philosophy but not to fathom the unchallenging atheism. Canon law hardly involved itself with lay issues. Priests behaved like mini-bishops. Unconscious affective, intellectual and sociological choices had largely taken over (1966a: 42-53).²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ For example there was little awareness of the sociology of the systems imported into Portuguese and Spanish Latin America.

Liégé (1966: 42ff.) observes three attitudes towards this situation: try to continue pastoral sovereignty indefinitely; reluctantly accept concessions whilst longing for ‘the good old days’; make a theological and historical critique of the whole system and remove what is not justified. Atarvism results from the long tradition of ancestral faith, blurring with culture. Orthodoxy, discipline and cultic practice are taken for granted.²¹⁶ He worries about the attitude ‘we do this because this is what we do’. He observes how possible it is to espouse Christian religion entirely and yet have no faith at all in his understanding of faith.²¹⁷ When religion becomes too much part of heritage it leads to conformity not freedom. Liégé (1966a: 50ff.) offers seven pointers to avoid atarvism: Do not let a utopian zeal for unity crush non-conformity or result in cheap unanimity. It is the quality of faith that matters, not gimmicks to secure full churches. Never succumb to the mentality that to be a Christian is to go to church and do your sacramental duties as if the sacraments worked *ex opere operato*. Remember the prophets and Jesus: the cult never comes first but the people’s situation before God. What matters is ‘*une pastorale au cœur*’. Clerical power and triumphalism with the laity as second-class citizens is to be avoided at all costs. Beware too much emotional devotion, to the cult of Mary for example: attachment to customs leads to loss of living faith. Beware an over identification of the church congregation with the parish community. The parish is to be included in the *pastorale d’ensemble* but must not be allowed to relativise the call to deep conversion to the Gospel. The church must be modest, not triumphalist, in its institutional sense of itself. It must keep poverty and remember it is a community that also transcends worldly concerns. It must work to demystify the tendency to idealise childhood as the privileged place of religious education. The accent must be on adult growth, on permanent education, maturation, growth in maturity as persons, not just on Sunday School.

In short, as the conclusion to *Gaudium et Spes* has it, there is the need to adopt a dynamic approach as opposed to the old static one.

²⁰⁶ For example, Liégé complains that his personal theological dictionary has no entry for ‘conversion’.

²⁰⁷ He refers to the rediscovery of some islands off China where Christians converted in the 16 and 18th centuries had conserved all the exteriors of religion, crosses, images, feasts, prayers in Latin and baptism but they had no idea of the Paschal Events and no knowledge of Jesus Christ whatever. They had kept some sentiments, morals, obligations, rites, signs, symbols and jargon. But they no longer had any faith. They had missed the key thing: to grasp in each generation the faith of the apostles and yet understand its newness in every generation.

13. The publication of Liégé's most significant writing on Pastoral Theology in 1971 (Liégé 1971a)²⁰⁸

What Liégé (1971a) deals with here is the reconciliation of truth and praxis in the church, a problem compounded by the equivocal 'joker'-like status of the word 'pastoral'. What remains inadequate is an analysis of concrete forms of Christian action. The need is for more than a theology of 'the pastoral' and more than a pastoral account of theology. To leave theology to systematics is impossible given that theology, like everything else, is developed within a determined culture. Only Christians with real responsibilities in the world can properly make the theology of the future.²⁰⁹

14. The first talk of Practical Theology

Tübingen's work mobilised a concept of practical theology but with little influence. Generally the phrase meant '*une discipline pratico-pratique à la usage de clergé*' placed in parallel with a scholastic theology, a weak ecclesiology and '*mal centrée*'. Just before World War II ideas of a 'charismatic' and 'kerygmatic' theology were developed to remedy this situation. The charismatic theology of A. Stoltz, Th. Soiron, G. Sönhgen, O. Casel and later, more critically written, of Urs von Balthasar was in part a reaction to a too rational and dryly intellectual theology. It shifted its concern towards sanctity and Christian mysticism. Though its influence was later felt in pastoral theology, its inspiration was almost entirely patristic. It did not make connections with contemporary culture. It both attracted the criticism of the

²⁰⁸ This was the chapter Jean Joncheray, Director of the ISPC, told me in 1990 to read first in approaching Liégé, as it was his most significant piece.

²⁰⁹ Liégé had earlier complained about the spirit of pastoral theology under Marie-Thérèse, Empress of the *éclairé* spirit and Joseph II, the '*Empereur sacristain*'. Here he explains why. In this setting the subject was used as a tool to equip the clergy as suitable officials for a Catholic state rather than as an authentic theological discipline. Liégé draws on Paul Broutin's *La Réforme pastorale en France au XVIII^e siècle* (1956) to show that early French pastoral theology was too official. He complains (as in 1957a) that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries clerical ignorance and general superstition abounded and spiritual life found itself shut up in monasteries. Aquinas himself makes the distinction, in *Contra impugnantes*, (ch. 2) between *Doctrina praedicationis, quae ad praelatos pertinet* and *Doctrina scolastica, cui praelati non multum intendunt*. But by 1850, in revolt against secularisation and rationalisation, we find a truly pastoral theology emerging at Tübingen. They rediscovered the Bible and the Fathers as a primary source and were alive to the notion of the Incarnation. On the other hand their thought was confined within the categories of German Romanticism which Liégé labels as *totalité, organicité, devenir* and *développement*. If it was a bit hazy (*flou*) it nevertheless gave them a new language. They insisted on the Holy Spirit as the animator of the Church. This and the historicity and originality of Christianity was their essential theme. They represent a first attempt to reflect systematically and ecclesialogically on the Church as a sacrament of salvation. See also Kerr (2007: 23) for Chenu (amusingly) on Joseph II.

systematic theologians and failed to meet the needs of those wanting a theology of ecclesial action. The same applies to Innbruck's kerygmatic School of H. Rahner, J.-B. Lotz, F. Lakner, J.-A Jungmann and F. Dander who wanted a 'preachable' theology alongside scholastic theology, one of immediate service to evangelisation and catechesis. Though its method was unsatisfactory, it was an important stimulus 'towards a theology planted in praxis and concerned with the church's accomplishment'.

In the twenty years from 1950 or so it was this approach to theology, inserted into the here and now of the actual life of the church as a universal sacrament of salvation that has been more and more rigorously defined, chiefly in Germany and France. At the same time, influenced by better use of current philosophy and better sources, systematic theology had moved beyond scholastic theology. The upshot was that pastoral theology could now justify its purpose beyond deputising for the inadequacies of systematic theology and have a proper awareness of its meaning for the life and mission of the church.

Vatican II's intuitions favoured pastoral theology in placing renewed emphasis on the truth such that act and doctrine were necessarily brought closer together. Pope John XXIII referred to a 'pastoral *magisterium*' basic to the Council. The question became, what is pastorally necessary to help the church 'into all truth', a more truly biblical notion of truth until recently made unfashionable by anti-protestants and anti-modernists. Other intuitions reinforced this primary one: ministry was to be seen as more pastoral than sacerdotal and returned to the whole 'People of God'. Scripture was to be claimed in its own right rather than filtered through the *magisterium*. There was to be a renewal of the church and world's connection.²¹⁰

The Council's deeply ecclesiological assumptions were favourable to pastoral theology. The era of Christendom had been pastored 'out of the situation' rather than by a pastoral theology with theological criteria. A more critical theology was needed to work hand in hand

²¹⁰ This account is more refined and detailed than the 1966 one and has the merit of being Liégé's own writing rather than a student's notes despite the fact that the comparison shows the general accuracy of those notes.

with the church in action according to church norms, rather than by improvisation or syncretistic cultural assimilation.²¹¹

There is a striking juxtaposition of confidence and diffidence in Liégé's chapter, an oscillation between grand claims for the by now established status of pastoral theology and a repeated caveat that the discipline is still young.²¹² Liégé (1971a: 61) writes that pastoral theology now has 'a certain future' which will not 'threaten the space' of other theological approaches but will enrich theology and function as '*prometteur (promising) pour l'ensemble du labeur théologique*'.²¹³

Whereas theology has so much discussed whether God or the Christ is its proper object, pastoral theology resolutely chooses to focus on the church, finding here God and Christ in the context of revelation and salvation.²¹⁴ It is the questions that arise from lived ecclesial

²¹¹ Liégé views an influential contribution here to be J. Comblin's *Vers une théologie de l'action* (1964). His definition of pastoral theology found widespread agreement. It is 'the theological discipline whose distinctive language and task is conscious reflexion on Church action in the here and now of what it carries out in its mission towards fulfilment'. Liégé comments 'Church action, its praxis, is both the starting and the finishing point of pastoral theology, the place it is rooted, the place from which it maps itself out and the place where it completes its task. He also quotes a definition of K. Rahner: In the widest sense of the term, pastoral theology (or better 'practical theology' or the theology of the practice of the Church) is theological reflexion on the Church's own up-building as much as theological reflexion on God's work in the world. So pastoral theology's task of theological explanation and full articulation of a situation is and must be achieved both in the light of the permanent nature of the Church and according to its situation in any particular epoch of the Church and of the world.

²¹² He reminds the reader that it is still 'open' and 'fragmentary'. This is well illustrated in a footnote-quotation offered by Liégé: 'Pastoral theology claims to be beyond the stage of promises and stammering beginnings. In any case, nothing is more characteristic of contemporary theology and its outlook than those notes. From this point onwards the Chapter breaks new ground (Adnes 1967: 106).

²¹³ He quotes Chenu's approval in 1957 of the reawakening of pastoral theology, especially the recent founding of Faculty and Seminary posts in the subject, together with a claim that 'the pastoral sector is without doubt the most active place of present progress of theological knowledge' (Chenu 1957).

²¹⁴ K. Rahner (1969) distinguished between an 'essential' and an 'existential' ecclesiology. Though both inadequate these epithets express two complementary methods in ecclesiology. Pastoral reflection focusses on the 'organic totality' and the 'dynamism' of ecclesial reality. Organic totality because, as in Ephesians 4.12-13, it is more than a question of thinking about the work of pastors. One might avoid this sense of thinking that 'pastoral' theology is about 'pastors' by adopting, as some have suggested, the phrase 'practical' theology. An example of this is given from Schuster (1965). The problem with this is that it suggests the rest of theology is unconcerned with the practical. Dynamism is an apt focus because the required reflection is about what the church is doing in its actual existence, in its quest for self-identity and up-building, in its marching forward towards its fulfilment, animated by the Spirit, in continuing the 'paschal action' (*l'agir paschal*). Action is here to be understood in a rich sense, as one speaks of the human act of being a person in the process of realising one's own story. It is Blondel's sense of the word in which being, willing and thinking are synthesised. This section ends with two sentences of quintessential Liégé which hardly need translation and are perhaps best left in the original: *C'est le mystère en situation d'accomplissement dans l'espace ecclésial, le sacrement de salut dans l'aujourd'hui de sa manifestation, lieu d'intelligibilité potential de tout le mystère chrétien. C'est dans l'Eglise en acte que la théologie pastorale va trouver la totalité de la Parole de Dieu en situation d'immanence dynamique* (Liégé 1971a : 63).

experience that are the point of departure for a new interrogation of Tradition and for the verification of given dogma about the Church. Pastoral theology provides the basis for the reorientation and strengthening of church praxis: pastoral theology is praxeology (*praxéologie*)

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Pastoral theology has many functions: contemplative and doxological, apologetic, critical, hermeneutic and poetic. It guides the Church's action by keeping it to its ultimate sources and criteria for faith. It offers critical lucidity about its past and its present, stimulating imagination, monitoring projects, responding to issues in a way that interprets and enriches them. It serves the truth in the concrete realities of history. Pastoral theology does not expect to be doing the speculative or hermeneutical work of systematics, though it learns from this. Neither does it make instant pronouncements and decisions. Its place is in relating to every aspect of what it means to take pastoral responsibility in a given situation. It needs to understand management techniques, pedagogy, and the ways tasks can be shared. It tackles concrete issues at this level but its concern is as much with the truth as with strategy.

15. The scope of Pastoral Theology and its relation to the Human Sciences

Given the diversity of church life, the scope of pastoral theology would seem to be as broad as that of systematics. Nevertheless pastoral theology is not condemned to be a chaotic mosaic of fragments because there can at least be a design to the mosaic (Liégé 1971a: 65).²¹⁶

Pastoral theology expects to be deeply engaged in the study of church history to learn about Christian experience and the various forms of pastoral engagement down the ages.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ For example, the lived life of the church (*vécu ecclésial*) is comprised of the being-together and the acting-together of Christians, the Christian community. The task is to make a critique of this lived life as a function of re-inventing the Christian community as that founded on the Christian Event (story, happening) (*Événement*), the place where its fraternity is realised, the carrier of a witness charged with both the confession and the celebration of faith. This will necessitate a confrontation between the memory of the church carried by Tradition as it listens to the contemporary 'requests' of the believing community. This is not a matter of suggesting pragmatic adjustments or offering neat recipes but of discernment and reflection-in-action. The pastoral theologian works from within the People of God, a witness engaged in its life and its research in a 'hands-on' fashion.

²¹⁶ The three major spaces in which the church needs pastoral theological engagement are the prophetic, the liturgical and the hodegetic. But the need is to hold the discipline together rather than take flight into marginal sub-theologies of a pragmatic kind such as a missionary theology, catechetical theology and so on. Theological college programmes are only too susceptible to this kind of crumbling under the pretext of bringing the church up to date.

²¹⁷ Its stance is critical rather than either triumphalist or merely concerned with erudition. It expects to find analogies for its work, comparisons from previous experience, wisdom and a proper basis for continuity with

Pastoral theology's relationship with the human sciences of ethnology, sociology and psychology of religion is important. There are three salient 'moments' for the intervention of the human sciences within the pastoral task: First at the start, to analyse critically the situation as it is and to see where the theological challenges present themselves. Second, during the theological debate to maintain proper boundaries so that any reductionism may be resisted, for example, between spiritual authenticity and religious culture. Thirdly, to ensure a proper integration of pastoral theology with contemporary culture, especially sociology, since pastoral theology leads both to a de-sociologizing and to a re-sociologizing of church life (Liégé 1971a: 67).²¹⁸

Pastoral theology's relationship with philosophy turns especially on philosophies of action, philosophies of the person and philosophies of history where there are comparisons of approach and intention. Existentialism, personalism and phenomenology have been of particular recent interest to pastoral theologians (Liégé 1971a: 69).

We live in a time of pluralism in theology. Pastoral theology will express itself differently in different regions of the church. It will always risk becoming dated but this is inevitable with any subject concerned with practice. Renewal is a constant need, though there is always a continuity. The need is to be open to the questions of tomorrow as they emerge (Liégé 1971a: 70).²¹⁹

today. It expects to learn from examples of bad practice. It brings to bear imagination and a creative spirit on to history so as to assist with the church's fulfilment today. The church's consciousness is challenged by each period of history, especially its periods of discovery and movement, particularly its earliest centuries. Pastoral theology keeps a particular eye on how the church has been conditioned by the past and has shackled its imagination. This role is vital.

²¹⁸ The human sciences must be integrated rather than annexed without respect to their proper status. The challenges are not met by adding pastoral epithets to data from the human sciences. It is a question of opening up deeply to their insight. Schillebeeckx (1962:77) is amongst those who criticise the French distinction between 'scientific' and 'religious' sociology and his criticism is well taken in relation to all the human sciences. What secular sciences find can be used and interpreted by theologians and incorporated into pastoral strategy but only on the basis of a properly pastoral theology drawing from its own data and criteria. Theology lies at the root of all church life and is able to provide its own critique of the human sciences. There should be no question of giving up theology in favour of the Magisterium of the human sciences 'as if the church were just another institution like *la Régie Renault*', a risk apparent at the moment, claims Liégé (1971a: 69), referring in the footnotes to Houtart (1969) and Greeley (1970). Karl Rahner (1969) is right to say that a truly sociological pastoral theology, able to engage with the strategy of the whole church rather than offer a set of tactics for ministers, has yet to be written.

²¹⁹ At the university level pastoral theology's place is a significant topic. The fact that all the theological disciplines have been waking up to their relevance to mission only adds to the debate. One imagines that in the future formation of priests, pastoral theology will take '*la place principale*'. This would be legitimate always provided there were certain essential prerequisites guaranteeing the seriousness of the enterprise: a thorough

16. The Final Position in 1977

Liégé (1977a) returns to the theme of the place of the practical in theology. He notes the current general agreement that *la pratique* is a constitutive element of all theology, hence talk of the *pratique* as place (*lieu*) of theology or even as ‘theological place’ (*lieu théologique*) (Liégé 1977a: 83). He asks three questions: What has happened to allow this important shift that recognises practical theology (*pratique* in theology *en acte*)? What precisely does this term *pratique* cover? Having defined it, how is this reference to the *pratique* to be theorised in the functioning of a theologian’s activity? He starts by saying that this insistence on the *pratique* as a constitutive element of all theology will only appear new to those who identify theology with decadent scholasticism. Christian faith has always had to reflect on its own self-understanding, to legitimate its discourse and explain its terms in dialogue with the actuality of its community life. The expression of the church’s faith in its sacramental and community life is only produced in link with its spoken practices, celebrations, catechesis, ethics and ascetics [sic]. As Maurice Blondel said, the history of dogma is most often developed as a movement ‘from the anticipated implicit to the known explicit’ (Liégé 1977a: 84). The way Scripture was gathered into its Canon is a good example of this normal practice.

All along church history the links between practice and theology have been recognised. K. Barth called theology the critical instance of the present preaching of the church. This is all important but today we want to go further in relation to the *pratique*: What is this newness? Is it a generalized association between *pratique* and the other domains of theology? Does it come from a more rigorous elaboration of the relation between theory and practice borrowed from recent philosophy? Or from a more critical mastery of actual church

investigation of Jesus’ ‘*project ecclésial*’ (theology of ‘communion’, of ministry, of sacrament, of mission): a sufficient knowledge of the Tradition ; an initiation into the methods of the human sciences. It would be regrettable were pastoral theology to eclipse systematics in the Faculties since that is indispensable for dialogue with the reigning philosophies, to explore criteria, to relate appropriately to culture and to serve doctrine. Nevertheless pastoral theology will go on becoming more assured and more original in its own right. It must yet come into its own, to the benefit, especially, of those with the greatest pastoral responsibilities. We need pastoral theologians de base who can help avoid the pitfalls of wildness, an over-technocratic or organisational approach, or an *ad hoc* or just too conservative approach. There are many examples of these in this period right after the Council. Pastoral theology must accompany systematics as it chews away rather than be a separate part of the teaching programme. But strict watch must be kept to avoid it becoming the *corollaria pastoralia* of the past. It needs its own method. Theology is too rich and diverse to be monopolised by any one theological dimension. Pastoral theology is well advised to minimise its contribution to theological polyphony.

practice?²²⁰ Or from increased attention to neglected issues of practice? Or from a more insistent emphasis on the historical dimension of faith and the type of truth revealed? (Liégé 1977a: 85).

However you assess these questions it is noticeable that Christian theology as a specific product of a faith community (not just a rational elaboration of a faith-object) finds itself disposed to welcome this new epistemological emphasis on the *pratique* (Liégé 1977a: 85).

Liégé next wants to define the identity of the *pratique* more precisely. As a term it is suggestive but vague. It needs more rigorous identification to be able to carry a questioning that is receivable in faith, an appeal to 'real life', to spontaneity in any form, not to experience in general. Of experience Luther had said, '*sola experientia facit theologum*'. This is partly true but too subjective because Luther was speaking about an individual's experience (Liégé 1977a: 87-88). The church's universal experience constitutes a more assured place for theology and which needs further enquiry. Many questions arise about church practice. Liégé offers examples of difficult questions concerning criteria: are some areas internal to theology to be privileged such as prayer, spirituality, catechesis or Christian action in society, so fashionable today?

Some liberation theologians privilege socio-political action placing it higher than matters of faith even when secular activities, as in the 1968 Uppsala debate, where one group claimed scripture only belonged to those engaged in the liberation struggle. The argument is that the Spirit is at work to liberate human groups and that the eschatological hope is already active in history. But can this criterion be privileged? We need fundamental arguments (Liégé 1977a: 86).

Liégé next asks how all this reference to the *pratique* actually functions (Liégé 1977a: 87-88).²²¹ How is it possible to welcome the *pratique* into the interior of the theological *acte*

²²⁰ There are many past examples where practice has stubbornly remained attached to theory to justify ideological ways of being, ignoring cultural change and putting itself at risk of '*fixisme*'; for example, in its theology of religious freedom, papal power, the divine right of kings or other matters of authority.

²²¹ The need is to get the epistemology right. He starts with the expression 'to theologise is to go out from the *pratique*'. This can be agreed to mean, minimally anyhow, that the *pratique* puts original questions to theology,

without making theology be just the servant of practice? There is a need for a dialogue between the faith's critical energies and the 'given' of the *pratique* so that each interviews the other in turn and reinterpretation is welcomed. The *pratique* gives to the faith clarity about culture, its discourse and its taken for granted understandings. The faith gives to practice a sense of what is at stake in ecclesiastical or secular goings on. This is a hard task. It requires a sharp sense of faith, rooted in apostolic sources, critically faithful to catholic tradition. There is also a need to analyse keenly practices encountered by the faith. This needs a conception of theological truth which holds on to its believing origin not a reductionist approach that sees theological truth as just emerging out of existence or which is just efficacious (Liégé 1977a: 88).

There is a second debate about the position of theologians in relation to effective practice (Liégé 1977a: 88-89).²²² There is, thirdly, a debate about inductive theology in relation to the traditionally more normative deductive theology.²²³ Liégé concludes with a final question. Do all theological forms have to be in reference to the *pratique*? Is this what everything leads to? There has been an attempt in recent years to elaborate a problematic of pastoral or practical theology. It is a question of trying to help the church act reflectively with criteria for truth. It is a matter of trying to elaborate a theory of faith in and for the *pratique* of the church today, lived out in Christian community situated in the world in a given time. One such theology emphasises the *pratique*. But is this the model for all theology, honourably replacing yesterday's systematics? Would not this be an impoverishment at a time when pastoral

renews ancient questions, opens polemics, offers new fields of reading and challenges dated, inadequate jargon. This understanding is what the Council expresses in *Gaudium et Spes* (44) saying the Church is always open to new avenues of truth. The danger of this approach to the *pratique* in theology is that it is too extrinsic, especially when it is to do with a matter something practiced in the church which is identified as a practice of faith. Can we go further and recognise something normative for theology about what derives from practice? Would we have to distinguish between some practice and other practice? Because it is important not to remove from the discerning believer, rooted in the living Tradition, the last word and last initiative of their own jargon. We can not just bend the faith to any practice, throwing onto the theological cart all sorts of ideological, moral or political baggage.

²²² This is not a matter of a neat division of tasks. It is a dialogue. But could this lead to the '*groupe théologien*' being overtaken by practical engagements? Some will think this. Others see an unacceptable shrinking of theology in the face of the *pratique*. But can not a theologian get close to the *pratique* even if not becoming totally immersed? Would it not it be acceptable just to be living alongside an active, practical and committed community?

²²³ Can we really say that just when theology is inductive it is safe to think that the *pratique* is the only thing to help faith express itself? Deductive theology was just as much the product of living faith in dialogue with human experience and interpreting it. Do we not rather need a dialectical expression which brings together the Gospel's founding events with what needs to be thought about in relation to practice today?

theologians, in calling to other forms and functions of theology, are still showing an interest in the *pratique* but illustrating a different way of relating to it? On this point of methodology also the debate remains open (Liégé 1977a: 89-90).

17. Conclusion

This Chapter set out to describe Liégé's pastoral theology chronologically in order to explore the assessments of Viau, Lemoine and Reynal, and be able to discern Liégé's vantage point in the comparative descriptions and discussion that follow in Parts Three and Four.

As is seen from the summary analysis above, Viau is clearly right to observe that Liégé's 'orientation' remains ambivalent. For Viau (1987: 23) he never quite resolved the tension between treating pastoral theology as a new chapter in received theology and as a dimension of all theology, though he believes the latter perspective generally prevailed.

Viau (1987:24) points out that Liégé's conceptions have not escaped considerable subsequent critique: that Liégé was insufficiently critical; his was only a sort of second hand theology; it was somewhat romantic, pointing to an evanescent church that did not take institutional reality into account; he concentrated too much on the personal, at the expense of the intellectual, character of faith. Be this as it may, Viau concedes Liégé's paramount importance for pastoral reflection during the 1960s. His work and teaching went beyond France and were the origin of unprecedented pastoral institutions in Viau's Québec. Today all Québécois pastoral specialists 'are gather together the streams in one way or another, of his theoretical developments' (Viau: 1987: 24).²²⁴

²²⁴ Commenting on the points in common between the German and French schools of pastoral theology in the 1960s, Viau (1987: 24-26) says the immense renewal of the Council was hardly less remarkable than its power to unite: there was a sense that everyone must work together for the progress of the church. This explains the unity of thought in European pastoral theology of that era. Two features stand out: The aim of pastoral theology is to announce the salvation of the church, and human experience plays a key role in this announcement. Pastoral theology is not an ecclesiology – it is concerned with all that leads a human being to be converted to a true faith in Jesus Christ. It is a form of theology of evangelisation. To demonstrate, Viau quotes Rahner's dictum that *la pastorale* 'is God's work of salvation in respect of the world' and Liégé's phrase that *la pastorale* is "acrament of salvation in the "today" of its appearing' (Liégé 1971a). Key points in summarising what is shared here include: the importance of taking human experience into account in the concrete lives of individuals and groups. Secondly there is agreement on the need for a rigorous analysis of this situation and experience. Thirdly this human experience must be related to ecclesial experience. Theological reflection rises up from the experience of the believing community. A summary can be made in five sentences:

Pastoral theology is the concern of the church seeking its “auto-edification” (Liégé’s phrase). It is to be a rigorous and systematic discipline, getting away from too speculative a theology. It focusses on the action of the church. It envisages the salvation of human beings. It takes into account human experience both in itself and in its relation with the church.

PART THREE: LIÉGÉ'S PASTORAL THEOLOGY FROM COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction: The Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches share the context of coming to terms with the modern world.

To me it seems that the next 50 years will be a period of doctrinal fluidity and the task of the Church is to secure continuity. There is much in traditional Christianity which is not acceptable to the present generation, and it is the business of our future leaders to pour the old wine into new bottles. The shape and size of those bottles constitutes the problem of the age - from a letter by Percy Gardner-Smith, Dean of Jesus College, Cambridge to John A.T. Robinson before his ordination to the diaconate in Bristol Cathedral on 23rd September 1945 (James 1989: 25).

Part Three aims to place French and British pastoral theology within a shared contextual framework that helps in comparing and contrasting their respective stories.

Liégé was ordained sixteen months before Robinson and Gardner-Smith's words would have been equally prophetic for him. Common to theology then was the multi-faceted challenge to adapt to the modern world. Scientific developments had revolutionised knowledge during the preceding century. But in 1950 most of this knowledge had yet to be weighed by academic theology, let alone popular Christianity. The similarly drastic revolution of 'modernity' was occurring in Western culture and society. The challenges, threats and opportunities this laid at theology and the church's door are well researched and described (Barr 1973; Hull 1985; Giddens 1986; Houlden 1987; Furniss 1995; Ballard and Pritchard 1996; Bruce 1996; Gallagher 1997; Roberts 2002). How would theology and pastoral theology respond? What resources would it seek? How would it use the new knowledge and circumstances? What would its attitudes be to modernity? What practical difference might all this make? Whatever the place of such questions in the conscious minds of theologians at the time, with half a century of hindsight we can see that they framed the context for

pastoral theology whether in France or Britain. These were the questions set them by the agenda of the times.

Part Three prepares the ground for the critical contrasts of Part Four by examining Catholic and British theology during this historic period. It becomes clear that by 2007 the insights that emerged on either side of the Channel have now been broadly assimilated on both, not in many aspects of detail, but in their common response to the initial challenges.

Whereas in 1950 there was almost no cross-fertilisation across the Channel, now there is. True, most current practical theology in French is not read by Anglophones and current initiatives within the French church are unknown in Britain.²²⁵ Yet the enterprise of practical theology, though increasingly local in emergence, is now best understood as a global enterprise (Gräb and Osmer 1997).

The various 'revolutions' have not only continued but the quantity, quality and speed of change they entail is so huge that the pastoral theological landscape of 1950 is now hardly recognisable. The assumptions, questions, burning issues and anxieties, language, life-styles, cultural norms and variables of then have all changed drastically. Significant contrasts then seem trivial now. Whatever their divergent courses through the shared terrain of their times, the pastoral theological tributaries of these six decades are now a confluence flowing through another land far away.

The challenge of responding to the modern world set pastoral theology's agenda and how it responded is the common issue able to serve as a lens through which to focus the two chapters of Part Three.

²²⁵ These are not even known about between the dioceses in France (Adler 1995).

Chapter Seven: Liégé's pastoral theology in francophone Roman Catholic perspective: 1945- 2005

1. Introduction

The aim of this Chapter is to see Liégé's achievement through Roman Catholic and French practical theology's eyes. This involves, first, a portrait of Catholicism under Pope Pius XII. Then follows a description of attempts at theological reform before Vatican II, and the significance of its calling. Then the Chapter focusses on the origins and development of French pastoral theology including an assessment of Liégé's contribution to this and a brief review of its current situation.

2. The theologian's world in the Roman Catholicism of Pius XII: repression from Rome ²²⁶

Pius XII is viewed as the last pope to rule over the 'Roman system' which 'at that time was close to its peak of perfection' (Fouilloux 1995: 73). For theologians like Liégé, Pius XII's Roman Catholicism was repressive; stuck in an immobilising 'ecclesial and theological fixism' (Alberigo 1995a: 35).²²⁷ The church was intransigent, fearful, pessimistic and under siege. The Pacellian Curia acted in secrecy and isolation (Alberigo 1995).²²⁸ Such hostility and

²²⁶ A word about sources is necessary: In the following pages there is heavy reliance on Chapters by Alberigo and Fouilloux in Alberigo (1995). Fouilloux is the leading contemporary ecclesiastical historian in France. He is deferred to and quoted four times by the great scholar Pierre Pierrard (2000) and three times by Gérard Cholvy (2002). He was entrusted with the major task of editing Congar's 1946-1956 Journal (2002). Dominique Congar, the nephew of the theologian, describes Fouilloux' *Présentation générale*, which prefaces this edition, as 'excellent' saying that 'there is nothing to add...everything has been said and well said (Congar 2002: 10). Nevertheless reliance on Fouilloux in particular may be thought to allow too much opinion to one scholar. It should therefore be stressed that the series in question has an editorial board of fifty-three scholars from over twenty countries, all of them of international repute. For example, England was represented by Henry Chadwick and Adrian Hastings. The spectrum ranges from scholars like Avery Dulles in New York to Gustavo Gutierrez in Lima. It would seem therefore that this series may be deemed to be the definitive available history of Vatican II. Further academic corroboration may also be found through scholars like Carlo Falconi (1967) or E.E.Yhales (1965). Alberigo (1995) is also cited by Kerr (2007) for data on the Council.

²²⁷ Alberigo (1995a: 35) describes it as 'a Catholicism rendered immobile by its certainties'.

²²⁸ For example, 'for a long time Rome failed to take any official notice of the ecumenical movement. Not only did the Holy See refuse to join it, as had been proposed to it at the outset, but it forbade its members to participate in it' (Fouilloux 1995a: 62). Deductive Thomist scholasticism was the reigning theological power and

condemnation were backed by four hundred years of experience.²²⁹ This bleak portrait can be softened.

By centralising Rome echoed ‘the creation and then the consolidation of the modern state and of executive power within it’ (Fouilloux 1995: 73). It was not intended as an end in itself. Theoretically it was for the sake of ‘unity among the troops, unity of command and

it would brook no opposition. Censure, prohibition, excommunication and hostility were normative and habitual. In fact by the 1950s Roman control ‘bordered on an obsession’ (Fouilloux 1995a: 74) Fouilloux writes:

any linguistic departure from the Vatican norm... was interpreted as potential support for the enemy and for communism in particular. Moreover, sanctions rained down to close the ranks of the front that had to be united *ad extra*; if this phenomenon has sometimes been compared, exaggeratedly, to the “witch hunt” that occurred in the United States in the time of Senator McCarthy, it was, in a minor mode, of a piece with that era (Fouilloux 1995a: 75).

²²⁹ The Council of Trent retaliating to the Protestant revolt in the sixteenth century had delivered a catalogue of anathemas. It was in this period ‘that the Roman Church began to think of itself as a fortress of truth, besieged by successive waves of heresy and then of wickedness’ (Fouilloux 1995a: 75). This ‘exhausting war of defence’ left its marks on the Church and its response increasingly hardened (Fouilloux 1995a: 75). The encyclical *Quanta cura* and the *Syllabus* of 1864 had exhaustively condemned nineteenth century trends. The notorious *Pascendi* of 1907 had comprehensively blasted Modernism and all its works (which had even had the audacity to spring from the bosom of the Catholic Church). In 1937 Pius XI described communism as ‘intrinsically perverted’. *Humani generis* in 1950 was intended as a dose of theological chemotherapy to destroy any remaining cells of Modernism’s cancer of openness (Fouilloux 1995a: 70-71). In preceding centuries Rome had progressively centralised authority (Fouilloux 1995a: 73). This process of ‘Romanization’ is thought of as being greatly spurred on by Vatican I’s dogmatic definition of the Pope’s personal infallibility in matters of faith and morals in 1870. This is true. But Fouilloux sees as even more significant the concept of the ordinary magisterium in 1863, the practical application and effect of which was enormously to increase the powers and decision making control of the Sacred Office:

This ecclesiology, confirmed by subsequent encyclicals and by the *Code* of 1917, made the Vatican more than ever the summit of Catholicism and the pope the apex of that summit: a kind of absolute sovereign in matters doctrinal, with no authority able to oppose him. The spreading practice of pilgrimages to Rome and of personal devotion to the pope were the spiritual echo of this theological development (Fouilloux 1995a: 66).

Rome made decisions without worrying about local dignitaries as, for example, Cardinals Feltrin, Gerlier and Liénart bitterly discovered in 1953 in the matter of worker-priests (Fouilloux 1995a: 69).

operation' needed to withstand assaults from outside (Fouilloux 1995: 73).²³⁰ Catholicism needed to emphasise its difference.²³¹

Post-Tridentine Catholicism was not entirely defensive. It 'tirelessly proposed the idea of an integral Christian countersociety that would allow no aspect of life, personal or collective, to fall outside its scope' (Fouilloux 1995: 76). It repeatedly called for a return to 'Christendom' (Fouilloux 1995: 76). Only one area of change did it welcome: technology. The railway enabled mass pilgrimages and the new media enabled propaganda.

The exclusive intellectual structure that accompanied this countersociety was the Thomism restored by Leo XIII. From this it derived its social foundations: 'neither liberalism nor socialism, but an organic vision that subordinated self interest, whether individual or collective (that of a class for example), to the common good' (Fouilloux 1995: 76).

Relevant to Liégé's background is the notion of a 'new Christendom' to which Pius XI was committed with slogans like: 'We will make our brothers Christians once again, we swear it through Jesus Christ' or 'the whole of Christianity into the whole of life' (Fouilloux 1995: 78).²³² It aimed to strip faith from its outdated medieval trappings. It implied a shift from preservation towards a Catholicism in movement, 'proud, pure, joyful and triumphant' as a contemporary slogan had it (Fouilloux 1995: 79).

²³⁰ Fouilloux distinguishes four threats in particular: Firstly, the Protestant Reformation, 'introduced the worm of free inquiry into the act of faith, which until then had been regulated by authority alone' (Fouilloux 1995a: 75) Next came the Enlightenment and the Revolution, especially the French Revolution, which the Church struggled against, 'always in retreat, by a resolute antiliberalism, which rejected both the laicization of public life and the privatization of religion' (Fouilloux 1995a: 75) Then came twentieth-century scientism, 'which attacked faith itself in its biblical sources and their dogmatic interpretation (Fouilloux 1995a: 75). The fear of this goes some way to explaining the harshness of Pius X's response to modernism. And, after all, the threats here had by no means gone away. And the essence of the debate had not changed. In the 1950s, as in 1907, the Church still felt the need to condemn Abbé Duméry's philosophy in 1958 and Teilhard de Chardin's science as late as 1962. Finally, there was the Russian Revolution of 1917. The Church saw this and the Soviet communism it led to as a scientism that 'presented itself as a (false) response to the (real) defects of liberalism, which in turn was heir to the free enquiry of the Reformers' (Fouilloux 1995a: 76).

²³¹ This is the needed perspective to understand sympathetically the condemnation of Anglican orders in 1896 and the failure of the Malines Conversations during the 1920s (Fouilloux 1995a: 77).

²³² Maritain made a distinction which gained wide acceptance between, in Fouilloux's words, 'the habitual activity of believers "as Christians" in the profane world and their exceptional activity "precisely insofar as they are Christians," when religious values were threatened there' (Fouilloux 1995a: 78). Catholic Action espoused this view.

Pius XI was pope from 1922, when Liégé was one, to 1939, when he was eighteen, and he was influenced by such ideas, embryonically similar to his later theology. For though the ultimate goal of Pius XI's 'new Christendom' was integral rechristianisation, it implied leaving the 'ecclesiastical fortress' and proposing an 'open-air' or 'shock' Christianity to a secularising world. So Rome may be given credit for forward movement during the first half of the twentieth century (Fouilloux 1995: 78).²³³

3. The theologian's world in the Roman Catholicism of Pius XII: prophetic reform in the ranks with Liégé as one of the prophets

Renewals had already precipitated the Lamennais, Modernist, *Action Française*, *théologie nouvelle* and worker-priest crises. They all raised the same question:

Instead of planning to build a Christian city that was both anachronistic and utopian, would it not be better to go out, once and for all, to the 'barbarians' of the modern world by undertaking an evangelisation that is really adapted to them?' (Fouilloux 1995: 82)

But whereas Möhler and Newman were tactfully dismissed, by the 1930s an offensive strategy had been chosen. Anonymous denunciations, secret investigations, the Index and 'demands for quasi-military obedience' were methods used, as Liégé was to experience bitterly (Fouilloux 1995: 82). But Rome could not extinguish nor silence these reformers. They complained, as Fouilloux delightfully puts it, of

a Thomism desiccated by having been too often compressed into succinct theses; a deductive Thomism that ground up contemporary realities according to the rhythm of its impeccable conceptualisations; that 'sought God at the end of syllogisms' (Fouilloux 1995: 83).

²³³ In fact the plan for a 'new Christendom' was abandoned after 1945. But it was something of its spirit that inspired the mission to the working classes which Rome first had some enthusiasm for despite its later massive back-peddalling and condemnation. Once this mission was earthed in human realities and spawned different tactical approaches it was found by Rome in 1954 to involve excessive and unacceptable conformity to the world. But by then the movement's ideas and questions were too strong to stop even if its activities could be. Rome had at least sown some seeds of its own later reform. Even under Pius XII, at least before 1950, Rome was capable of modest reform, as shown by the 1943 biblical studies encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu*, 'unanimously regarded as freeing scholars from the leaden cloak that had weighed on biblical studies since the modernist crisis' (Fouilloux 1995a: 80) .

This rationality was accompanied by uncritical devotional credulity characterised by Fouilloux as ‘dubious Marian apparitions, stigmatizations not officially acknowledged, sulphurous types of sanctity’ (Fouilloux 1995: 83). This is important because Liégé, perhaps more than anyone else in France, addressed these symptoms. For it was ‘a mysticism that obscured to some extent what is specific in Christian faith, namely, Jesus Christ, true man and true God, dead and risen’ (Fouilloux 1995: 83). The cult of Mary was allowed to proliferate into a Mariology that amounted to an appreciably different religion that Congar called ‘Mariano-Christianity’ (Fouilloux 1995: 83).

Roman Catholicism had shut itself up, ignoring current intellectual and social developments (Fouilloux 1995: 83).²³⁴ The reformers managed to hold faith with Rome despite its myopic intransigence (Fouilloux 1995: 84). They used ‘an inductive approach that, instead of measuring reality by the yardstick of intangible truths, started from human history, and attempted to understand these in relation to God’ (Fouilloux 1995: 84). Fouilloux now names two of these reformers:

An effort was made to focus on Christology in order to explain the essence of the Christian faith whilst clearing away the accidental undergrowth that had been proliferating around it for at least three centuries and was becoming more and more invasive. If the mystery of God becoming man and dying and rising for the salvation of the human race is indeed the heart of the Christian message, of its kerygma, then an appropriate intellectual approach to it ought to be able to separate it out from its devotional straightjacket and make it widely known, especially through catechesis (Fouilloux 1995: 84).

And then he makes this comparison:

This was the perspective adopted by a group of German theologians from which the Jesuit, Karl Rahner, emerged, and which had its imitators on the other side of the Rhine, *as can be seen in the work of the French Dominican Pierre-André Liégé* (Fouilloux 1995: 84). (My emphasis)

²³⁴ In the 1950s Kant was still the great enemy, responsible for modern individualism. Hegel, Marx, Freud and Nietzsche were largely unattended to. Masses of young people were being deeply influenced by these thinkers while Rome was still duelling with Kant, Comte and Renan. However much Rome tried to stifle the question, Catholics increasingly asked whether it was right to stay in the world created by Romanism or better to participate in the world that actually exists (Fouilloux 1995).

Here is the antidote to that sickly Marian piety; ‘a kerygmatic theology meant a purified spirituality’ (Fouilloux 1995: 85). ‘It meant a shelving of secondary devotions for the sake of the only adoration in spirit and in truth that counts: adoration of the Trinitarian mystery...’ (Fouilloux 1995: 85).²³⁵ Scholars had of course been calling for a return to the sources since the 1920s.²³⁶

Catechesis was ‘at the juncture of these several returns to the sources and profiting by modern pedagogical research’ (Fouilloux 1995: 87). Clerical chaplaincy like Chenu’s was important. Chaplains promoted renewal movements.²³⁷ Chenu and Liégé shared willingness to sacrifice scholarly to pastoral and administrative work despite intellectual capacity of the highest order; complete commitment and working long hours; and passion for the gospel.²³⁸ By the time Liégé became a chaplain a growing number of middle-class people were

²³⁵ Fouilloux comments that ‘ecumenical contacts played a large part in the position I am trying to describe’. And though I have been able to discover almost nothing of concrete substance from Liégé’s years in Germany, it is a fair deduction, especially given Congar’s influence on him, that he widened his ecumenical perspective there, especially since Fouilloux (1995: 85) mentions the ‘great ecumenical value’ of this concentration on Christology, which echoed Barth’s approach, known to Liégé.

²³⁶ Rather than rely on the Romanism of the post-Reformation era, surely the faithful could and should be fed ‘through a scrupulous adherence to the intentions of the Founder and his first disciples’ (Fouilloux 1995: 85). The late nineteenth century return to the Bible common to France, Germany and Belgium had, in Fouilloux’s view, three elements. It was scholarly, pastoral and theological. Thus it used all resources available; it helped better editions of the Bible replace the current pious reading matter; it got beyond the impoverished medieval Scholasticism of the theological manuals. A similar return to patristic sources was equally under way (Fouilloux 1995: 86).

Also influential for Liégé was the liturgical movement, born in Belgium just before the First World War. It grew in Germany first, then in France. It was in alliance with the biblical movement and shared the same aim of transcending ‘the rubricism of the preceding century with its fussiness and rigidity and its demand for uniformity’ (Fouilloux 1995: 86). Fouilloux singles out Louis Bouyer’s *The Paschal Mystery* (1945) as ‘one of the finest products of this endeavour’ (Fouilloux 1995: 86) And, of special relevance to Liégé, given his passion for the same end as expressed in his books, this movement ‘made an effort to change passive believers into active’ (Fouilloux 1995: 86) It emphasised the main rites, explained them and even celebrated them in the vernacular (Fouilloux 1995: 86).

²³⁷ In Pius XII’s time these chaplains were ‘among the intellectual leaders of the ‘antiroman complex,’ some of them being theologians of renown who often sacrificed their scholarly research to attend countless meetings, draw up working plans, and write articles of sound popularization for those who were becoming their flock. Thus between 1942 and 1954 French Dominican Marie-Dominique Chenu devoted himself completely to the Christians of the 13th District in Paris, to teams of teachers, groups in the ‘little clubs’, priests and militant workers; he gave himself to them with exemplary constancy, because he saw in them so many ways of introducing the gospel into his own age (to paraphrase the title of the volume containing some of these scattered contributions)’ [*La Parole de Dieu II. L’Évangile dans le temps* (Paris, 1964)] (Fouilloux 1995: 88).

²³⁸ Fouilloux adds: ‘As for the theologians who were working for these groups, their books were far more widely known than the products of their Roman confrères, which were often privately published. There was evidently a demand for the theology that could be read by the nonspecialist - thus the acute problem when works were translated from German or French into Italian or Spanish’ (Fouilloux 1995: 89). Some of Liégé’s books would be translated into all three.

disaffected by 'Rome's chilling certainties and were calling for an expression of the faith more adapted to their intellectual or professional standing' (Fouilloux 1995: 88).

Militants from Catholic Action, urban and rural, stressed that a church that 'seemed to be the product of another age' was increasingly incredible. University lay people were demanding a realistic apologetics. Young people rejected the prohibitions.²³⁹

Rome treated innovators as suspects 'and this was a position from which they could not easily extricate themselves, since even after a negative finding the file containing the accusation remained (Fouilloux 1995: 89). This would be precisely Liégé's experience. Rome regarded France and Germany as by far the worst cases which somewhat explains the severity of the measures against the Dominicans in 1954 (Fouilloux 1995: 89).

4. Vatican II: the re-emergence of the pastoral in the church and the beginnings of the new pastoral and practical theology in France

John XXIII insisted that henceforth the church was to be pastoral.²⁴⁰ Suddenly the church finds itself poised on the crest of a massive wave about to break.²⁴¹

²³⁹ They wanted a spirituality which took 'human love seriously' (Fouilloux 1995: 88). They were, after all, children of their times; living through the move from the 1950s to the 1960s that 'seemed to be a decisive turning point in the realm of thought' (Fouilloux 1995: 59). Progressive humanism was being challenged, after Auschwitz and Hiroshima. A new 'concern for commitment to peace and human dignity' was sought (Fouilloux 1995: 59). The emerging optimism that was to flower in the 1960s was criticised by some as 'blind to the defects of the "free world"', to the 'errors of the Churches' and to 'the cries from the Gulag' (Fouilloux 1995: 59). Soviet, American or Roman Catholic orthodoxies all had their denouncers. As colonies struggled for independence, so these prophets railed against the hypocrisy of orthodoxies 'which had no qualms about destroying those who resisted their several forms of indoctrination' (Fouilloux 1995: 59). And they based a theory on what they observed: far from mastering nature, consciousness or history, human beings are being driven by obscure and implacable forces in those areas; thus was Marx revised by Althusser and Freud by Lacan (Fouilloux 1995: 59).

²⁴⁰ See Appendix 3 for a more full description of the background to and immediate context of the Council.

²⁴¹ There is a need to say something about the major source for this next section. Dr. Gérard Adler is a highly esteemed professor at the Catholic faculty of the University of Strasbourg. For example, his work with Vogeleisen (Adler 1981) is given as the basic bibliography for the catechetical movement in France in the *Éditions du Cerf's* great theological publishing venture, *Initiation à la Pratique de la Théologie* (Lauet 1987). Or again, his article, '*Questions de Théologie Pratique dans l'Aire Francophone Catholique*' (Adler 1995) is chosen for inclusion as a '*lecture obligatoire*' in Professor Marcel Viau's '*Recueil de Textes*' used as the primary material for pastoral theology at the University of Laval (Viau 2003). The article used here as a source was first commissioned for the *Biennio di Specializzazione in Teologia Pastorale* and appeared in *Studia Patavina, Rivista di Scienze Religiose* 1996/3. Then, with minor modifications it was published as *Von der Pastoraltheologie zu einer Theologie der christlichen Praxis. Ein*

It was as a systematic theologian that Liégé proclaimed a new pastoral theology. But his involvement in the Scouts, the catechetical movement and his general pastoral ministry is significant because, as Adler (1995; 2004) shows, pastoral theology in France emerged out of practice.

At parish level in France, pastoral care was the task of priests but they shared an overwhelming sense of frustration and alienation.²⁴² Adler (2004: 28) points out that the pastoral theological renewal associated with Liégé was not a theological add-on in France; it was born in the very heart of theology at a time when theology turned to the practical. Pastoral reality provoked theology to change: a century of secularisation, dechristianisation, scientific development, conditions of life, *déplacement*, habitat, growing urbanisation, and new philosophical ideas alien to faith (Adler 2004: 29). Pastors had to deal with people marked by these changes. Neo-scholastic theology no longer connected with life. For Adler (2004: 29) it is not surprising that systematic theologians were reformers given their involvement in *Action Catholique*, JOC or JAC: from 1930-40 these movements produced a 'joyous effervescence' (Adler 1995; Adler 2004). Y. Daniel and H. Godin (1943) published their influential *France, pays de mission?* Well researched and supported by Cardinal Suhard of Paris, it was widely read. It questioned the parish system as capable of engagement with the working class. It suggested changing a territorial church arrangement to a more personal one (Adler 2004: 29).

Lagebericht aus Frankreich in the International Journal of Practical Theology (Adler 1998). Since it has not been published in English or French, Professor Adler kindly sent me a copy of his original, entitled *De la Théologie Pastorale à une Théologie des Pratiques Chrétiennes*. A version of this article is published as Adler (2004) though there are slight differences and omissions from the original.

²⁴² Pastoral theology as taught in French seminaries until Vatican II was centred on the cleric and the traditional acts of his sacerdotal ministry. But it had become bogged down in an inherited conventionality with a second-hand feel. It was a matter of following the recipe. Pastoral teaching until the 1950s consisted of a commentary on the rubrics of the Missal, the Breviary and ritual. Doctrinal rectitude was paramount and no local adaptation was acceptable. Given that these years were times of socio-cultural mutation, this could even be damaging to the psychological equilibrium and spiritual health of the pastor. Ministers were alienated from their own thinking and authority and just had to be obedient to handed out formulae that often did not fit their circumstances or experience. These features of 'theological formalism' are described in Adler's article (Adler 2004). Adler (1996) suggests that the way of pastoral thinking still operating in France can be found in the expectations of S. Rautenstrauch who founded a chair in pastoral theology under Maria-Theresa of Austria in 1774. His view of this was 'how theological theory must be applied in a concrete manner in a way useful to the practice of human life' (Adler 2004: 28). F. Grifschutz, was the first chair holder. He wrote: 'The pastor, as a particularly important member of society, has now many occasions to keep subjects in peace, in tranquillity, to stifle all spirit of revolt, to inculcate strongly in the head of all subordinate beings their duties with regard to superior authority: faithfulness, obedience, respect, honest payment of taxes etc' (Adler 1996: 2).

Pastoral theology thus starts from a very contextualised situation in France. It was introduced by men and women who reflected ‘*sur le terrain*’ (Adler 2004: 29). Among them, the catechists.²⁴³ These initiatives disturbed Rome. They might open a breach in the uniformity of thought (Adler 1996: 3).²⁴⁴ In France local, humble work with children influenced theology, pastoral action and church self-understanding. Though the term was not yet in use, it was here that the future ‘practical theology’ found ‘the form of its design and found its flight’ (Adler 2004: 30).²⁴⁵

Secret liturgical renewal occurred in youth camps, especially scout camps. Rules were broken as chaplains drew on research introducing renewed, stimulating liturgy: ‘One can say that in France practical theology began very practically’ (Adler 2004: 30). Pastoral theology was produced by the systematicians, primarily Liégé, through their ‘immersion in the new contexts and practices’ as much as through their ‘taste’ for the ideas themselves (Adler 2004: 30). Drawing on biblical, liturgical, and patristic sources they ‘reconstituted the theological soil which was giving way under the feet of the practitioners’ (Adler 2004: 30): ‘The names remembered here are authors who in their time offered very enlightening and stimulating theological reflection, recognised as such by the practitioners’ (Adler 2004: 30). Most seminal and important is Liégé, ‘without doubt the best known abroad’ (Adler 2004: 30):

²⁴³ ‘My catechism doesn’t travel a hundred metres into the street with the child’ joked Marie Fargues, naming the increasingly radical divorce between faith and life; between Christian teaching and the experience of children (Adler 2004: 29). But between 1935 and 1940 an intense production activity among catechists tried to put the gospel into words for today. Adler describes this as the human sciences starting to function ‘as clinical discourse’ (Adler 2004: 32). The catechetical activity of the 1930s had begun some ten years earlier as Marie Fargues, Françoise d’Aubigny, Françoise Derkenne and others began to make the claim that the young discipline of psychology could mediate a pedagogy whose discourse would be more adapted both to the mystery of faith and to young people. It would help catechesis escape from current formalism. They drew on the insight of secular pedagogy and the New School. It followed the logic of child development’s discoveries about intelligence, affectivity and sociability. What is observed influences the process and changes what had been a prescriptive *catéchèse* into a descriptive one. Mention must also be made of Joseph Colomb. Between 1945 and 1950 he, above all, brought together the catechetical, liturgical, biblical renewals then in full spate and tried to coordinate them. How to speak the Word of God in a way that did justice to this advance including the resources of psycho pedagogy? This was the question. See also Adler and Voegelisen (1981: 149-207).

²⁴⁴ Liberation theologians would later find that their theology arising out of a concrete situation would pose the same problem for Rome.

²⁴⁵ Adler (1996) is an article of particular importance. It is the only summary and assessment of French pastoral and practical theology during the twentieth century written for an international readership that I have found. Adler (1995) complements it but is shorter, more theoretical and less historical.

Is it possible to express what he specifically contributed in just a few lines? His courses, published works and articles were intended to give academic credibility back to pastoral theology at university level alongside the other theological disciplines. He defined this branch as a discipline which had its own discourse for reflexive awareness concerning the action of the church in the here and now of its accomplishment. He understood its distinctive role to involve three missionary and ministerial directions: prophetic, liturgical and hodegetic (Adler 2004: 30).

What is less acknowledged is that he greatly contributed to make known a theology of the Word:

His impact was great in catechetics where the new, everyday, vocabulary inspired by this theology was replacing what had gone before: the announcing of the Word as Good News as a message and a proclamation. This replaced the mere teaching of a doctrine. Now the accent was on a personalist vision of faith, a free response to the message of God, *fides qua* rather than *fides quae* (Adler 2004: 31).

Liégé pleaded for taking the human sciences into theological reflection in the area he still called pastoral theology, but, 'although he defended it like this, it dwelt for him largely under the authority of theology' (Adler 2004: 31). Adler judges that 'what is retained from him is his influence on pastoral thought, on his students and the works they brought into being' (Adler 2004: 31). He was not a practical theologian proper 'because with him, though he was open to the future, theology was, in spite of everything, at the level of intentions and finalities more than an analysis of the practical' (Adler 2004: 31).²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Adler mentions three other systematians along with Liégé as of special importance in what he calls the 'first wave' of France's pastoral theologians (Adler 2004: 31). A. Brien also took up the torch for a pastoral theology anchored in the university. He had been a prisoner of war and thus with people far from faith but not uninterested in it. He discovered there the gap between lived realities and what Adler calls the clotted (one might say 'fixed') language of the Church. His life work was concerned with establishing good links and relations between human values and Christian values. He had an optimistic vision of man founded on a God who was for, not against man as appeared to be the case in many quarrels between French society and the Church at the time. Brien argued with passion for a unified anthropology. Not an easy accomplishment since the human sciences had rather shattered this unified vision of man, though not of a God whose interest is the well being of man.

Adler wants to cite two others, though they don't 'habitually' appear in the history of pastoral theology. The first is Jean Mouroux whose *Le sens Chrétien de l'homme* (1945) had a wide readership. It sprang from the area of Christian humanism popular before the war that had been proposed by Masure. In it he tried to show that Christianity was not foreign to man but that the Christian mystery was the revelation of God's friendship and is capable of saving and divinising him. Adler comments that this book and his other, *L'expérience chrétienne* (1952) offered a breath of fresh air quite splendidly into the pastoral theology and ethics of the time. His other name is that of C. Wackenheim, whose *Christianisme sans idéologie* (1974) was of special importance. Like Liégé he was putting back the practical as a dimension of all theology and stressing its importance for practitioners on the street. It was not a book that went as far as analyzing concrete situations but it put theology back into its roots, into praxis.

These pioneers were involved in a ‘really theological engagement’ executed ‘with intelligence’ (Adler 2004: 32). It enabled their disciples to raise new, profound and radical questions of practical theology after them. His caveat is that they still worked ‘under the theological prescription’ (Adler 2004: 32). But they accepted the questions and issues of practitioners allowing them substantially to nourish their theology, something amplified by their disciples to the point that theologians ‘could know how to recognize the specificity of pastoral perspectives’ (Adler 2004: 32).

So in France the human sciences become first a clinical and then a critical discourse. First psycho-pedagogy finds its way into catechesis and other areas of church life and then, in this order, sociology, psychoanalysis, linguistics, institutional analysis, the pragmatics of communication and the others follow suit. These disciplines provided a critical discourse in the years of post-conciliar cultural mutation 1970-1980 (Adler 2004: 34).²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ Adler reminds us of the need, in the telling of pastoral theology’s story, to remember the sociocultural context of this epoch, with its effervescence and challenging of traditional society and many values and ideas that had hitherto remained unchallenged. Now they were contested in economic and social revolutions across various countries. If the human sciences have, by 1960, already made a great impact on theology, it is not long before some critics are perceiving them as ‘destroyers of the faith’ (Adler 2004: 34). The ethics of psychoanalysis becomes specially mistrusted. Adler sees two people as important in this development, both faculty members at the ISPC. The first is Jean Le Du who introduced group dynamics into catechesis. Following on from the work of Lewin, Moreno and Bion, this brought out more clearly the relation between process and content, and notions of status, role and function. The emphases were on Rogerien empathy with a focus on the subject in development, the fading of the idea of the ‘teacher’, the demands of unconditional positive regard and congruence. This was easily caricatured as *laissez faire* and it is true that sometimes these emphases were, in Adler’s word ‘excessive’. They seemed a product of the ‘radical, apparently irreversible mutations going on whose stakes were so high at a time of changing awareness’ (Adler 2004: 34). Nevertheless what is owed to Le Du is the knowledge that, as Adler puts it, ‘to propose the faith to Nathalie, you need not only to know the faith and Nathalie, but also to know the relations between the person, the group and...the Trinity’ (Adler 2004: 34). Adler comments, importantly: ‘Consequently a practice deduced from theory no longer has pertinence: if you see that the announcing of faith can change people, you must accept equally that group or inter-group relations can change or even mask the content of faith’. (Adler 2004: 34). Secondly, there was Gérard Defois. He contributed significantly to introducing the analysis of institutions into this field and into church practice, catechetical and otherwise. He exposed, with this critical instrument, underlying institutional interests, what was at stake concerning power and opposition, ideological or emotional sublimation and latent or open conflict in church practice. He insisted on taking care to verify whether the church behaved in the ways implied by its religious propositions. He exposed the gap between what the institutional church said and what it did. What he introduced sociologically was taken up by Audinet, Joncheray and J. P. Leconte and contributed always effectively to the analysis of practice as much within as outside the church (Adler 2004).

5. Liégé's World of Roman Catholic Pastoral Theology after Vatican II

Vatican II revived the *laos*, the People of God.²⁴⁸ But the changes triggered by the Council were more far reaching than those it proclaimed (Jossua 1979a: 102). The church's cultural and philosophical resting places were crumbling. What had been 'shared assumptive worlds' had drastically fragmented (Browning 1991: 4).

Responding creatively, Schillebeeckx, Rahner, Congar and Küng founded the international journal *Concilium* 'to radiate and keep alive the open spirit of the Council' (Borgman 2003: 2)²⁴⁹. Volume 3 (March 1965) was theme-titled 'Pastoral Theology' with Liégé on its editorial board.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ The God whose Spirit dwells in the hearts of all Christians. The Church, in *Lumen Gentium*, is to be understood as 'the basic sacrament or revelation': '...the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of an intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such unity' (Vatican II 1975). Theodore Davey CP sees this document as resituating the call to ministry in baptism rather than ordination (Davey 1986). Davey regards the 1971 Synod of the Roman Catholic Church as significantly breaking new ground in developing the Council by implying that the ministry of justice, promoting human dignity and defending human rights, is of the same status as preaching and administering the sacraments. It entails that the Roman Catholic Church is a community of justice and peace as a prerequisite for speaking to the world; that anyone who speaks about justice must first be just in the eyes of those to whom he speaks.

²⁴⁹ Schillebeeckx and Rahner in the first issue, January 1965, show their new confidence: the Council had been one of bishops but also of theologians. The founders were convinced that a theology was developing which could be a support to 'those who carry out the pastoral task within the church'. This theology would guide the bishops, priests and laymen with responsibilities. It was 'especially this theology, which would be practical in a new way, that would appear in the journal' (Borgman 2003). Borgman quotes Rahner and Schillebeeckx that the Council had made it clear that the pastoral work of the church and the preaching of the Gospel has something to learn from pastoral practice. They asserted the central issue was the same in both practice and theory, namely, and Borgman quotes, 'a theology which is deliberately based on Scripture and the history of salvation' (Borgman 2003). Theology is now free to engage with the real issues of the modern world. It is worth quoting from the General Introduction by Rahner and Schillebeeckx to *Concilium* vol. 1 no. 1, in January 1965. The edition is given the general theme title of 'Dogma':

In this review, the authors are concerned primarily with those who carry out the pastoral tasks within the Church. Much depends upon their decisions and activities. Taught by the experience of Vatican II, they know that the pastoral work of the Church and the preaching of the Gospel have something to learn from the science of theology, just as this theology has to learn from pastoral practice. These men know that in practice they cannot get very far merely with a theology they learned years ago in the course of their education and training. A new theology is taking shape which may have much more to say to them in connection with their tasks than what they read in manuals published a decade or more ago. It is difficult to sketch even in outline the distinguishing marks of this new theology. Quite clearly, however, it is deliberately based on Scripture and the history of salvation. At the same time it has the humble courage to confront the new problems arising from the human conditions of today. It seeks, on the basis of our contemporary situation, a

By 1976, the word ‘*displacement*’ was used to express the drastically altered state of affairs.²⁵¹ Appendix Seven offers more detail on this significant shift. The articles Jossua and J.B. Metz gathered for the 115th *Concilium* show, ‘without any possible doubt the fact that during the last twelve years the changes that have happened have been much more radical than during the period preceding Vatican II, which this Council ratified’ (Jossua 1979a: 102). Where does 1970s *displacement* leave Liégé?

better understanding of the Word of God for man and the world of our time. A theological insight of this kind is necessary for anyone who, acting in faith, is actively engaged in the Church and in the world (Rahner and Schillebeeckx 1965a).

Liégé was on the Editorial Board for the 4 pastoral editions of *Concilium* between 1966 and 1969. In *Concilium* generally I have come across 13 references to 9 of Liégé’s works in the footnotes; one quotation by him in the main text; one quotation by him in a footnote; one comment about his theology in a footnote and references to two of his works in the main text. I surmise that Liégé does not appear in the footnotes in *Concilium* more often because it is strongly Germanic and not much of his work is translated so the Dutch and Germans only cite German references. Congar was translated into German and is much more cited.

²⁵⁰ The first mention of Liégé is on page 70 of Vol. 1 No. 1 in the footnotes of an article by Boniface Willems entitled ‘Who belongs to the Church’ referencing his point to Liégé’s article as well as to Congar’s book (Liégé 1954; Congar 1963). There is no mention of Liégé in Vol. 2 No 1. This time Karl Rahner and Heinz Schuster write the editorial. They begin:

Since it is the function of theology in the Church to lay down the basis of the Church’s self-awareness in a scientific manner, it cannot limit itself to the permanent factors and their unfolding in the history of the Church. The present and future of the church fall too within the scope of theological thought. Only pastoral theology can undertake this. But it can only do so if we no longer leave it at collecting and transmitting norms, regulations and experiences for use by the clergy. It must become ‘practical theology’ in the true sense of the word. This implies two conditions. On the one hand, it must take account of all members and all functions which, in one way or another, contribute to the self-realisation of the Church. On the other hand, it must be subject to the constantly changing contemporary situation. This is vital because the contemporary situation is precisely that moment of salvation history in which God makes us here and now responsible for the realization of the Church. Only when this contemporary situation is analysed and interpreted as exactly as possible can pastoral theology develop the principles and imperative decisions required by the Church for its action now and in the future. Only then, too, can the Church begin to plan its attitude towards the contemporary world and will it be able to guide, organize and co-ordinate its activities, and all that is implied, on every level, from top to bottom’ (Rahner and Schuster 1965b).

This is strikingly Liégéian. He had been saying these things for at least fifteen years. *Concilium* is a strongly ecumenical journal. The very next edition in April is theme-titled ‘The Dialogue with Protestant Theologians’ and contains, for example, an article by Walter Kasper which refers to Congar’s work on Luther’s Christology (Kasper 1965). Roman Catholic pastoral theology from this point on keeps itself strongly aware of what Protestant theologians are saying. This, as we shall see, does not appear to be the case vice versa. But what neither Protestants nor Roman Catholics had expected was how extensively the anticipations of 1965 would be swept away by the sea change already upon them. See also Kerr (2007: vii).

²⁵¹ At the *Concilium* general assembly at Chantilly. Jossua prefers ‘displacement’, a metaphor to suggest not being in the same place where you were before, of being ‘somewhere else’ (Jossua 1979)

The railway carriages in which Liégé travelled during the 1950s used primitive technology in comparison with the TGVs planned by the time of his death. They were built with solid traditional materials. Picture-frames, panelling and bodywork used wood. Windows were lowered by leather straps. Seats were filled with horsehair. The engine used coal and steam. The drastic developments in technology, philosophy, the human and physical sciences, ideas, politics and society go some way to explaining why someone, so influential in his day, might be so swiftly forgotten. Liégé continued to inspire enthusiasm at conferences. But everything around him had changed. It was as if, driving steadily along on a two-way road, new lanes were added to Liégé's and new vehicles overtook him. Lyotard went to the USA, returning some years later with half his bibliography in English titles. 1968 and *Humanae Vitae* vitiated the influence of the Catholic Church. Young people were preoccupied with secular concerns: from the pill, Flower Power and a man on the moon to cultural revolution and Zen. Liégé and the church could not maintain their former plausibility. 'Relevance', like guitars at mass, could prove counter-productive. Liégé's message of Jesus Christ was now only one song among many. Rather than galvanising the French church into rejuvenated action, the Council seemed to have precipitated the breakdown of its former unity and power. It increasingly seemed for enthusiasts rather than the general mass of people.

Many signs of hope were perceived: It now engaged with the modern world. The 'preferential option for the poor' felt like a new hallmark of authenticity. Religious life was liberated and flexible. Faith and experience were better connected. There was an excitement about new liturgy, spirituality, communities, lay-involvement and catechesis.

Yet Liégé's pastoral theology stays so close to the heart of Christian experience and conviction that it cannot date entirely. Despite '*displacement*' Jossua writes:

That is why Christian theology will not exist tomorrow unless it arises new from intense spiritual experience. It must not fear to go on with the endless search for God and to welcome his manifestation in Jesus Christ (which is its true message), to be aware of the outpourings of the Spirit (Jossua 1979a: 110).

Liégé to the core. After all, Christian theologians cannot get away from the event Jesus Christ, the resurrection and Pentecost.

6. Practical Theology in France and the francophone world

International and ecumenical meetings have benefited French practical theology (Adler 1996: 7). Jean Joncheray has proposed a typology of relations between human sciences, especially sociology, and practitioners.²⁵² He suggests three models of cooperation between theologians, pastors and sociologists: using sociology as a preliminary aid to pastoral and theological reflection by helping us understand the world we live in better and how our message will be received; using sociology as an active support for pastoral work to unblock situations and allow better functioning; it can enter a mature dialogue with theology about the language and practice of Christians (Adler 1996: 7-8).

Audinet is assessed as 'one of the best surveyors of French and international practical theology' (Adler 1996: 8). Audinet thinks of practical theology as 'a science of action, reflection on ecclesial practice in contemporary society' doing his theology 'in the cité of men where God-talk must be audible, credible and plausible in today's social imagination and practice (Adler 1996: 8). Audinet developed an anthropology of *homo religiosus* 'which encompasses and overtakes, but without attacking, the rooting of practical theology in a Catholic ecclesiology' (Adler 1996: 8). He seeks a shift from practical theology towards a 'new practice of theology'; focussing on the relation between Church to world to the relation between society and religion (Adler 1996: 8).

Adler mentions the Swiss practical theologian Marc Donzé for incorporating German methods, seeing his subject as 'a constant interaction between the contemporary requests, the practice of Christian people and the foundational references' (Adler 1996: 8). Adler mentions the Protestant Chairs of practical theology at Geneva, Lausanne and Neuchatel, whose output overlaps, despite different histories and emphases. Adler also mentions the ecumenical dimension of his own work at Strasbourg.

He describes Canadian francophone practical theology as very significant, especially in Québec. French practical theologians include it in their panorama. In Ottawa it is called 'pastoral sciences'; in Montréal, *praxéologie*; in Québec, pastoral studies. It is firmly planted in

²⁵² Adler offers Joncheray (1995) as the reference here but unfortunately it is omitted in the bibliography.

these Universities and committed to build itself up in a scientific manner and to secure its status and recognition within the theological disciplines. This is a common intention. But each university has a specialty. The *Groupe de Recherches en études pastorales (GREC)* was founded in 1982. It is bilingual and includes Toronto. Adler offers nine titles of its work during the 1980s and up to 1991 to show its seriousness and achievement. At Montréal there are two significant figures, Jacques Grand'Maison and Jean-Guy Nadeau. Key words for them are observation, problematisation, theological and pastoral interpretation, re-elaboration of practice and the evaluation of prospective (Adler 1996: 9). Paul Ricoeur is especially influential here. At Laval there are two notable aspects: the immense and fruitful research around the history of *catéchèse* in Québec from 1760 to 1963 by Raymond Brodeur and Brigitte Caulier. This united the work of theologians and historians around the production of the catechism which gives a rigorous historical, anthropological and theological critique of the whole subject. Finally he mentions Viau and his attempts to root pastoral theology epistemologically, especially in his *La nouvelle théologie pratique* (1993) which 'opens new avenues' (Adler 1996: 9). He classes this as fundamental theology influenced by north American analytical philosophy to design a foundation for and analysis of practical theology's discourse. Viau proposes three topics for this discipline: *expérience, langage* and *la croyance*. He replaces a substantialist rationality by a procedural rationality and shifts the concepts of the practical, of theology and of practical theology. The suggestion is that in the analysis of language, all theology is able to be practical (Adler 1996: 9).

Finally he mentions African francophone practical theology with its emphasis on inculturation and the founding, in 1992, of the international, ecumenical francophone Society for practical theology.

Adler's article ends with a discussion of practical theology in France. He sees it as very diverse. Unlike Germany, it is not, apart from Paris, Strasbourg and similar Institutes, located in the Universities. It is often found in people rather than institutions which gives it a certain fragility, because they do not embody a university's continuity.²⁵³ Practical theology is found in diocesan pastoral reflection and initiatives or in catechetical or apostolic 'movements' where it is at its most inventive (Adler 1996: 10). Sadly this is not taught academically so is not

²⁵³ Interestingly Liégé was both a 'personality' and a University teacher.

much communicated. Adler sees as a particularly French problem that ‘we create far more than we share academically’ (Adler 1996: 10). Also unlike Germany, Italy or Spain, France does not publish compendiums of pastoral theology. Adler does not find this especially regrettable, for while they can be a useful resource for students they tend to be too swiftly systematized, too organized around a few key principles, and therefore too close to a deductive approach to theology. While he does not want to see practical theologians ‘just rushing from one novelty to another’ Adler suggests there is a good case for grasping that practical theology is a provisional reflection, always in process of becoming (Adler 1996: 10). When you stop it, you stop the movement of life and church practice.

Adler’s own definition of practical theology is that ‘it consists of critical and systematic reflection on the channels of thought and action by Christians and by a Church as it proposes and puts into effect the gospel message in society in a contemporary context’ (Adler 1996: 10). The expression pastoral theology is limiting in two ways. Quantitatively it suggests a theology *ad intra ecclesiam* and therefore risks forgetting the *ad extra ecclesiam* issues like justice and peace or ecology. Secondly, it is limiting qualitatively, because in the analysis of practice it runs the risk of being in critical dialogue with theology, and not doing enough justice to other disciplines which examine the coherence between what it says (*finalités des pratiques*) and what it does (*objectives, mises en oeuvres concrètes*) (Adler 1996: 11).

Adler’s *résumé* of the article from which this sections has extensively drawn makes an apt conclusion here:

Renewed practical theology’s development in France, in its own manner and rhythm, has followed that of other countries. Without doubt this means that social and cultural evolution has imposed itself in the same way and with similar results. Where is practical theology going? Is its role provisional? To remind theology that the Christian proposition is first life, and action in society, or will these Chairs in practical theology continue marking it as a specific discipline alongside others? Is it a theological sector among others or is it an *aiguillon* (goad, spur, incentive)? Does it constitute a dimension of all theological reflection and will it therefore one day have finished its mission, namely to remind theology again and again that it is not first speculative Gnosis but reflection for life? (Adler 1996: 12)

It would seem that the specific status of practical theology within theology is not going to be easily resolved. Liégé's ambivalence as pointed out by Viau, is still shared by practitioners today.

7. Conclusion

In the French context it is a significant observation, in the establishment of practical theology, with its multiple references, that the more a variety of disciplines were brought together the harder it was for one to 'take power' over the others in a prescriptive manner, as dogmatic theology had succeeded in doing through the 1950s. Dogmatic theology lost its power to assert itself above practical theology. When new human science ideas, with no ecclesiastical airs, started influencing the situation, they necessarily imported disturbingly new points of view which carried their own critique (Adler 2004).

This Chapter has moved a long way. It began in the stultifying atmosphere of Pius XII's 'Roman system' and finishes in the era of post-modern international practical theology. This Chapter has traced a movement from one ecclesiology to another. The ecclesiological horizon has changed from one of authority and the powers of the church, that of the Counter Reformation and, for practical theology, the theologians of the Restoration, to an ecclesiology of the church Body, first found in the Tübingen School and developed as an ecclesiology of communion and the People of God in Vatican II (Adler 2004: 11). Liégé played a significant role in this shift.

This Chapter has also traced a shift from a theology of application to a pastoral theology. Before the Council priests 'applied' what the manuals dictated. After the Council pastoral theology affirms its rootedness at the heart of a renewed ecclesiology. It becomes 'practical theology' and involves itself with the concrete situations of real people, seeking how to announce the Word and how the church might be effective in the present. It has passed from a prescriptive to a descriptive and critical theology (Adler 2004: 11). The era begun is one of a theological hermeneutics of Christian action. This shift closely parallels the development of Protestant theology. It is also one in which Liégé's work was of importance.

From an ecclesiocentric church characterized by intransigence and defensiveness we have seen a shift towards non-defensive communication. The Roman Catholic Church has moved from rejecting the modern world to recognizing its fast mutating nature, seeking to dialogue with it, and find a credible way to be true to the gospel. French pastoral theology has travelled far from an assumption that it could offer a model for the Christian to reproduce. From a parish-focused pastoral approach there has been a broadening of attention to consider Christian practice in an exploded diaspora of situations and contexts. As Adler puts it:

Practical theology has passed from being defined as K. Rahner or P. -A. Liégé would have defined it, as the study of the self-realisation of the Church in the contemporary world, to the definition of a J. Audinet, as the study of the self-realisation of the religious man and the believing Christian in contemporary society (Adler 2004: 11).

His seminal definition may have lost currency, but Liégé's role in this third shift may not be gainsaid.

Chapter Eight: Pastoral Theology in British Perspective: An overview

1. Introduction

The aim of this Chapter is to offer an appropriate background for the critique of British practical theology through the lens of Liégé that is the purpose of Part Four.²⁵⁴ Something needs to be said about the British pastoral theological tradition, particularly in the twentieth century, to make its main features sufficiently explicit for Part Four. It aims to be general, though more detailed material has been placed in appendices and footnotes. In order to avoid repetition it leaves discussion of writers important for the comparison with Liégé such as Tillich, Browning, Campbell, Carr or Graham until Part Four.

It starts with a brief overview of pastoral theology in Britain. Then it looks at British church life from the 1950s to be able to compare this with Liégé's context. It then offers a snapshot of the Pastoral Studies Movement in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s and the theological education with which it is associated. Next it looks back at the shifts in British pastoral theology in the last half century. Finally it notes the recent phenomenon of so-called 'international' practical theology. By the end of the Chapter the reader has sufficient background to British pastoral theology sufficiently to engage with the content and argument of Part Four.

2. Pastoral Theology in Britain from the 1920s to the 1960s

The Anglican approach to pastoral care has been described as 'an art form of a community rather than a profession of an *élite* (Reed 1990: 42). One of its basic tasks is catechetical and pastoral theological: 'it endeavours to develop and deepen people's comprehension of faith in Christ' and Anglicans 'look for concrete ways to engage with integrity about matters of personal and social transformation' (Reed 1990: 42). Its long tradition began at least with

²⁵⁴ 'British' here includes active influences upon it and so some influential writers from the U.S.A.

Richard Baxter (1615-91).²⁵⁵ Anglican 'pastoral theology' has tended to be atheoretical, a tradition of good pastoring, not a strictly theological discipline properly called pastoral theology at all.

Ballard (2000: 62f.) offers five characterising features of the 'British theological tradition up until around the 1960s'. It was taught only to aspiring clergy. Its focus was their practical work. It was largely a matter of practical 'hints and tips' with little undergirding theory. The 'flock' to be ministered to were mostly Christians. It was not intellectually demanding, pastoral theology being 'simply a way of transferring theological truth into some kind of practice' (Ballard 2000: 62).

For Burck and Hunter the 'early ground-breaking effort' of British pastoral theology in the twentieth century was Clement Rogers' 'attempt to establish pastoral theology as an inductive, empirical science concerned to discover the laws of spiritual life and human relationships in that light' (Burck and Hunter 1990: 870). They see pastoral theology as subsequently going in two directions: The first has a clinical orientation, associated with Frank Lake and R.A. Lambourne, 'perhaps the most widely known figures in twentieth century British pastoral theology'. The other has a spiritual orientation and is associated with Martin Thornton (Burck and Hunter 1990: 870; Thornton: 1956).²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ He is 'the author who most ably represented Puritan and Pietist beliefs about the ministry' (Miller 1990: 875). His book has been 'the most frequently reprinted pastoral manual in English. Baxter envisioned a ministry in which the pastor's study was 'the fulcrum of his professional life' (Miller 1990: 875). He entered his study 'to prepare himself for a two-fold witness: preaching to the public and private ministration to individuals' (Miller 1990: 876). The High Church or Laudian party of the seventeenth century maintained a similar ideal of the unity of piety and learning. This was given classic expression by George Herbert (1593-1633), in his treatise about parish ministry, *A Priest to the Temple; or the Country* (Herbert 1652). John Keble, in the nineteenth century, would develop this tradition for the Anglo-Catholic movement in his *Letters of Spiritual Counsel and Guidance* (Keble 1870). Edward King (1829-1910) 'published a set of pastoral lectures that he gave to ordinands as professor of pastoral theology at Oxford University' (Ballard 2000: 61). In the Church of Scotland pastoral training 'was integrated into the nineteenth-century university system as 'practical theology', following the paradigm of Friedrich Schleiermacher' and focussed on liturgy, poimenics and homiletics (Ballard 2000: 61).

²⁵⁶ See Appendix 6 for more on Lake and Lambourne. Ballard sees Thornton as a thinker concerned to reassert religious identity by concentrating on what ministers distinctively had to offer 'by way of religious insight, spirituality, sacraments and prayer' (Ballard 2000). Interestingly, by 2002, in the SPCK's *New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies*, Thornton has no mention.

Lyll (1990: 109) sees the tradition in Britain being given the foundations ‘of a fresh approach’ by J.G. McKenzie (1929) and H. Guntrip (1956, 1971).²⁵⁷ The Methodist, Leslie Weatherhead (1893-1976) exerted a similar influence and ‘played an important part in reconciling religion with psychiatry (Mursell 2001: 570). In particular his *Psychology, Religion and Healing* (1951) was significant in making ‘a critical analysis of the contributions of Freud, Jung and Adler to pastoral work’ (Lyll 1990: 109).

From the 1930s through to the 1950s there were mixed and ambivalent attempts to incorporate new knowledge into pastoral thinking. In the same year Weatherhead’s book was published, the Anglican Lindsay Dewar, examining ‘the fact...that the traditional moral standards of the world have been gravely weakened’, wants to blame ‘the influence of modern science’, and especially of psychology, as having done so much to ‘undermine the authority of both religion and morality’ (Dewar 1951: 16).²⁵⁸

Nevertheless British writers began to share a conviction that a purely theological education cannot equip a modern pastor for his (sic) pastoral tasks.²⁵⁹ This was Norman Autton’s or R.S. Lee’s approach.²⁶⁰ Lee, whose *Principles of Pastoral Counselling* (1968) was widely studied, makes it explicit in the Preface to his influential *Your Growing Child and Religion*:

²⁵⁷ Like Boisen in North America they responded to the inadequacies which they perceived in the education being provided for pastoral ministry. Both found insight from Freud and exercised an important influence through their writing, psychotherapy and teaching.

²⁵⁸ After commenting a little on Freud, Dewar adds:

Teaching of this kind has now percolated down to the masses. Coming, as it has done, on top of the morally disintegrating influences of Darwinism and Marxism, it is hardly surprising if the cumulative effect upon traditional moral standards has been damaging to a high degree (Dewar 1951: 16).

More positively, Dewar collaborated with three others to produce a ground-breaking book in 1937 (Balmforth 1937). This *Introduction to Pastoral Theology* sought to combine pastoral care with ‘knowledge derived from modern scientific study of human nature’ (Balmforth 1937: 5). It aims to broaden the pastoral theology of ordination training from a too narrow concern

with such matters as parochial visitation, preaching, and the public ministrations of the clergy in church, and to groups of persons in classes, clubs and the like. The pastor’s ministrations to the individual, his exercise of the duties of the spiritual physician have been left too much to the light of nature and common sense: qualifications admirable... but inadequate for the delicate work of the physician of the soul (Balmforth 1937: 6).

²⁵⁹ It is striking how very frequently male pronouns are used in this period. The SPCK ‘Care and Counselling Series’, for example, popular throughout the 1960s, features such titles as *The Pastor and His Ministry* and *In His Own Parish* while Lee (1968) has a Chapter entitled ‘The Pastor Himself’.

²⁶⁰ Though he did not publish, except privately for his students, another pioneer worthy of mention in this field is the long-serving chaplain of St. Bernard’s Psychiatric Hospital, Southall, Harold Norris to whom generations of theological students including the present writer are indebted, especially for his writings on depression.

It is to be noted that theology is not discussed in the book. Its approach is purely psychological, and the place and value of religion are taken for granted. Psychology is not a substitute for religion; but on the other hand religious behaviour obeys psychological laws, and it is disastrous to ignore these (Lee 1965: 7).

Weatherhead also did not deal explicitly with pastoral theology. Perhaps the atheoretical tendencies of British pastoral theology explain why definitions of it can be so vague. Burck and Hunter concede that though all Protestant pastoral theology is based on the word meaning a shepherd and is thus a theology of shepherding, no consensus on a more precise meaning exists.²⁶¹

In Britain the integration of the human sciences into pastoral theology and pastoral care made steady progress. 1958 saw the founding of Frank Lake's Clinical Theology Association which was a hallmark of this period.²⁶² A year later, the Richmond Fellowship was founded 'to carry out a programme of education in the field of human relationships based upon the fellowship's therapeutic communities' (Lyll 1990: 109).

3. The situation in Britain during the 1950s

Adrian Hastings writes:

Faced with the rather dreary reality of post-war England, the Church of England as an institution sat tight, tied on every side by its venerable customs, pastoral amateurishness, and immensely complex separation of powers. It could do little about the state of the nation, and not much more about itself, being short of both money and men (Hastings 1991: 437).²⁶³

²⁶¹ Burck and Hunter (1990) discern three main traditions: 'Traditionally it is 'the branch of theology which formulates the practical principles, theories and procedures for ordained ministry in all its functions'. Next it is 'the practical theological discipline concerned with the theory and practice of pastoral care and counselling'. Third, it is 'a form of theological reflection in which pastoral experience serves as a context for the critical development of basic theological understanding... Here pastoral theology is not *of or about* pastoral care but a type of contextual theology, a way of doing theology *pastorally*'. All three strands were to be significantly developed during the 1960s.

²⁶² See Appendix 6 for more on Lake.

²⁶³ Two editions of Hastings' *History* have been used: the 1987 Collins, and the 1991 SCM versions, referenced separately.

Commenting on the conservatism of Archbishop Fisher's primacy he adds that the only overall reform attempted in these years was the revision of canon law - an enterprise upon which a very great deal of careful thought and effort was expended over many years. It was a characteristic expression of Fisher's primacy: 'the most absorbing and all-embracing topic of my archiepiscopate' (Hastings 1991: 439).²⁶⁴ The Roman Catholic situation was no better.²⁶⁵ Paradoxically, intellectual life in the Church of England after the war can have, in Hastings' words, 'seldom if ever seemed healthier' (Hastings 1991: 446).²⁶⁶ The Church of England under Fisher showed a modest growth in numbers. There were signs of encouragement such as David Sheppard being ordained in 1955 having captained England's cricket team the preceding year. Hastings describes its 'high point' as the 1958 Lambeth Conference, attended by 310 bishops from 46 countries: Its theological preparations had been well done and its resultant teaching, especially the statement of its committee on *The Family in Contemporary*

²⁶⁴ 'Not everyone could agree with him', writes Welsby, 'as they saw some of the best minds in the Church of England occupied on a task whose relevance in the face of the far more crucial developments in Church and State was dubious to say the least' (Welsby 1984: 42). He continues: 'Dean Mathews of St Paul's compared the bishops 'to a man who occupied himself in rearranging the furniture when the house was on fire' (Welsby 1984: 42).

²⁶⁵ Hastings writes:

The English Catholicism of the 1950s was not then politically or intellectually very influential...nothing, after all, could be much duller than its cardinal leaders' (Hastings 1987: 478). Others, though, were waiting in the wings: 'In England Godfrey might steer the ship dreadingly enough from the bridge but the real pace was made by the likes of Heenan and Sheed participating in a far wider movement of Catholic renewal (Hastings 1987: 481).

Hastings refers to what he calls 'the English Catholic paradox of robust clerical sterility combined with a just slightly precious lay creativity' (Hastings 1987: 487). Roman Catholicism could, after all, boast Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh and, towards the end of their lives, Siegfried Sassoon and Edith Sitwell. *Elected Silence* by Thomas Merton, published in Britain in 1948 'proved by far the most exciting and influential religious autobiography of its generation, perhaps of this century' (Hastings 1987: 481-482). But it was also a time of 'the deepest loyalty to the contemporary papacy. The supremacy of the pope, both in theory and in practice, was never questioned' (Hastings 1987: 482-483). 'The new theology' from France was known about in intellectual circles but kept hushed up. 'In general' it 'was suspect and unread'. Waugh had heard enough in 1956 to write to Penelope Betjeman about the 'dreadful influence of the French Dominicans' (Hastings 1987: 486).

²⁶⁶ He is thinking of men like A. M. Ramsey, Dom Gregory Dix, T.S. Eliot, Austin Farrer, Eric Mascall, L.S. Thornton, Donald Mackinnon, Ian Ramsey, John Betjeman, and J.B. Phillips. In fact none of these men could compete for influence with C.S. Lewis; 'in the field of religion no other writer of the mid-century is comparable to Lewis' (Hastings 1987: 493). But their theology was not radical. For example, Hastings describes Austin Farrer as 'perhaps the nearest thing to a genius that Anglo-Catholicism produced in this generation' (Hastings 1987: 494). 'Both philosopher and biblical scholar' he was 'of absolute outstanding quality', but

he was a little too idiosyncratically enigmatic, too closely confined to Oxford's ways and idiom, to have a really national influence. There was no one quite comparable in weight with Continental Catholics like Congar, de Lubac and Rahner, or Continental Protestants like Cullman. There was little genuinely theological wrestling with great contemporary issues - the bomb, the reunion of the churches, the philosophy of Wittgenstein. Theological 'conservatism' in the 1930s had had a radical if simplistic quality; twenty years later it had turned more mature but also somewhat complacent and unchallenging. 'The theological scene was calm to the point of being colourless', says Ulrich Simon of these years (Hastings 1987: 492).

Society was amongst the ablest to come from any authoritative church body in the twentieth century (Hastings 1991: 441).²⁶⁷ Theologians in England were not regarded as controversial figures. They were free to pursue their studies and teaching as they saw fit incorporating new knowledge as they thought best. There was nothing to suggest that they might misuse this freedom. Theology was 'in a fairly quiescent state' (Vidler 1971: 273). Hastings writes of England:

The unecclasiastical half of the nation was now being educated as never before. The Church's greatest avoidable failure in these years was probably in the field of catechetics, in not pioneering a new style of religious teaching in State schools to keep pace with new educational approaches in other subjects.²⁶⁸ There were plenty of able theologians in the Church in the 1950s but they were mostly far too academic to get down to such tasks as this (Hastings 1987: 438).²⁶⁹

If this seems to portray Britain as unexciting theologically, perhaps it is not so simple. Pastoral practice could be radically ecumenical, political and rooted in a community approach to care.²⁷⁰ In 1939 Leslie Hunter was appointed bishop of Sheffield. He had

²⁶⁷ Archbishop Temple had been more socially radical, a course which could have been continued if George Bell had been appointed Archbishop. In the event it was the stolidly 'middle of the road' Anglican, Fisher. The prophetic radical torch was kept burning by charismatic individuals such as Revd. John Collins, founder of Christian Action, Trevor Huddleston, Michael Scott, Bishop Ambrose Reeves, all strongly influenced by the situation in South Africa (Hastings 1987: 428-435). Hastings comments of these four men: 'Yet it is the strength of the Church of England, at its best, that it is so unable to control its prophetic mavericks (Hastings 1987: 432). It was also the time of the founding of Oxfam and Christian Aid, and the inspirational years of Max Warren then John Taylor at CMS.

²⁶⁸ This condemnation by Hastings may be regarded as a reinforcement of the critique of British practical theology's approach to catechetics when viewed through Liégé's eyes that is one of the major conclusions of Chapter 10 below. Whereas British theologians 'were far too academic to get down to tasks such as this', Liégé devoted his academic best to advance catechetics as a top theological priority.

²⁶⁹ Vidler writes

No new heresies or orthodoxies had been striking the headlines. English divines, as their manner is, had more or less assimilated the neo-orthodox theology, of which Barth and Brunner were the continental apostles, and in doing so had toned it down and drawn its sting..... The editor of a British theological journal remarked that the topics which really seemed to excite his readers and bring in correspondence were such matters as baptism and episcopacy, and not any fundamental issues of belief. The biblical theologians were happy talking among themselves and were neither keen nor successful in drawing others into the conversation. It was a period when theology was doughy rather than yeasty (Vidler 1971: 273-274).

Vidler (1971) describes the condition of Anglican theology in 1956 as lethargic or ostrich-like; not facing up to some fundamental questions. Anglican theological College life was, with mild caricature, largely based in Bicknell on the Thirty-Nine Articles and the pastoral hints and tips of the Principal's reminiscences of his days as a curate backed up by the possession of a copy of Charles Forder's *The Parish Priest at Work* (1949) and Bicknell (1919). In 1958 41.7% of the clergy, mostly country parsons, served 11.2% of the population. 34 people per thousand made their Easter communion in Birmingham in 1956, 172 per thousand in Hereford (Hastings 1991: 438).

²⁷⁰ This was the case, for example, at St. Matthew's Moorfields in Bristol where Mervyn Stockwood had been vicar since 1941. Here a team of ordained and lay including Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and

worked with SCM and been involved in Temple's social initiatives and in social research in Newcastle in the 1920s. In 1944 he founded the Industrial Mission with E.R Wickham as its leader.²⁷¹ In the same city Alan Ecclestone, was initiating radical ideas and emanating a deep spirituality in the down to earth parish of Darnall.²⁷²

It is generally agreed that the liturgical renewal of the twentieth century, known as the Liturgical Movement saw 'an extraordinary recovery and renewal by the Christian Church of its worship and the understanding of that worship as central to its life and work' (Welsby (1984: 68 - citing Ellsworth Chandlee 1972).²⁷³

Congregationalists shared Holy Communion and a team meeting weekly to organise their response to the parish (James 1989). Initiatives were not confined to the city. A start was made to group tiny rural parishes, notably at South Ormsby in Lincolnshire where fifteen parishes were linked; an organisational commonplace today but, Hastings (1991: 439) reminds his reader, 'very original' in the 1950s. He also mentions new educational pastoral developments in the form of the university chaplaincies and a more professional approach to public school chaplaincy (Hastings 1991).

²⁷¹ He was deeply concerned about the gulf between the Church and the industrial working class. Hastings comments that his industrial mission was 'certainly not at the time a major piece of Anglican policymaking' but that now it can be 'recognised as the start of something important in the creation of a 'missionary structure' for the Church's presence in a modern urban-industrial community' (Hastings 1987: 439). The link between institutional church and industrial mission was a happier one than the story of Worker-Priests across the Channel. For example, the work in Sheffield was locally inspired but in synch with the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly. This had been founded as early as 1923 but by 1951 had become the Social and Industrial Council, a body which published 'a number of valuable reports and surveys' notably *The National Church and Social Order* in 1956, 'a severely academic document' which 'exuded an atmosphere far removed from the harsh realities of the shop floor', yet 'contained a full and valuable account of the principles that governed the attitude of the Church of England towards the social order' (Hastings 1991: 37). A British Council of Churches document of 1958 provided 'a much more direct approach' to the relationship between the Church and industry, 'thoroughly theological but anchored firmly in the empirical situation' which 'called for a doctrine of creation as strong as the doctrine of redemption' and raised the question, crucial in the sixties and seventies: does the Church, through its representative clergy and laity, take Christ into a world from which he is absent or does it go into the world to help men identify the Christ who is already there? (Hastings 1991: 37).

²⁷² See Ecclestone (1958: 398f.). In 1942 there were just twenty-two communicants in this industrial parish of 14,000. Ecclestone remained there for twenty-three years. Welsby writes: What began to emerge at Darnall was a more disciplined fellowship, aware of its tasks in the local community and much more capable of understanding what the Bible had to say to the Church and the world (Welsby 1984: 35). In 1953, Chad Varah founded the Samaritans.

²⁷³ Welsby writes that it 'was a remarkable example of the convergence of theological concern and pastoral insight', whose theological origins 'are to be found in the Roman Catholic Church in France in the nineteenth century' but by 1945 to be 'widely' found in 'the Low Countries, Germany and England' (Welsby 1984: 68). Welsby names six scholars of particular importance in England, singling out two: 'In 1935, A.G. Hebert published *Liturgy and Society* which demonstrated how the Eucharist was the centre of power from which the social order might be redeemed' and Gregory Dix whose *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 'the product of fourteen years' study and a work of profound scholarship 'transformed Anglican liturgiology almost overnight from a remote and academic branch of scholarship into a study whose immediate relevance became evident to multitudes of parish priests' (Welsby 1984: 68).

From these origins, the Parish Communion movement grew in influence to make this service the central act of worship in parishes. Its particular pioneer was Henry de Candole, Bishop of Knaresborough from 1949, and in the same year, from a conference at Queen's College, Birmingham the Liturgical renewal found expression in

In these ways in Britain, absorption of new ideas went quietly hand in hand with changed pastoral practice. Not by any means everywhere. But where it occurred it was not prevented by higher authority. Of these initiatives, Hastings comments: 'these were not pastoral shifts planned from the top or even particularly encouraged from the top' (Hastings 1991: 441). They depended on individuals.²⁷⁴

In the Church of England, pastoral theology was largely implicit and embedded in institutional practice, especially the ministry of the clergy. Its emphasis was practical; its compass wide. There was a received wisdom about every conceivable aspect of parish ministry from the baptism of infants to the visiting of the elderly and dying, or from sex instruction to confirmation candidates to managing the Women's Meeting (Forder 1949).

what from then on was called the Parish and People Movement. De Candole said its formation 'gave the liturgical movement in the Church of England a spearhead - a voice of leadership and corporate expression, and a possible instrument of action' (Welsby 1984: 69). It was aimed 'at the ordinary parish and its revitalization' to make worship 'more free, more participatory, more sacramental and more Catholic' (Hastings 1987: 441-442). It 'undoubtedly exercised very widespread influence in thousands of parishes including Evangelical ones' but Hastings describes its weaknesses as 'rather characteristic of the 1950s Church as a whole':

There was a certain absence of punch. It raised no opposition. It was almost over-respectable. This was partly because it was a little weak on theology. It was a reform of practices rather than of ideas. While the liturgical movement of the Continent was sustained by a galaxy of theologians and scholars and could produce periodicals like *Maison Dieu*, of really top quality, the Anglican liturgical movement could hardly manage this. Its best scholars, like Dix and Hebert, were already dead or old. Here as elsewhere while the English Church of the 1950s did not lack learning, it did lack a lively interplay between learning and religious practice (Hastings 1987: 442).

See also James (1957: 61ff.). Another good example of renewal is described in Ernie Southcott's *The Parish Comes Alive* (1956) which, interestingly is based on the work of Abbé Michonneau in northern France as well as on his own at Halton, Leeds. It emphasises the importance of the house group and worship in the home. Halton was a large parish containing five estates. Welsby writes:

His strategy was theologically based, starting with the desire to exhibit the fullness of Christian initiation - an initiation into a teaching, worshipping, and caring community. The Parish Communion on Sunday became the focus of worship, with a great deal of lay participation which was unusual in that period, alongside a weekly parish meeting to formulate and monitor parish policy, and to develop the fellowship of the Eucharist. 'House Churches' were established with the object of meeting people where they were. (Welsby 1984: 35).

Southcott was not the only person to be liturgically inspired by the Liturgical Movement in France. John Robinson was (James 1989). Or there is Joost de Blank's *The Parish in Action* (1959), which describes his experiment with the parish conference.

²⁷⁴ Robinson, for example, had read the Continental theologians and been greatly inspired by Tillich even as a New Testament tutor at Wells Theological College between 1948 and 1951, inevitably a pastorally influential position. His influence continued significant whilst at Clare College, Cambridge and until his move to Woolwich in 1959 (James 1989). This is no doubt why he could be writing as early as 1952 that the priesthood of the future would 'consist in great proportion of men working in secular jobs' (Robinson 1952).

There was a fine tradition of parish pastoral care, well described by Anthony Russell (Russell 1980).²⁷⁵

In Britain scholars worked behind the public scenes. Aware of Continental ferment and often quietly assimilating its fruits themselves, they did not attempt to popularise these teachings. Not, at least, until Bishop John Robinson published *Honest to God* in 1963 unleashing the tidal wave of Continental theology upon an unsuspecting British public and even more startled ecclesiastical leadership.

4. *Honest to God* and the period after 1960

In 1962, a group of Cambridge theologians, by publishing *Soundings*, made what Welsby (1984: 110) calls ‘an attempt to rouse Anglican theology from its dogmatic slumbers to face the important and difficult intellectual problems that hitherto the Church had neglected’: He doubts that ‘the slumbers of many were unduly disturbed’ by this endeavour and only ‘startled into full wakefulness in the following year by *Honest to God*. (Welsby 1984: 110). ‘English religion of the 1960s will always remain more associated with *Honest to God* than with any other book’, writes Hastings (Hastings 1991: 536). ‘Only the Bible could rival it’.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ Or see Bradbury (1989: 33-35).

²⁷⁶ ‘It went through four impressions that March and nearly a million copies were sold within three years’ (Hastings 1987: 536). Robinson wanted to rework accepted ideas about God ‘as an attempt to express the gist of the Christian faith in a fresh frame of reference’ (Vidler 1971: 275). He drew especially on Bultmann, Tillich and Bonhoeffer. He appropriated Bultmann’s rejection of mythology, Tillich’s objection to supernaturalism and Bonhoeffer’s distrust of things ‘religious’ (Grootaers 1997: 532). The result? He found he had produced ‘a bestseller on a world scale and a universal talking point’ (Vilder 1971: 275). ‘The unassuming little pocketbook had an effect like a bomb and gave rise to widespread uneasiness among the ecclesiastical authorities not only of the Church of England but also of the other Churches, including the Catholic Church in Europe (Grootaers 1997: 532). Grootaers (1997: 532-534) considers there were three categories of reader: those who found nothing new in what Robinson was saying; shocked traditional believers, quite unwilling to update their education; and the great mass who were moved to find an author, indeed a bishop saying what they had long felt in their heart. Grootaers’ context is Vatican II but his implication is that Robinson’s response to secularisation was more profound than the Council’s:

The *Honest to God* movement was no passing phenomenon, and the problem of ‘secularisation’ remained on the agenda of theological research. Neither birth control nor the problem of secularisation would receive a satisfactory answer at Vatican II, and both were destined to burden the reception of the Council in some degree (Grootaers 1997: 533). Other books with a fermenting character appeared around the same time (Vidler 1962; Vidler 1963; Williams 1965). They were popularly seen to express what became called ‘the new theology’ but Vidler sees this expression as misleading

because it implied that a positive and constructive reinterpretation of the Christian faith was being launched by a consortium of divines, whereas all that happened in fact was the appearance of a variety

What the Cambridge theologians have in common, and share with the so-called 'death of God' school from the U.S.A., is 'their determination to take seriously the complete secularisation of contemporary culture' (Vidler 1971: 276).²⁷⁷ A variety of responses was expressed.²⁷⁸

There were innumerable calls for a 'New Reformation'.²⁷⁹ But it should not be thought however that the 1960s experienced no revival of spirituality. The almost mystical writings of

of independent and inchoate essays that were designed to voice, rather than to satisfy a need (Vidler 1971: 275-276).

²⁷⁷ The different approaches of this school as expressed by Thomas J. Altizer, Paul Van Buren and William Hamilton (she does not mention Gabriel Vahanian) are neatly summarised in (Armstrong 1993: 380-381).

²⁷⁸ Some accepted secularisation as a norm and attempted 'to construct a faith in which the concept of God was dispensed with' (Vidler 1971: 277). In Britain during the 1950s, the Logical Positivists like A.J. Ayer had asked whether it made sense to believe in God (Armstrong 1993). According to certain forms of linguistic analysis the term 'God' was now rendered meaningless. In Britain particularly, some philosophically minded theologians wanted 'to repudiate the popular misconception that 'all the philosophers are Logical Positivists' (Flew and MacIntyre 1955: vii). This group focussed on these questions of verifiability or falsifiability. The majority of theologians, however, took the line shared by Liégé. They 'accepted the secularisation of culture as a fact but did not accept it as normative for Christian faith. They looked upon it as a challenge to discover ways of experiencing and point to the transcendence and ineffable mystery of God within a culture that seemed to exclude him. Or, as Bonhoeffer had put it, it was a call to the 'abandonment of a false conception of God, and a clearing of the decks for the God of the Bible' (Vidler 1971: 277). Vidler is critical of 'the new morality' that tended to accompany these negotiations with secularism. He welcomes its deliverance from legalism and text-book morality and its stress on personal freedom and responsibility, but deplores its spilling over into justifying 'all kinds of laxity' and giving the impression 'that Christianity had nothing more to say than "love and do what you will"' (Vidler 1971: 279).

²⁷⁹ The perception here was that for Christian faith to renew itself and connect to modern secular people, it needed to be willing, like Robinson, 'to demythologise almost anything of which modernity might conceivably be suspicious' (Hastings 1987: 537). As Robinson put it, 'the most fundamental categories of our theology – of God, of the supernatural, and of religion itself – must go into the melting' (Robinson 1963: 7). Dennis Nineham's hugely influential Penguin *Mark*, which also appeared in 1963, is a supreme example of this approach. Comparing it to *Honest to God*, Hastings writes that it

is in a different and more masterly way at least as important in diffusing widely and authoritatively a highly scholarly post-Bultmann approach which simply left no room for the old kind of miraculous supernaturalism (Hastings 1987: 582).

Together with Wiles and Cupitt, 'all essentially early 1960s people', Nineham and the other liberal naturalists or modernists, who rejected the supernatural, 'were dominant and they continued to provide the main note for English theology for the next fifteen years' (Hastings 1991).

Mention must also be made of Ian Ramsey, Bishop of Durham from 1966 who parallels Liégé in certain respects. Hastings describes him as the bishop 'most adroitly in tune with the mood of the sixties', more than Coggan or Michael Ramsey (Hastings 1987: 556). He goes on:

More than any other ecclesiastical leader of the second half of the twentieth century he resembled William Temple in the breadth of his concerns, the immensity of his commitments, the impression of confident modernity he conveyed, the engaging geniality and optimism of his temperament. Ramsey was ...a quintessential liberal...yet no whit less deeply religious for that.... Just as people were anticipating that he would be moved to Canterbury on Michael Ramsey's retirement – he died of over-work aged fifty-seven (Hastings 1987: 556).

The same age as Liégé, and for the same reason.

Teilhard de Chardin were popular from their first publication in 1959. Robinson wanted to redefine prayer, not abandon it. He was with the widely read Dag Hammarskjöld, himself influenced by the medieval mystics, who yet stated ‘in our era, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action’ (Hammarskjöld 1964: 108).²⁸⁰ Young people in particular were searching for spiritual experience and, in Welsby’s words: ‘the paradox was that so many were seeking a transcendental dimension for human life precisely at the time when the Church was questioning the value of the transcendental (Welsby 1984: 122).

There is a further paradox in the 1960s liberal attempt to meet the secular world on its own ground: ‘At heart Robinson was always quite an old-fashioned believer – as well as being a pastorally minded bishop’, writes Hastings (1987: 537). Yet his and others efforts to connect a modern Christian faith with the secular world turn out with hindsight to have been exerted at precisely the period when, according to some commentators, Christian religion collapses because of that secular world’s new perspective.²⁸¹ Hastings comments:

²⁸⁰ Others like Douglas Rhymes or Michel Quoist, made compelling connections between prayer and secular living. Anthony Bloom and Monica Furlong ‘began to introduce many to contemplative prayer’ (Welsby 1984: 121). Julian of Norwich appeared in paperback and began to make her mark.

²⁸¹ Robinson’s *Honest to God*, on this view, heralds the end:

For the generations growing up since the 1960s, new ethical concerns have emerged to dominate their moral culture - environmentalism, gender and racial equality, nuclear weapons and power, vegetarianism, the well-being of body and mind - issues with which Christianity and the Bible in particular are perceived as being wholly unconcerned and unconnected (Brown 2001: 190).

Church of England confirmations in 1960 were 190,713. By 1970 they drop to 113,005. By 1997 they have sunk to 40,881:

Whereas previously, men and women were able to draw upon a Christian-centred culture to find guidance about how they should behave, and how they should think about their lives, from the 1960s a suspicion of creeds arose that quickly took the form of a rejection of Christian tradition and all formulaic constructions of the individual (Brown 2001: 193).

He adds:

It is precisely because ‘the personal’ changed so much in the 1960s - and has continued to change in the four decades since - that the churches are in seemingly terminal decay and British Christian culture is in its death throes.....It seems unlikely that there will ever be a return to an age of faith. The evangelical narrative has decayed; the discourses on gendered religiosity have withered. The search for personal faith is now in ‘the New Age’ of minor cults, personal development and consumer choice (Brown 2001: 196).

Too drastic? Maybe. But Hastings also portrays the common legacy of the 1960s to the churches in strong terms: ‘a rather stable, if not actually improving state of affairs characteristic of the 1950s seemed almost overnight to be replaced by a near-nightmarish quantitative slide’ (Hastings 1987: 580). It is a slide common to the ‘western’ world. And he also sees it as ‘not specifically a religious crisis’ but rather ‘one of the total culture’; ‘a crisis of the relevance (or capability for sheer survival) of long-standing patterns of thought and institution of all sorts in a time of intense, and rather self-conscious, modernization’ (Hastings 1987: 580-581). And here, is Hastings so far from Callum Brown?

Classics and philosophy – the traditional academic roommates of theology – ceased to provide the normative core for education and started to seem instead slightly eccentric pursuits. Economics,

No church can continue for long without a theology possessing a fair measure of internal coherence, one related organically... to the actual religious practice of believers ... By the 1970s the central tradition of English academic theology, particularly Anglican theology as taught at Oxford and Cambridge, was hardly any longer fulfilling these needs (Hastings 1987: 662).

There would seem to be an interpretative choice: Either secularisation necessarily brings with it the end of religion. Or 'the inner dynamic' of 'biblical religion' 'may actually require for its own deliverance the savage thrust of secularization' (Hastings 1987: 586). On this view the old structures needed to be liberated from domestication and religion allowed 'to relate anew to the totality of the secular' (Hastings 1991: 596).

5. Theological education and the Pastoral Studies Movement

Good accounts of this are found in Ballard (1986, 1999, 2000). The pastoral studies movement was accompanied by great ferment and, unsurprisingly given institutional resistance to change, often met with hostility. But it swiftly gained ground and patterns emerged, often strongly influenced by what was happening in the U.S.A. These developments include Clinical Pastoral Education, pastoral counselling, field education; the influence of humanistic psychology and management-leadership training.²⁸²

sociology and politics – all rather unconcerned with religion or concerned only in a dismissive way – were coming to constitute the regulative subjects upon the arts side of a university (Hastings 1987: 581).

Parallel to the theological *displacement* described in the last Chapter we may note, in England, the following:

The new scholarship... was over-prone to appeal to an almost limitless pluralism as the only legitimate conclusion to draw from historical research in both biblical and ecclesiastical history (Hastings 1987:).

Partly this was because of 'the ever-increasing scepticism' of Nineham, Wiles, John Hick, Geoffrey Lampe, Don Cupitt and others about 'all the central dogmas most characteristic of Christianity, the incarnation, the Trinity, even for some the very existence of God' (Hastings 1987: 649).

It was most in evidence in relation to Christ. 'Is it any longer worthwhile', asked Nineham, the urbane doyen of the school, 'to attempt to trace the Christian's everchanging understanding of his relationship with God directly back to some identifiable element in the life, character and activity of Jesus of Nazareth?'... In the wider approach to religious issues a greatly increased recognition of the depth, sincerity and vitality of non-Christian religions... seemed to lead a little over-easily to a relativist conclusion in regard to any one religion, including Christianity (Hastings 1987: 650).

²⁸² To these generic trends must be added, in the UK some remarkable and successful individual initiatives and partnerships, notably, in 1970, the Westminster Pastoral Foundation, by the Methodist William Kyle who had been influenced by his experience of the clinical training movement in the United States. It was a time of experiments. In 1971 the Roman Catholics started the Dymna Centre for counselling and training. And from about this time the Church of England established 'Advisors' in pastoral care and counselling, at least in some

Universities like Oxford and Manchester already had professorships of pastoral theology. In 1964 Birmingham University, under Professor Gordon Davies, began to offer 'pastoral studies'. It was quickly followed by Cardiff and Manchester (Ballard 1986: 16).²⁸³ Priestly formation in the Church of England followed the route described by Russell (1980).²⁸⁴ Ballard (1986: 12-13) describes how the emergence of a professional education in all spheres, social work, teaching and nursing, for example, has led to a new convergence of theory and practice. The apprenticeship model has been found increasingly inadequate since the trainee also needs to reflect on theory and needs the critical disciplines to support understanding. These professional trainings therefore began to draw on theory and philosophy making experiential learning a more integrated part of the academic process. Practice became no longer understood as the application of accepted theory. By the same token professional academic education's acquisition of critical skills is recognised as requiring more than simple common sense to put into practice (Ballard 1986: 12).

dioceses. Other initiatives included: the Institute for Religion and Medicine; the Association of Pastoral Care and Counselling; Industrial Mission; the William Temple College; the Urban Theology Unit; the Cuddesdon 'Littlemore' course and the general rise of pastoral studies in Theological Colleges during the 1970s, culminating in the Church of England's paper (Dyson 1976) 'Education for Pastoral Ministry' in 1976 (Ballard 1986: 17).

²⁸³ Birmingham University's Pastoral Studies course described its aim as 'to help people to gain a greater understanding of themselves, society, the environment and theology in relation to the pastoral task', understood as, mainly, reflection on pastoral practice (Ballard 1986: 27). Manchester University's focus was on the 'important middle ground between formal theology and pastoral techniques', and was especially concerned to draw together ethics, pastoral theology and social theory (Ballard 1986: 27). Cardiff and Heythrop were more professionally focussed. Ballard describes the colleges as emphasising three areas in the social science sphere: human development, the sociology of contemporary society and the place of religion in society today. He notes the diversity of ways, in different courses, of organising the various components of the theological syllabus and prioritising emphases for study. But it is generally the case that spirituality becomes increasingly important; pastoral action in race relations, inner city issues, community work and industry is stressed; and increasing use is made of placements.

²⁸⁴ Here it was essentially a process that continued throughout the nineteenth century, by which the clergy moved away from identification with the gentry and the civic duties that belonged to this rank and began to take on recognisable professional tasks. Clergy training had been greatly influenced and enhanced by the Oxford and Evangelical Movements, hence the number of nineteenth century theological college foundations. Through emancipation and ecumenism and also because society had increasingly lost a religious *a priori*, the status and roles of all priests and ministers slowly converged around the provision of religious services and the exercise of other duties for a voluntary organisation. The former hierarchical or Tridentine status is lost. Indeed there will become an increasing tension between the demands of an internal church ministry and keeping alive any kind of public ministry (Ballard 1986: 10). Theological education in Britain shared, broadly, with France and Germany, the post-Enlightenment development described by Farley (1983) and outlined above with particular reference to Catholic France. It has a practical reference deduced from first principles. Ballard claims that, in part, the need to adjust to scientific and secular criteria to retain university status effectively demoted the practical in universities leaving the theological colleges to bridge the gap (Ballard 1986: 10-13). But since 1945 the influence of the Biblical Theology Movement helped relate faith to critical learning enabling a closer academic convergence of colleges and universities.

Ballard and Pritchard (1996: 3-6), add to this description of trends in pastoral studies. They also refer, in describing important recent cultural shifts, to the unsurprising nature of theology's increasingly practical focus given contemporary pluralism in which Christianity is no longer normative and needs to establish its particular identity. They refer too to the changing role of voluntarism, to the increasing contextualisation and localisation of theology, thinking especially of South America and to a greater current concern for orthopraxis, living out the struggle of faith, rather than orthodoxy, believing the right things.

In the light of these developments, Ballard and Pritchard see theology as a four-fold activity: It is descriptive; describing what has been and is still believed. It is normative, seeking 'to establish the inner meaning of Christian belief, to examine its norms and claims, and then to examine both the thought and life of the Church in the light of its findings' (Ballard and Pritchard 1996: 11). It is critical, willing to take on all questions put to it. Finally it is apologetic; it works out the practical and intellectual implications of faith. They see each theological discipline as a petal contributing to theology's full bloom.²⁸⁵ For Ballard and Pritchard, practical theology stands for 'the whole field, a primary theological discipline alongside biblical studies etc.' They limit pastoral theology to 'ministerial studies or the theological understanding of pastoral ministry' (Ballard and Pritchard 1996: 24).

²⁸⁵ For examples, systematics asks, what does it mean to believe Christianly today? Practical theology asks, what does it mean to live and act Christianly today? And Fundamental or philosophical theology asks, what are the grounds of faith? They consider that each discipline has three characteristics: a subject area, a methodology and a critical and practical nature. Practical theology asks of the concrete practice of the Christian community questions like: how does this situation, practice or action in the world express the gospel? Adequately? Does it need to be challenged? Is it appropriate to the context? How does it relate to the Kingdom? It uses the methodologies of theology and the social sciences. They quote from James Whyte's summary in an SPCK Dictionary:

The systematic theologian asks critical questions about the way faith expresses itself in language; the practical theologian asks critical questions about how faith expresses itself in practice and about the relation between the practice and the language (Whyte 1987).

But it is triadic, because the church functions in a changing society, and is concerned with the inter-relationship between faith, practice and social reality.

6. British pastoral theology in retrospect and today.

Ballard (2000: 60f.) assesses that this discipline has undergone since 1945, 'a transformative renaissance'. He writes: 'The clerical, pragmatic paradigm of pastoral theology was revolutionized in Britain in the second half of the twentieth century' (Ballard 2000: 62). Before then it was 'a severely practical, atheoretical discipline that was marginal to mainstream theological endeavours and uninformed by the human sciences and professional skills' (Ballard 2000: 67).

Ballard (2000:62) sees seven 'strands of influence' contributing to this transition. They are: the rise of professional ministry; the crisis and diversification of ministerial role and identity through secularisation; new fields and paradigms – Ballard is thinking of the increasing influence of the human sciences in facilitating human wellbeing; the turn to the human in theology with a 'focus on the importance of lived experience, practice, action and the primacy of human need' (Ballard 2000: 65); the turn to the practical in education; moving beyond the clerical paradigm and the turn to the laity; and North American influences.

Pattison and Lynch (2005: 408) bear witness to the significant development of practical theology 'as a distinctive discipline' since the last World War. Contributing a Chapter on practical theology to the third edition of *The Modern Theologians* (Ford 2005), they claim that even 'the decision to include this Chapter in a major textbook reflects a growing recognition that pastoral and practical theology represent a serious field of study' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 408). They point to the formation of recent professional academic bodies.²⁸⁶ They mention the 'more than fifty courses offering specialised postgraduate study in this area in Britain alone' and to the recent emphasis of some systematic theologians on the practical (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 408).²⁸⁷ Pattison and Lynch summarise the situation thus:

²⁸⁶ Such as the International Academy of Practical Theology, the Society for Pastoral Theology (USA) and the British and Irish Association of Practical Theology.

²⁸⁷ The reference given for the fifty courses is Ballard (2001); for the systematic theologians it is Fiddes (2000) and McFayden (2000).

²⁸⁸ In another influential publication Woodward and Pattison (2000: 13-16) list fourteen 'essential characteristics' of practical theology. It is useful to note these: They confirm that Protestant practical theology is bound to be viewed as sacrilege to strict Barthians as it too allows nature as well as grace to make a theological contribution. Woodward and Pattison's list includes the following: Practical theology is based on theological reflection on experience and is fundamentally experiential,

Across academic disciplines generally, the twentieth century saw an increasing interest in the theoretical and empirical study of everyday, lived experience (Highmore 2002). Practical theology can thus be understood as part of a wider academic movement which treats contemporary human experience as worthy of sustained analysis and critical reflection. As a sub-discipline within theology, practical theology shares and focusses the general 'turn to the human' in its aims, concerns and methods. This anthropocentric movement has become a main feature of Western theologies in general over the last century or so (Fierro 1977). While practical theologians generally remain deeply committed to engaging with Christian traditions, this engagement typically takes the form of a critical dialogue between those traditions and contemporary experience (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 408-409).

Pattison and Lynch (2005: 410) offer five 'characteristics that are shared by the vast majority of pastoral and practical theologians'.²⁸⁸ These are: the methodological primacy given to reflection upon lived contemporary experience, first highlighted by Anton Boisen (1876-1965); the adoption of an inter-disciplinary approach that involves human sciences; the setting up of a three-way critical conversation between lived experience, theological norms and traditions and other academic disciplines; a preference for liberal or radical models of theology; and the need for theoretical and practical transformation in sympathy with Karl Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach: 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways; the point is to change it' (Pattison 1994: 32).²⁸⁹

even privileging contemporary experience as that precisely which it is necessary to bring into dialogue with past experience such as that to which the Bible bears witness. It presupposes that reflection and theological articulation will involve and be concerned with the emotions, the symbolic, the arts and the imagination. It is committed and transformational; it aims to make a difference and to influence symbolic, the arts and the imagination. It is committed and transformational; it aims to make a difference and to influence practice. It is both confessional and honest, committed both to a faith view and to trying to be honest about blind spots and prejudices. Neither will it oversimplify complexity. It is unsystematic because it always has to re-engage with the fragmentary realities and changes in the world. It is local, contextual and situationally related. It is sociopolitically aware and committed to 'seeing from below', having learned to use the 'tools of suspicion' from the praxis-based liberationists. It is interrogative. It asks questions and is unwilling simply to accept a received view. It is interdisciplinary, requiring both the methods and knowledge of other disciplines. It is analytical and constructive, helping people both to understand and build from their particular situation, context and agenda. It is dialectical and disciplined. It proceeds by way of a critical conversation that holds in tension theory and practice; past and present; situational realities and general principles; realities and ideals; description and prescription; written text and living text; theology and other disciplines; and the religious community and the society outside. It is skilful and demanding.

²⁸⁹ Pattison and Lynch (2005: 423) suggest that the implications of globalisation are important for everyday life for everyone. They suggest the need for a 'glocal' approach; that is, to have a global focus but give it local expression. They suggest that as comparative culture becomes increasingly important, the question arises as to whether practical theology has a role to contribute to global religion and spirituality as well as to the church.

They state that ‘pastoral and practical theology is a diffuse discipline characterised by being all periphery with no centre’(Pattison and Lynch 2005: 414) . It is

a discipline which concentrates on exploring particular topics that are interesting and important to those individuals working on it, rather than on any agenda, detailed methodology or view of God common to all (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 415) .

Nevertheless they discern ‘three different *styles* of working in the field’ (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 415). These are, first, the liberal-rational approaches, for example, of Hiltner and Browning, strongly influenced by Tillich’s correlational method that ‘focus on developing clear, rational academically justifiable and credible methodologies’(Pattison and Lynch 2005: 415). Next there are the neo-traditional confessional approaches of writers like Nouwen and Oden. Finally there are the radical-liberationist approaches that emphasise social context, structures and dynamics of power and the promotion of human liberation and well-being.²⁹⁰

Ballard (2000: 61) points to the ecclesiastical complexity of the British Isles, with ‘traditionally dominant’ state-established Anglicanism in England, ‘state-established, Calvinist-influenced’ Presbyterianism in Scotland, and each of the four countries having ‘a wide range of well-known denominations’. He points to the increasing ecumenical cooperation and ‘theological homogenization’ between the churches ‘symbolized by the establishment of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland in 1990’ with the Catholic church ‘as a full member for the first time’ (Ballard 2000: 61). Certainly the development of pastoral and practical theology in Britain has been a strongly ecumenical affair.

7. The new ‘international’ practical theology

In the first edition of the *International Journal of Practical Theology*, the editors state that there have been far-reaching innovations in practical theology in recent decades (Gräb and Osmer

²⁹⁰ Ballard and Pritchard (1996: 57-70) offer three basic models for practical theology. It can function as applied theory. It can use the method of critical correlation as in Browning’s ethical model or Tracy’s hermeneutical model. Or it can adopt a praxis model as in Liberation theology. They also mention a further model, associated especially with E. Farley, which they call the habitus model and close to models of practical spirituality as in the approach of H. Nouwen.

1997: 1-5).²⁹¹ These include both a ‘scientific emancipation’ and a broadening of scope’ (1997:1). This has happened particularly in the USA, Canada, Latin America, Europe and East Asia. This new practical theology is no longer just concerned with applications and techniques. It no longer understands itself to be a form of applied exegesis or dogmatics, charged with formulating principles to guide ecclesial practice. Neither does it just draw on psychology, education or their rhetoric to guide it. It ‘has extricated itself from an over-dependence on both the theoretical disciplines of theology and the social sciences’ (Gräb and Osmer 1997: 1).

Its scope is now wider than just pastoral theology. It is not just about church polity, organisation or ministry. This ‘is closely related to fundamental hermeneutical reflection on the practical character of theology as a whole’ (Gräb and Osmer 1997: 3).²⁹² It has also made a turn towards empirical-hermeneutical concerns. Now it is concerned with contemporary religious culture in a context of pluralism. The social sciences have made a similar turn as a way of understanding culture. They have remembered the importance of symbol and myth.²⁹³ Practical theology has become close to a science of contemporary religious culture.²⁹⁴

²⁹¹ Pattison and Lynch note the different regional use of terminology: in Holland practical theology tends to mean using social research methods to generate pastorally useful findings; in Germany practical theology is still thought of in Schleiermacher’s way as concerning church governance, leadership and education. In the United Kingdom practical theology typically draws on material not derived from the church at all.

²⁹² This itself is based on the idea that the practical interest of the Christian life is not just about the biblical and dogmatic traditions. It concerns the church’s present and future vision of what the Christian life might become. This is a praxis-theory-praxis approach which theology needs to be: ‘Practical theology brings the practical grounds of theology to self-conscious awareness as well as providing action-oriented guidelines for ecclesiastical and religious praxis in society’.

²⁹³ This broadening, for example, would be that shown by the fact that ‘liturgies and sermons are analysed in the context of a theory of symbols and ritual, taking as their subject the nature of aesthetic experience in religious communication in contemporary pluralistic and individualized societies’ (Gräb and Osmer 1997: 3)

²⁹⁴ Ballard and Pritchard (1996) usefully describe recent, important cultural shifts, especially towards a pluralism in which Christianity is no longer normative. In this circumstance it becomes vital for theology to establish a distinctive Christian identity making it not surprising that it has an increasingly practical focus. Amongst other phenomena Ballard points to the rise of spirituality and of the social sciences; the changing role of voluntarism and the continued development within the caring professions of their own professional theory and skills. He refers to the recent emphasis on the contextualisation of theology, for example in the Liberation theology of South America.

8. Conclusion

This Chapter aimed to offer a sufficient introduction and background to British pastoral and practical theology to engage with the discussion of Part Four. To do so it has drawn from ecclesiastical and theological history and made use of already existing surveys of the field. As with Chapter seven, so this Chapter has travelled a long way from the post war ecclesiastical status quo and its pastoral tradition until that point, to the current scene.

What can be learned from this presentation of Liégé, his context, life, thought and legacy when compared and contrasted to the British story of practical theology? This is the concern of Part Four.

PART 4

LIÉGÉ'S PASTORAL THEOLOGY AND BRITISH PASTORAL AND PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Chapter Nine: Comparing and Contrasting Liégé's Pastoral Theology with British Pastoral and Practical Theology

1. Introduction

The main thesis of this study is that a presentation and critical evaluation of the pastoral theology of Liégé is worthwhile and of value to British practical theology. Part One set the pastoral theology of Liégé in context. Part Two presented it. Part Three examined it in historical perspective. Part Four's task is to evaluate it critically and examine its value for British practical theology. It would be hard to guess from any British practical theology that there was a French perspective with a different bibliography, key names, assumptions and aims. Part Four draws on this alternative tradition to exploit its difference: against the normal assumption 'since this is our tradition, what next?' is placed the question, 'since this is *not* our tradition what can be learned from it?'

The context of Liégé's France was one in which groundbreaking theological renewals were being vigorously resisted by the church authorities. His response was to produce a pastoral theology that was fervently evangelistic, radical, prophetic, ecclesial, praxis and mission-oriented and catechetical, rooted in fundamental and kerygmatic theology.

By contrast the British context of pastoral and practical theology from the same period was dominated by the conservative, established, status of the Church of England, confident in its role in society, with a long, strong tradition of individual pastoral care. The Presbyterian Church held a similar status in Scotland. In Britain scholars and pastoral innovators were free to pursue their own interests. Diverse initiatives were taken: academic and practical, regional, denominational and fragmented. American influences were strong, as was interest in affiliating psychological insight to individual pastoral care. Contexts for different initiatives

were often specific, such as particular universities, seminaries, hospitals, industry and individual parishes.

Nevertheless Liégé and British pastoral and practical theology shared significant concerns: The challenge of adapting the life and thought of the churches to the modern world; an interest in the human sciences, politics and society; a concern to develop a deeper and more cogent understanding of the discipline and methods of pastoral theology; an interest in Christian formation, both individual and corporate, as well as in ministry, spirituality, liturgy and pastoral care.

This Chapter will describe and discuss these contrasts and comparisons which need to be understood for the evaluation that follows in Chapter ten.

2. Contrasting contexts

1. Introduction

Both Liégé (1957a:xviii), and H. Richard Niebuhr (1977) in *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry*, argue that practical theology tends, in a given age, to become unified under the umbrella of its predominant pastoral function.²⁹⁵ For Liégé and British practical theologians this was to engage with the modern world in its own terms whilst privileging human experience to lead the debate with inherited doctrine. Yet, despite this common problematic, French and British practical theology developed separately.

²⁹⁵ So, for example, Gregory the Great's, *Pastoral Rule* focusses on preaching and education. With the Reformers the focus is on preaching and pastoral care is seen in that light. The eighteenth century evangelicals had their own focus, and the nineteenth century Catholic revivalists privileged sacramental grace (Niebuhr 1977 (1956)).

There are some general contextual overlaps such as the nineteenth century revivals.²⁹⁶ But the comparative contexts are more separated than connected. The rich theological renewals of post-war France did not cross to Britain. What could, theoretically, have been shared between French and British practical theologians during the 1950s and 1960s, was not shared. Why? This question is largely answered by differences of context. Historical, social, philosophical, religious and cultural conditions combined uniquely in France to provide the soil for Liégé's pastoral theology. These variables did not obtain in Britain. As chapter 8 showed, British theologians had other agendas, preoccupations, histories and social, religious and cultural contexts. Why should they look to France? This lack of connection is mostly a matter of language. We are two culturally and socially comparable cultures who produce much humanities scholarship separately.²⁹⁷ True, Liégé's colleagues Congar, de Lubac, Chenu and Daniélou were widely translated.²⁹⁸ But neither are any of the great British names of practical theology discussed in this study are known in France. There has been no cross over.

In the Anglican world the post war contextual changes are those described in Chapter 8 and summarised as 'transformative renaissance' (Ballard 2000: 60).²⁹⁹ From the 1960s, largely

²⁹⁶ For example, as Guéranger, Lacordaire, the three Saints, (Thérèse, Jean Vianney and Bernadette), Charles de Foucault and others had renewed the religious life in France so the Oxford Movement, Newman, and the foundation of the Anglican Orders such as CR, SSF, SSJE, and SSM and various women's Orders had renewed a quest for holiness in Britain; as Keble, Newman and Pusey began to edit the *Library of the Fathers* in 1836 so Renan, Migne and others, and, later, de Lubac and Daniélou and others, explored primitive and medieval Christianity. As the Clapham Sect and others promoted moral standards, good works among the poor and mission so, in France, Ozanam and others pursued the same themes.

²⁹⁷ In the week of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Mozart's birth in 2006, Blackwell's bookshop in Oxford displayed a full table of new books about him in English by British authors. In the same week *La Procure*, one of the largest bookshops in Paris, displayed an equally impressive table of similar new books in French by French authors. A brief examination revealed there was little cross-referral. If this is the case with someone as much shared in common as Mozart, how much less likely is it that British readers would have discovered what furrows were being ploughed in French pastoral theology in the early 1950s?

²⁹⁸ Who is translated is significant in reception history leading to an almost total divide between who is very well known and who remains unknown. The result is that many educated British people with a theological interest have heard of Congar and de Lubac. Almost none have heard of Féret, Colomb or Liégé. In France these reputations are more nuanced. Undoubtedly Congar and de Lubac had more intellectual impact, through the Council and the *gravitas* of their oeuvre, than Liégé and Féret. But research interviews at *Le Saulchoir* showed that some Dominicans view Liégé's influence on the French church as equal to Congar's. This works both ways. John Robinson is a recognized name in French theological circles.

²⁹⁹ 'The clerical, pragmatic paradigm of pastoral theology was revolutionized in Britain in the second half of the twentieth century' (Ballard 2000: 62). Before then it was 'a severely practical, atheoretical discipline that was marginal to mainstream theological endeavours and uninformed by the human sciences and professional skills' (Ballard 2000: 67).

through Vatican II, there is much more overlap.³⁰⁰ Today the shared context is captured by the phrase ‘international’ practical theology.

2. The context of Liégé’s pastoral theology

Liégé shared the exceptional aspirations of post war France.³⁰¹ Given the passing of what Liégé called ‘the time of Christianity’ he believed that many of the assumptions, beliefs and practices of the church were now wholly inappropriate. The church stood in desperate need of radical reform. Christians should expect to count themselves among the marginalized.³⁰² Nevertheless, he believed Christian faith to be intellectually justifiable, able to hold its own in dialogue with contemporary challenges, questions and knowledge. He assumes it is the task of a practical theologian to engage in this dialogue both to bring people to faith and to guide the church’s practice appropriately. He perceives his church as the universal church, with responsibility to hold together the Christian mission and witness across the globe. He assumes its organisation, internal dialogue, quality of corporate life, history, modes of catechesis, indeed its whole life, are all his business as a theologian.

Liégé knows that the history of the French church since the Revolution has led to specific problems.³⁰³ Liégé, his teachers and allies are embattled. Their institution rejects their proposals. The church still inhabits a culture and adopts attitudes which have not faced up to the modern world.³⁰⁴ This context changed drastically with Vatican II. The climate was one of reform that entirely fitted Liégé’s aspirations. Modernity was now to be engaged with and positively responded to. Yet the late 1960s and 70s go on to be characterised by conflict between increasing radicalism and the conservatism of those for whom the reforms were either entirely mistaken or at least too far-reaching.

³⁰⁰ It was noted in Chapter 7 that the French sociocultural context was one of effervescence, of the challenging of traditional society and many of its ideas and values. This context was shared with Britain where the Pastoral Studies movement, and significant upheavals, changes and renewals date from this decade.

³⁰¹ For the most recent comprehensive treatment of this subject see Kelly (2004).

³⁰² The norm will be that people live their life without God and those who take account of God will appear strange and odd to the majority.

³⁰³ Such as political polarisation, the legacy of Maurras, industrial revolution, communism, difficulties in church state relations, anticlericalism, and the aftermath of the Vichy regime, all of which needed to be understood to promote appropriate mission in France.

³⁰⁴ As discussed in Parts One and Three above.

3. How Liégé's pastoral theology was a response to its context

Liégé's pastoral theology is shaped by his concern that the church should be able to respond faithfully to contemporary needs and issues.

Firstly it is thoroughgoingly theological. Liégé sees the most urgent need as helping the institution of the church and the faith of individuals and communities to be a contemporary expression of the Gospel.³⁰⁵ First fruits of what God intends can be realised in individuals and congregations, and Liégé's pastoral theology encourages such realisation in the here and now of any situation. He is realistic about human sin and institutional sin. He is not an idealist who expects the political realisation of a perfect church. But human sinfulness should not function as a licence for the church's practice not to conform to the Gospels. Liégé's pastoral theology is concerned to separate authentic faith from the piety of religion. Christian faith has certain irreducible hallmarks without which it is not authentic. He is willing to put in criteria. For Liégé practice, as much as doctrine, can be heresy.

Secondly, since the church needs reformation, Liégé's pastoral theology is prophetic. It aims to animate the theology that guides both the individual's faith and the bishops' vision. It aims to link theology and practice throughout church life. It is therefore concerned with liturgy, justice, ecumenism, authority, church order and lay responsibility.

Thirdly, since corporate and individual Christian formation are equally important, it is focussed on adult catechesis and corporate Christian life. It is equally concerned with society and the family; with lay and ordained. It is responsive: the world sets the agenda to which the Gospel responds. Liégé is therefore concerned with everything human, including domestic and moral issues of everyday life such as the nature and functioning of Christian

³⁰⁵ Pastoral theology is thus both a visionary and critical discipline: is the church actually living its faith in practice? What does a practical expression of the Gospel consist of? By what theology is the Church to gauge its practice? What theological criteria should guide it? Pastoral theology is thus the critical discipline that enables the praxis of the Church to conform to the gospels, and individuals and communities to grow into the fullness of Christ. There is nothing pragmatic or expedient about Liégé's pastoral theology. He is concerned with the practical consequences of God's revelation culminating in the Event Jesus Christ and God's giving of the Spirit to continue His work through the Church, despite its sin. It is theological for its own sake, not a theory underpinning a project to make the Church a better institution. Liégé sees the Church as the mystical body of Christ and pastoral theology's task it to articulate what it means to incarnate this in practice.

community, adolescence, life cycle, marriage, divorce, abortion, sexuality, death and dying. Hence his dialogue with the human sciences: they possess the insight to show better than theology alone what meeting human need involves and love requires.

Fourthly, it aims to establish a renewed theological rationale for mission both at home and abroad.

Fifthly, since to Liégé the faith of many is lack-lustre, his pastoral theology is never far from preaching. It aims both to inspire charismatic preaching by ministers and the lifelong conversion of individuals and communities.

4. *The British Context*

The thesis portrayed a strongly contrasting context in Britain where the subject was never seriously concerned to promote or resource church reform at an institutional level, though some individual prophets cried in the wilderness.³⁰⁶ Neither did it focus, except marginally, on corporate Christian formation.

³⁰⁶ Its ecclesiology exuded a different ethos precipitating a different approach to theology and preoccupations far removed from Liégé's. The Church was conservative but, for historical reasons, more tied in to society and the Establishment than the French church. Its clergy tended to be an educated élite with degrees from State funded universities whose Professors might be Crown appointments. Far from being in conflict with the State, as in France, it was able to be influential by its Commissions, schools, academic status in the ancient universities and its general standing with the general public to whom it aspired to minister without discrimination via the pastoral tradition mediated through Baxter, Herbert and countless others. The pastoral feel was different; gentler, tolerant, less excitable, less political, not caught up in anti-clericalism for example. Whereas Liégé sensed the need for a theological onslaught on 'the period of Christianity' to help the French church connect to its situation, British clerics generally felt their Christian pastoral inheritance to be still pastorally viable, an advantage rather than a handicap, enabling easy pastoral access. Anglican and Protestant Authorities were not repressive. So many individual initiatives flourished, often paralleling those in France because based on the same renewals. Yet, in Vidler's phrase, a 'quiescent' theology generally prevailed, despite the originality and brilliance of certain individual scholars. Pastoral theology in Britain was still focussed on the individual and on linking psychological insight with pastoral care. Liégé's modernist conception of pastoral theology as a systematic discipline with a vast, interconnected and coherent theological purpose and agenda, the decisive ecclesial vehicle for the reform of praxis, simply did not exist. By the time British practical theology emerged, a post modern climate had already arrived, which still prevails, of a three way critical conversation, rather than, as Liégé saw it, a systematic theological discipline that also, necessarily, involved a method for engagement with other disciplines in which theology was the senior partner. Pastoral initiatives in Britain tended to be applied distinctively in different settings such as hospitals, industry, city missions or particular parishes. Certainly Britain shared in the cultural, social and theological turmoil and excitement of the 1960s and 1970s. Clergy numbers started to drop. Church attendance declined. Optimists had visions of radical change. But the Vatican Council, though closely observed, and influential in its thinking and reforms, did not have the impact on the Protestant Churches in Britain that it had in France because

The church and its theologians were less keen to shake off the 'period of Christianity'.³⁰⁷ For them it was less necessary to return to the theological roots than it was for Liégé. In order to work out what should properly replace the inappropriate theology of 'the time of Christianity' he was obliged to start from first principles. Colleagues involved in the renewal of both historical and biblical theology surrounded him. In Britain the underpinning theology tended to be implicit and the task the more pragmatic one of seeing how to make the church socially useful. The Anglo Saxon taste for pragmatism is well known (Ballard 1999: 295).³⁰⁸

Secondly, since individual initiatives could flourish without repression by the Curia, they abounded. However there was no co-ordinating authority. Pastoral theology was 'all periphery and no centre'. Thought and action were fragmented, regional, denominational and haphazard. They reflected the Protestant pluralism of different settings, ecclesiologies and traditions.³⁰⁹ It is free thinking, not very political, humanistic, and more concerned with education in general and ministerial training in particular than with Christian or spiritual formation as such. The dominant theme of pastoral studies in this period was the relation of theological to psychological insight. This reflects both a live interest in Britain and the general willingness to accept American pastoral initiatives and research.

Academically, in this period, pastoral studies grew in stature and new departments opened. But whereas Liégé battled with the older Faculty of Theology, in Britain new departments were left unchallenged perhaps in part because those theologians who found the subject

Roman Catholicism was less of a force here. Nevertheless, during these years, pastoral studies made steady and uncontroversial progress in both university departments and ministerial training. As with the initiatives in the field mentioned above, so in both Universities and seminaries pastoral studies continued to be characterised by local initiatives and individual charismatic figures. What they had in common was their incorporation of American pastoral scholarship.

³⁰⁷ It is illustrated through the status of the Bishops, the debates of the House of Lords, the widespread acceptance of church Establishment, the continuance of the royal family with the sovereign as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, the churches' involvement in education and in church reports and Commissions. The context was one in which a conservative approach was believed to contain pastoral benefits and theologians worked to show how, since this was so, it could best be exploited

³⁰⁸ Ballard (1999: 295) helpfully defines this as meaning that it has 'a greater interest in a working compromise than principles'.

³⁰⁹ Scotland, in particular, has its own tradition. In general this pluralism reflected the influence of the dominant Anglicanism in England and Presbyterianism in Scotland.

outside their interest could ignore them. Though university-based, Liégé was free to devote his theology to the cause of his church. In the British academy, by contrast, theologians had to be sensitive to the ethos and requirements of a secular university. Liégé could evangelise even as he wrote and lectured, for example, on kerygmatic faith. British academics needed to remain within the boundaries of critical thought in which proselytising has no place. The rise of religious studies, as opposed to theology, has reinforced this. The considerable increase in the number of courses available to the religiously interested who may well have nothing to do with the church has led to an increased focus on human well being as such far removed from the 'clerical paradigm' (Ballard 2000: 66).

3. Aims

1. Introduction

Since Tillich's (1968: 8; 67-73) method of correlation has been seminal and influential in so much British practical theology, it is useful to compare his theological aims with Liégé's. Both Tillich and Liégé did their theology in and for the church. Since then there has been a separating out of pastoral theology. It can still be an 'engaged church activity'. Equally it is found to be a worthwhile subject for a wide variety of people, including people of no particular belief, in which they engage with the traditions of religious faith and modern experience (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 11).³¹⁰ Inevitably, the agnostic academic theologian, the theological activist who writes little or no theology, the committed theologian in a secular university, the Religious in a Catholic university, all produce very different work. For Liégé pastoral theology was necessarily catechetical in order to animate church community life and authentic liturgy. It aims to unite dioceses, catechumens, lay people, society and the family. In his ecclesiology the church exists for the sake of the world to collaborate in God's creative and redemptive plan for humankind. Liégé's pastoral theology is to help the church faithfully engage in this collaboration. This comparison of Tillich and Liégé is intended to

³¹⁰ Pattison and Lynch (2004: 8) give as an example of such practical theology, recent work on child abuse which draws heavily on human science research but also engages 'with theological concepts and norms, and explores the relevance of these for the experience of abuse'.

offer clarity about the aims of practical theology in the period immediately before this 'separating out'.

2. Comparing the aims of two seminal theologians: Tillich and Liégé

Tillich (1968: 8) saw that for Christian faith to be of any practical use to modern people it must relate to the categories of modern thought. His systematic theology was to offer just such an account. For Tillich (1968: 8) the challenge is two-fold: the Christian kerygma must be restated for the times and it must offer an answer to the questions of ultimate concern asked by modern people.

Liégé's shared Tillich's desire to make the kerygma intelligible for today but specifically he aims to fashion a sacerdotal, royal people who participate in the glory of Christ, prophet, priest and Lord (Liégé 1955b: 7). He assumes Christian faith is essentially corporate. His aim is fundamentally catechetical (Liégé 1955b). Whereas Tillich has to invent language, like 'the New Being' to render the kerygma into modern, existential terms, Liégé's challenge is to create a catechetical discourse to help the church towards the sanctity of total conversion. In 'For a catechetical pastoral theology' (1955b), he puts it in a Tillichian way: catechesis must find ways of asking questions to which Christ is the answer. Catechesis is for building up the church, not for the intellectual edification of individuals in isolation from that task.

At this point they diverge: Tillich's concern is to let Christian faith make sense today. Liégé's concern is to build up the church as a truer community of Christian faith today. Liégé's pastoral theology's aim is missionary: a new pastoral theology is needed for the better catechising of the church to help it be a more authentic community of God's love. Tillich agrees that theology must serve the needs of the church. The theologian's role is to help the church establish its 'theological self-interpretation' (Tillich 1968: 33). Good theology 'deals with the Christian message as a matter of ultimate concern' (Tillich 1968: 33). As a systematician, he sees this role in terms of stating and interpreting 'the eternal truth of the

Christian message'. Theology should indeed have 'prophetic, shaking and transforming power' (Tillich 1968: 5). But this impact for a particular individual is theologically conveyed when the theologian offers the Christian message 'adapted to the modern mind' without having lost 'its essential and unique character' (Tillich 1968: 8). Tillich (1968:8) arrives at his method logically by seeing that he must 'correlate the questions implied in the situation with the answers implied in the message'. He defines 'the situation' as 'all the various cultural forms which express modern man's interpretation of his existence' (Tillich 1968: 6).

For Tillich practical theology is 'the technical theory through which these two parts [historical and systematic theology] are applied to the life of the church (Tillich 1968: 37,38).³¹¹ Both theologians' complaints reflect their concerns. They are distinctive but share an overlap concerning the notion of experience. Tillich complains that theology often fails the church by either miss-stating 'the truth' or by not speaking adequately to the situation, sometimes both. Liégé protests against current bad method in pastoral theology where its reduction to matters of pastoral technique and the general pragmatism of the Curia leaves it quite lacking in the theological criteria and principles it needs. He protests against the post-

³¹¹ A technical theory describes the adequate means for a given end. This, for practical theology is 'the life of the church':

While the doctrine of the church about its nature and its functions is a matter of systematic theology, practical theology deals with the institutions through which the nature of the church is actualised and its functions are performed. It does not deal with them from the historical point of view, telling what has been and what is still going on in the church, but it looks at them from the technical point of view, asking how to act most effectively.... As occurs in every cognitive approach to reality, a bifurcation between pure and applied knowledge takes place in theology.....practical theology has no less theological standing than theoretical theology... practical theology and theoretical theology are interdependent (Tillich 1968: 37).

Each function of the church has an end for which institutional means exist. 'Each function needs a practical discipline to interpret, to criticise, and to transform the existing institutions and to suggest new ones if necessary'. Theology itself is such a function, and its institutional realisation in the life of the church is one of the many concerns of practical theology.

Tillich understands that practical theology will need to draw on psychology and sociology, especially their knowledge of the structures of man and society, their understanding of the situation of special groups and their knowledge of cultural achievements and problems from any aspect of life. 'In this way', he writes

practical theology can become a bridge between the Christian message and the human situation, generally and specially... It can put new questions before the systematic theologian, questions arising from the cultural life of the period, and it can induce the historical theologian to make new researches from points of view that come out of the actual needs of his contemporaries. It can preserve the church from traditionalism and dogmatism, and it can induce society to take the church seriously. But it can do all this only if, in unity with historical and systematic theology, it is driven by the ultimate concern which is concrete and universal at the same time (Tillich 1968: 38)

Tillich addresses issues like liturgy, the Bible, liturgy and ecumenism at the logically appropriate moments in his system. Liégé seizes the catechetical, liturgical, Scriptural and ecumenical renewals as pastoral theology's missionary opportunity to co-ordinate and combine urgently needed raw materials for maximum catechetical impact.

Tridentine church that had lost ecclesiological corporateness. Here they come close. Like Farley who wants to recover ‘habitus’, Liégé wants to recover Augustine’s combination of pastoral and scholastic theology; a more lived theological approach. Tillich points out that the sources of theology presuppose participation in them, that is, experience (Tillich 1968: 46). So ‘experience’ is always an issue in theology.³¹² Tillich sees the theologian as a philosopher in that analysis of the human existential situation which theology answers is philosophical (Tillich 1968: 70-71). Thus theology’s method employs ‘semantic rationality’, ‘logical rationality’ and ‘methodological rationality’, that is, a rational way of deriving and stating its propositions (Tillich 1968: 61-65). For Liégé ideas are not enough because catechesis is an oral, living affair with the Holy Spirit as its author.³¹³

3. Comparing Definitions

³¹² He approves, as would Liégé, of the early Franciscan school, for example of Alexander of Hales and Bonaventura, calling it ‘existential’, practical knowledge ‘based on a participation of the knowing subject in the spiritual realities, a touching and tasting (*tactus* and *gustus*) of that with which he deals’ (Tillich 1968: 46). He continues, ‘Behind their endeavours lay the mystical-Augustinian principle of immediate awareness of ‘being-itself, which is, at the same time ‘truth-itself (*esse ipsum -verum ipsum*)’ (Tillich 1968: 46). He complains that the theology which became predominant under Duns Scotus and Aquinas replaced this ‘mystical immediacy’ with ‘analytical detachment’ but rejoices that the Augustinian-Franciscan tradition never lost its power, for example in sectarian movements such as that associated with Thomas Muenzer (Tillich 1868: 46). Classical orthodoxy, he asserts, for all its victory of ecclesiastical or biblical authority never entirely took over, as the phenomena of Continental Pietism, Anglo-American Independentism, Methodism and Evangelicalism demonstrate. This tradition thus survived the Enlightenment ‘and found classical expression in Schleiermacher’s theological method’ (Tillich 1968: 47). Tillich argues that Schleiermacher’s experiential method has been much misunderstood and is critical for today’s theology. Neo-orthodoxy made a mistake in becoming detached from it. It represents the Augustinian-Franciscan tradition mediated to Schleiermacher via, religiously, his Moravian tradition and philosophically via Spinoza and Schelling. For Schleiermacher ‘feeling’ was a teleological dependence, not a psychological function. Tillich sees it as close to ultimate concern. And Tillich’s norm for theology was precisely, ‘the New Being in Jesus as the Christ as our ultimate concern’ (Tillich 1968: 56).

³¹³ Liégé’s method involves considerable exploitation of the word *Parole* (Word) which powerfully brings together the spoken word, the Word as Act, the Johannine joining of heart and Word, word as exterior expression in society, and word both as the noetic enlightening of the mind and as dynamic, leading to action. Liégé is pioneering a catechetical discourse in this inclusion of the oral dimension in approach to pastoral theology. For him doctrine as ideas is not yet doctrine. Catechesis personalises doctrine and makes it live. And for Liégé practical theology is the discipline which engages with this to think about all that is involved in the transmission of faith: as important as what can be said is how it is said and preached. Catechesis is a human dialogue. It points to a mystery not to propositions. It is the science of the art of creating Eucharistic Christian community. As with the British theologian, R.A. Lambourne, Liégé’s message is always addressed to the community not just to individuals. This corporate emphasis had been mediated to him especially through the Tübingen School and the ecclesiological work of de Lubac and Congar, even of Cardinal Suhard. In Liégé’s circles this approach was normative.

The aim of this section is to examine a representative sample of definitions from writers who have influenced British practical theology and from British practical theology itself. These will be critically compared and contrasted with Liégé's definitions.

A range of definitions has influenced British practical theology. In Protestant pastoral theology one classic, respected definition is Hiltner's.³¹⁴ Another is Thurneysen's.³¹⁵ Another is Browning's.³¹⁶ Fowler's definition is also quoted by British writers.³¹⁷ Campbell enlarges the scope.³¹⁸ In general British practical theology tends to be broadly and openly defined. It is seen as a rational discipline whose purpose is not to evangelise but to provide a frame and context for critical thinking and dialogue between religious faith traditions and contemporary life, enriching and transforming its participants. Pattison with Woodward (1994: 9) see it as 'a prime place where contemporary experience and the resources of the religious tradition meet in a critical dialogue that is mutually and practically transforming'.³¹⁹ Elaine Graham(2002:3) sees pastoral theology as 'critical theology of Christian practice'.³²⁰ A.O. Dyson (1987, cited by Ballard 1999: 305) offers a definition not far from Liégé's: 'the

³¹⁴ It is 'that branch or field of theological knowledge and inquiry that brings the shepherding perspective to bear upon all the operations and functions of the church and the minister, and then draws conclusions of a theological order from reflection on these observations' (Hiltner 2000: 28).

³¹⁵ See Crapps (1990: 1276-1277) for a description and critique of his approach. In his understanding pastoral care occurs 'within the realm of the church...it presupposes membership of the body of Christ, or has this membership as its purpose' but ultimately 'it is rooted in the Word of God' and is concerned with the communication of this and at the heart of its message is forgiveness; it is a model of proclamation (Thurneysen 1962)

³¹⁶ 'critical reflection on the church's dialogue with Christian sources and other communities of experience and interpretation with the aim of guiding its action toward social, and individual transformation' (Browning 1991: 36). This is a definition built on the Roman Catholic Tracy's: 'practical theology is the mutually critical correlation of the interpreted theory and praxis of the Christian faith with the interpreted theory and praxis of the contemporary situation' (Tracy 1983: 76).

³¹⁷ 'critical and constructive reflection on the praxis of the Christian community's life and work in its various dimensions' (Wesson 1986: 57). Heitink's important definition has been less noticed. It is 'an empirically-oriented theological theory about passing on the Christian faith in the practice of modern society' (Heitink 1999: 6).

³¹⁸ Practical theology is 'concerned with the study of specific social structures and individual initiatives within which God's continuing work of restitution and renewal becomes manifest. These may be found either inside or outside the life of the church' (Campbell 2000: 84).

³¹⁹ It is particularly interesting that this definition uses the word 'place', an exact translation of 'lieu'.

³²⁰ Graham, somewhat elusively for the general reader, wishes 'to move towards a model of pastoral theology as the interpretation of the purposeful practices through which symbolic and material reality is both mediated and reconstituted' (Graham 2002) or, elsewhere 'pastoral theology is a critical phenomenology, studying a living and acting faith-community in order to excavate and examine the norms which inhabit pastoral praxis (Graham's italics) (Graham 2002). More down to earth, Ballard and Pritchard see practical theology as a four-fold activity. It is descriptive of the content of belief. It examines the church's life in the light of belief's norms. It is critical and responsive to questions. It is apologetic, concerned with the practical and intellectual implications of faith (Ballard and Pritchard 1996).

theological study of the church's action in its own life and towards society in response to the action of God'.³²¹ Unfortunately it is not a definition that has been always been followed up in the literature, though Ballard (1999: 305) builds on it strongly, summarising the task of practical theology as, 'to enable the people of God to respond in faith to the life and times in which God has set them'. The catechetical flavour of this is Liégéian.³²²

This is an area still fraught with confusion. In spite of all the work in the academy we have seen, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, to separate pastoral theology from clerical ministry and establish it firmly within, indeed, at the heart of theology itself, the recent SPCK New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies (Carr 2002) places it firmly in the realm of theological education and ministerial formation; that of priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic Church and pastoral care and counselling for the Protestants. Its six-line entry on practical theology, having defined it as 'the part of theological education or ministerial formation that deals with pastoral and practical matters' (Carr 2002: 276), briefly describes the content of pastoral studies courses.³²³ This last definition amounts to an undermining of the entire recent tradition of academic practical theology.

Liégé is fascinated by definitions and develops seven over a fifteen year period. Liégé's definitions are:

- 1.) 1955: 'systematic reflection on the total lived life of the church in the time of its up-building; or to put it another way, systematic reflection on the entirety of the Church's mediations in their task of building up the body of Christ; or again, a dynamic theology of the Church' (1955b: 5).
- 2.) 1957: 'the theological science of ecclesial action' (Liégé 1957a: xv).
- 3.) 1960: 'the theological science of the action of the Church to build up the body of Christ' (1962cc).

³²¹ Ballard's 1999 citation gives 1985 as the year. This is a typographical error. It is 1987.

³²² Ballard and Pritchard (1996: 5) stay close to Liégé when they write, 'Practical theology...raises the theological issues of meaning and truth in relation to the living out of the life of faith', except that they do not mention the church, preferring, like Campbell, a broader scope.

³²³ It describes pastoral theology as '1. The theology and practice of pastoral ministry (Roman Catholic). 2. The theology and practice of pastoral care and counselling (Protestant)' and practical theology as 'The part of theological education or ministerial formation that deals with pastoral and practical matters' (Carr 2002).

- 4.) 1961: 'systematic reflection on the mystery of the Church in its lived practice between the Ascension and the Parousia' quoted by Reynal (Reynal 2004: 508).
- 5.) 1964: 'the theological science of paschal action in the Church's "today"' (1965o).
- 6.) 1969: 'theological discourse which expresses the reflexive awareness of the action of the church in the "today" of its development (1970d).
- 7.) 1975: (influenced by the political theology and liberation theology of Metz): 'a theory of faith in and for the action of the church, developed in the today of its accomplishment (or of its practice)' (1976e).

Liégé's definitions carry considerable Catholic influence.³²⁴ Alastair Campbell shares with Liégé a concern for the church-world relationship which leads him to be critical of both Hiltner and Thurneysen.³²⁵ But his aims are broader than Liégé's. By holding church activity and God's activity in the secular world together, he outflanks Liégé to use theology directly to address God's initiatives outside the church. Here is a challenge to Liégé: is he so church-oriented that he does not enquire about the Creator's power in the world independently of the church?³²⁶ Campbell's critique of Hiltner points to his 'strange' lack of awareness of the necessary status of the church in his definition of pastoral theology (Campbell 2000: 82).³²⁷

³²⁴ For example Heinz Schuster defines practical theology as 'that branch of theology which deals with the Church's self-fulfilment in the ever new contemporary situation' (Schuster 1965b: 5)

³²⁵ Campbell (2000: 83) writes, 'It seems that the articulation of the nature of practical theology is intimately related to one's understanding of the relationship between the life of the church and the life of the world "outside the church"'. A 'systematic conceptualisation of the church-world relationship' is what is needed (Campbell 200:83).

³²⁶ Campbell (2000:84) writes, 'Practical theology is concerned with the study of specific social structures and individual initiatives within which God's continuing work of renewal and restitution becomes manifest. These may be found either inside or outside the life of the church'. Campbell shares Liégé's assumption that pastoral theology must change the church. But Campbell wants it to change the world too, without reference to the church: "The "findings" of practical theology can be expected to be mostly in the form of concrete proposals for the restructuring of the church's life of witness, fellowship and service, for the style of life of individual Christians within the "secular" structures of society, and for the renewal and reforming of the secular structures themselves' (Campbell 2000: 85).

³²⁷ In Campbell's (2000: 82) analysis, Hiltner divides divinity into the 'logic-centred field' (biblical, historical, doctrinal studies) and the 'operation-centred field' (three 'perspectives' here, Shepherding, Communicating, Organizing). He earths theology in the human sciences and wants contemporary experience to help revitalise the church. Hiltner fails to solve 'the basic problem' of how the present experience of the church is related to its historical basis as attested to in scripture'. 'Indeed his theology seems to have no place for the category of revelation' (Campbell 2000: 82). For Campbell, Hiltner failed to spot his cultural conditioning, an observation Liégé would appreciate. He contrasts Hiltner with Bonhoeffer who asked, 'what is Christianity today and who is Christ for us today?' Campbell (2000: 82) calls Hiltner's failure here 'ecclesiastical conservatism' whereas both Liégé and Campbell ask profound ecclesiological questions. Liégé is mentioned in *Concilium* on page 24 of Vol. 2. No 2. on Liturgy in reference to an article called *The Assembly and its Pastoral Implications* by Casiano Floristan (a leading Spanish theologian) who writes (p. 20), "Ecclesiology will be a principal starting point for a

Liégé would concur with Campbell's criticisms of Thurneysen's aim for pastoral theology.³²⁸ Campbell (2000: 83) concludes that neither Hiltner nor Thurneysen define an 'independent and viable practical theology'. Campbell's own suggestion stems from his spotting, rightly, a clue in the persistence of the 'church-centredness' problem since Schleiermacher's definition. Though Campbell's ambitions are broader than Liégé's, the 'church-world relationship' was nevertheless a key concern of Liégé's from 1944. Campbell, of all the Protestants, remains closest to Liégé, not least in this sentence: 'the actions of Christians are celebrations of and attestations to God's reconciling work in the world which begins and ends in Jesus Christ' (Campbell 2000: 83).³²⁹ Campbell's broadly shares *Concilium's* sense of the scope of practical theology. In seeing it as going beyond the clergy and relating it primarily to 'the whole economy of salvation' he is close to Liégé (Campbell 2000: 84). They are also close on mission. Campbell wants this theme to 'move into the centre of its concern'.³³⁰ Campbell and Liégé both strive to see how pastoral theology relates to theology as a whole. They agree it needs to be in equal partnership with the other theological disciplines drawing from the

contemporary pastoral examination, but not the only one". The footnote 10 says, "Arnold in Germany and Liégé in France are the pastoral theologians who have gone the deepest into the ecclesiological significance of ecclesial actions". In the previous footnote, on the same page he refers to Liégé's Introduction to a Spanish edition of Arnold and also to his contribution to *problemas actuales de Pastoral* at the 1st international congress at Fribourg 1961 (Madrid, 1963).

³²⁸ Thurneysen's definition of pastoral care starts, like Schleiermacher's, with the church. Campbell's criticisms are that it leaves out the notion of healing, it misses out the call to serve the needy and it fails to do justice to the rich idea of *koinonia*. It is too proclamation based. Thurneysen, writing in 1962, is strikingly parallel to Liégé in his focus on the Word of God. But Liégé was also passionate in his concern for the poor and for the up building of common life in Christ with its implication of healing.

³²⁹ Campbell (2000: 84f.) goes on to say that this emphasis on 'what God is doing in the world' is familiar from the 1960s and 'reflected reactions to the 'death of God' and the 'secular theology' 'debates found strongly in Joseph Fletcher, J.A.T. Robinson and Paul Lehmann". It seems strange that Campbell refers to these names as his summary of the 1960s' ethos without mentioning the Second Vatican Council and its epoch-making texts on these very subjects. For example, he mentions the 'option for the poor' as a function of political theology rather than a phrase which comes from Council texts. Indeed he does not mention the Roman Catholic Church, a remarkable absence from the perspective of this study. In the context of Campbell's critical remarks about Hiltner and Thurneysen, it is striking that Ballard (2000) writes a Chapter entitled 'The Emergence of Pastoral and Practical Theology in Britain' without approaching the question of how this subject relates to the Judeo-Christian tradition and in particular, the Gospels. It is simply impossible to imagine Liégé writing a Chapter with the same title save that the word Britain be changed to France without his mentioning Jesus Christ.

³³⁰ It was exactly to encourage this theological move that Liégé and his colleagues attempted to found the Journal, *Bible et Mission* in 1953 which finally was allowed to appear as *Parole et Mission* in 1958 (though the seeds were sown in 1946). The first edition addresses precisely Campbell's issue. In the editorial Liégé and his three colleagues explain that the reason they have chosen to put 'mission' in the title at a time when other journals, embarrassed by colonialism, are dropping the term is for 'strictly theological reasons'. It is, they say, a key word, used by the apostles. It is theologically important to link the invisible mission, the eternal mission of the Word and the Holy Spirit, with the visible mission of Jesus, the apostles and the Church. Its aim is, precisely, to put thinking about *la théologie missionnaire* into the centre of theology, given the necessity to relate the whole tradition of the Church to the realities of life today and 'all that animates current movements and thinking' (Liégé 1958).

best and most recent scholarship of each.³³¹ The shift from deductive to inductive theology (and Campbell's insistence that both are inadequate because a lateral not a linear relationship is needed), is a shared issue (Campbell 2000: 84). What Campbell (2000: 80) calls 'spiritual maintenance' of the people done by the clergy was broadened in the 'lay involvement' movement in Protestantism and the new ecclesiology formalised by the emphasis on the 'People of God' in the Vatican Council. Campbell (2000: 80) singles out Thurneysen and Hiltner as being of special importance in restoring pastoral theology by helping to 'set the theology of pastoral care within the general context of the subject matter of theology' (Campbell 2000: 80). This is what Liégé and his colleagues were trying to do and for the same reasons. Without mentioning Roman Catholic rehabilitation of pastoral theology, Campbell does use church-life categories familiar to them: *kerygma*, *koinonia* and *diakonia*.³³²

Campbell (2000: 80) speaks for the British tradition when he writes: 'There appears to have been little interest in recent theological writing in the construction of a comprehensive definition of practical theology'. Woodward and Pattison (2000:4), suggest that though pastoral and practical theology can be clearly defined, 'it is probably not very useful to do so': definitions differ and the contents they address differ correspondingly. They argue there is no need for an agreed definition. They offer various contrasting definitions noticing five commonalities: pastoral and practical theology are concerned with practice; with the relation of practice to the Christian theological tradition; with the Christian community, the church, and its work as a very important focus; with a traditional focus on ministry; and with 'contemporary practices, issues and experiences that bear upon or form a concern for the Christian community' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 6). Do Liégé's definitions share these commonalities? They do.³³³

³³¹ Campbell appears to derive this conclusion from his critique of Hiltner and Thurneysen and what has been learned from their inadequacies. Liégé, on the other hand, is arguing this from the start of the 1950s as his understanding of what a contemporary reading of the gospel required. Anyhow Campbell and Liégé at least appear to share the same theological values.

³³² His first reference for this point is J.C. Hoekendijk (1964). He also refers to the Roman Catholic, Küng and the Protestant, Moltmann.

³³³ Though of course Liégé's account of the history of pastoral theology shows his understanding that the ordained ministry has been a focus for it in the past, there is no hint of this aspect needing to be part of his definitions in the way the North American Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling want to acknowledge in their separate entries on Protestant pastoral theology and practical theology (Hunter 1990).

Graham's critique of pastoral theology as a discipline includes the observation that its curriculum has been held together 'more by contingency than epistemological congruence' (Graham 2002: 56). This is true enough of the British tradition but unfair to Liégé, whose definitions do have 'epistemological congruence' and cannot be accused of conforming to the narrow and specific model of 'individual counselling' she condemns.³³⁴

Liégé's definitions contrast with British ones in twice including the word 'systematic', a term British authors resist, locating practical theology at some distance from systematics. Another contrast is that Liégé sets practical theology within eschatological context: either between the Ascension and the Parousia or as 'Paschal' action belonging to 'time of the church's up-building'. Liégé's definitions contrast with Protestant notions that it is but 'the study' of something or a meeting place, however valuable. Liégé's definitions belong to their era in explicitly focussing on building the body of Christ. Woodward and Pattison, as is general today, have broadened their definition to end the ecclesial marriage. Contemporary francophone definitions have broadened similarly.

4. Comparing styles of practical theology

This section takes the typology of styles of practical theology suggested by Pattison and Lynch (2005) and briefly summarises each style under a separate heading as a backcloth to comparing Liégé's style with them in sub-section 4.

³³⁴ Liégé's pastoral theology was not on this orbit and it is a loss that not even a theologian of Graham's stature acknowledges or takes this French perspective into account. Liégé's context was different. He wanted to renew 'dead scholasticism' not escape psychodynamic counselling of the individual. But in the process he grappled with a lot of the issues that British practical theology admits to picking up decades later (Graham 2002: chapters 2 -4). It must be stressed that Liégé's approach was corporate and theological all the way through.

1. Liberal-rational Approaches

The theologian who most embodies these developments is Don Browning.³³⁵ He focusses ‘on developing clear, rational academically justifiable and credible methodologies’ (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 12). Appendix Eight provides a fuller analysis of his most influential book (1991). He needs to be understood by way of Tillich’s correlational method as taken up by Hiltner.³³⁶ Woodward and Pattison (2000: 88) describe Browning as ‘the key international figure in the renaissance of practical theology in the second half of the twentieth century’ ... ‘he has given new meaning and method to the concept of practical theology’:

Coming from a background of passionate commitment to developing relevant, practically-related theological ethics, Browning argues that practical theologians must employ what he calls a ‘revised correlational method’ to their work. This method takes both the theological tradition and the contemporary situation very seriously and attempts to engage them in critical dialogue together. The aim is to arrive at normative ways of seeing the human situation which can then be related to contemporary ideas and practices in pastoral work (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 73-74).³³⁷

³³⁵ Another scholar who falls into this category and has made a significant contributions is Gerben Heitink (1999) in his major work, *Practical Theology: History. Theory. Action Domains*. Heitink notes that pastoral theology evolved rapidly during the 1960s. He sees it as a theological theory of action with a methodology comparable to that of the social sciences. Though he discusses its recent development in Germany, the Netherlands and the USA, he does not mention France. He suggests that all recent approaches to practical theology, though varied, presuppose the unitary nature of its theorizing. He defines it as ‘the empirically oriented theological theory of the mediation of the Christian faith in the praxis of modern (Heitink 1999: 6). Praxis does not mean practice but action or activity as in the usage of the Acts of the Apostles with the Greek, *praxeis apostolon* or as St. Paul uses it in Romans 12. 4. to mean the different functions (*praxeis*) of church members as the body of Christ. In other words practical theology examines God’s activity through the ministry of human beings. Its starting point is the empirical; the experience of human beings and the current state of church and society. Praxis implies both the mediation of the Christian faith and, through agogics, intentional change, agology being the discipline that deals with the professional management of intentional changes (Heitink 1999). The context in which this occurs is society, with which praxis is interconnected. The mediation is embedded in the question of how there can be a real transmission of the Christian tradition. Agogics looks to description and explanation, linking mediation and intentional change. Society, not the church, is always the horizon. Heitink’s three hundred and fifty page book is a *tour de force* of theoretical argument but very dense and indigestible, unlikely to be of much help in parishes. But he has been important in establishing practical theology as a serious academic discipline in the contemporary university. Not, however, as important as Don Browning. For a detailed review of Heitink’s book see Ziebertz (1997). See also Pattison (1992-3).

³³⁶ See Appendix 8 for more on Hiltner, Browning and Nouwen.

³³⁷ They also say that in his many works Browning has argued that Christian practice should be based on and contribute to theologically based ethics. They commend this view as an important corrective to post-war

For all these philosophical and epistemological concerns, Browning bases his theology on the event Jesus Christ, the resurrection and Pentecost. However the reader must dig deep to see it:

The inner core to practical reason...functions within a narrative about God's creation, governance and redemption of the world. It also functions within a narrative that tells how the life and death of Jesus Christ furthered God's plans for the world (Browning 1991: 11).

This is the world of Liégé. But there is more distance from than connection to this world. Browning aims for a philosophically sophisticated epistemological rehabilitation of practical theology as the model 'for theology as such' and has assimilated an array of conversation partners to establish his purpose. But it is hard to apply his complex and theoretical ideas in practice.³³⁸

2. Neo-traditional Confessional Approaches

Pattison and Lynch (2005: 418) call Henri Nouwen's approach 'neo-traditional-confessional' in which 'a primary emphasis is placed on the importance of the theologian's personal spirituality or their pursuit of an authentic relationship with the truth as revealed within the Christian tradition'. Nouwen's starting question in *The Wounded Healer* (1972) is, what does it mean to be a minister in contemporary society? The question is urgent because the familiar ways of ministry are now 'crumbling' and ministers stripped of their traditional protections. Nouwen found that he could only link his psychiatry to his theology by joining American Protestants like Hiltner and Boisen.

Thomas Oden made a shift similar to Nouwen's from trying to integrate theology and counselling psychology to employing 'a much more applicationist approach focussed on

pastoral care in the USA that uncritically took counselling and psychotherapy as its practical and ethical template (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 89).

³³⁸ His correlational method would be too difficult to make use of in most parishes. So by defining practical theology as he does perhaps Browning closes down opportunities rather than opening them up. In a review Stephen Pattison (1992a) writes:

The book remains dense, complex and obscure. Poor basic organization, lack of 'signposts', a rambling, diffuse style and an unfortunate tendency to use terms which sound very much the same but actually denote different movements or activities serve to alienate and confuse..

using the resources of the Christian tradition' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 418). Oden (1984) spotted that current writers frequently referred to Freud, Rogers and Berne but never to Cyprian, Chrysostom, Augustine or Gregory the Great (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 419). So he started to explore 'the relevance of Christian doctrine, and patristic theology in particular, for contemporary ministry and theological reflection' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 419).

3. Radical-liberationist Approaches

Pattison and Lynch (2005: 420) describe this as the approach of those whose work reflects 'three basic concerns that characterize contemporary theologies of liberation'. First, they emphasise social context, especially as it related to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. 'Typically, they argue the need for forms of theology that are relevant to oppression and exclusion in that particular context' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 420). Secondly, it is strongly aware of structures and dynamics of power and is concerned to examine any damaging consequences and identify forms of resistance. Thirdly, it is concerned to promote human liberation and well-being:

Liberationist practical theology can therefore be judged effective in its own terms to the extent to which it stimulates thought and practice that lead to improvements in people's psychological, physical and spiritual well-being in particular contexts. By contrast with Oden's confessional pastoral theology, which is concerned with maintaining the truth-claims of the historical Christian tradition, liberationist practical theology is primarily concerned with the practical and social implications of particular theological positions and discourses. Liberationist practical theologians are therefore open to exploring new theological languages and metaphors that may hold greater potential for human liberation than traditional discourses of God, creation or Christian life (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 420-421).

4. Liégé's style in comparison with these styles

Liégé's style was broad, combining these styles. He strives to build pastoral theology as a serious academic discipline. He is an evangelist. He is a pioneer of the radical style that becomes Liberation Theology. He examined the theological history of issues. Thus he engaged with biblical theology, patristics, medieval theology, Thomism, theologies of the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries and, in general, the Catholic *magisterium*. His style partnered past and present philosophy and the unfolding discoveries of human sciences.

There is a striking contrast in Liégé's sources and those of Hiltner, Browning and Heitink. Hiltner makes references to the bible, William Temple, Boisen, Tillich and assorted psychotherapeutic literature. He elaborates his thought from his own reasoning. Browning's book sources are theme-dependent. They are philosophical, psychological and cultural-studies related. Heitink (1999), as a Dutch Protestant, privileges Dutch and German contemporary academics.³³⁹

Liégé would not be content with Hiltner's shepherding perspective, considering the subject to need more subdivisions. Hiltner's focus on the pastoral event is nuanced and more systematic with its 'reception, assimilation and understanding'. But where Hiltner is content to help people find meaning, Liégé wants to build a renewed church whose members are equipped with a mature faith. For Hiltner, insight, understanding, healing, guiding, sustaining, and knowing seem valid ends in themselves. For Liégé they are secondary to the gaining of the fullness of faith in the church. Pastoral theology is theological, for Hiltner, in starting with theological questions and returning with a theological response. Pastoral theology is theological for Liégé because it proceeds from the Event Jesus Christ, Pentecost and the message of the kerygma; it is a thinking about an initiative taken by God, by definition theological. Both Hiltner and Liégé agree on the prophetic function of pastoral theology. Hiltner's primary concern is to enable a contemporary understanding of Jesus and a style of pastoral care to match. Liégé's primary concern is the corporate catechising of the church as the appropriate vehicle for contemporary mission.

In basing his work on theological ethics, Browning inhabits a different theological world. Whereas Liégé is reacting to a European Catholic scholastic status quo that rejected modern human science, Browning is reacting to an American Protestant context that has uncritically allowed itself to be dominated by counselling and psychotherapy. Whereas Liégé wants to

³³⁹ Heitink's bibliography, approximately six hundred entries, contains no books by Chenu, de Lubac, Congar, Daniélou, Liégé, Küng or Rahner. He does mention the four most famous French names in his text however. Commenting of the theological renewal of the *théologie nouvelle* of the 1930s he writes that they focussed on *ressourcement* in a way that led to a biblical-kerygmatic theology. He continues: 'In more recent times high expectations were awakened by the *aggiornamento* of Pope John XXIII and Vatican II, but these were soon squashed' (Heitink 1999)

give back to theology more heart, Browning wants to give back to pastoral care more theology. Browning (1991: 11) acknowledges, but does little explicitly to develop, that his work 'functions within a narrative about God's creation, governance and redemption of the world'. Liégé acknowledges, but does not sophisticatedly develop, the need for theology to work in partnership with the human sciences. Liégé forges his pastoral theology from the Event Jesus Christ. Browning forges his practical theology through the language of practical reasoning, philosophical hermeneutics, pragmatism and the philosophy of science. They share an admiration of Augustine and Aquinas. They share a use of the Enlightenment philosophers. Liégé has an acquaintance with the American pragmatists but not their successors important to Browning like Rorty, Bernstein, Gadamer and Habermas. A sharp difference between them is that while Browning addresses himself to any 'we' wishing to think out how to understand and act in a particular situation, Liégé is in principle addressing and wanting to influence, the entire Catholic church. They share an interest in human and Christian maturity. Browning has the advantage of a good deal more human science scholarship than Liégé.

Liégé takes for granted Nouwen's emphasis on the theologian's spirituality to underpin their work's authenticity. Liégé writes about holiness, how to pray and how to grow in Christian maturity. Liégé and Nouwen, as Catholics, share a rich inheritance of spiritual writings on spiritual authenticity, pastoral vulnerability and suffering in Christian life, ministry and witness. Nouwen's work incorporates his psychiatry and found enrichment from the American situation into which he moved. Liégé's work incorporates his Dominican formation and his pastoral experience. Their starting points are different. To employ the language of patristic Christology, it is as if Nouwen starts 'from below' and Liégé 'from above'. Nouwen starts with man's existential predicament: fear and loss of faith in eternal verities. With the help of the vulnerable, authentic pastor, a meditative exploration of mysticism and the discovery of the liberation of helping others a person can be uplifted 'from below' to a fresh experiential transcendence that reconnects him to the divine. Liégé on the other hand continues to assert the divine initiative, 'from above', that a person has to 'taste and see' for himself.³⁴⁰ They agree that only authentic self-knowledge gives the disciple

³⁴⁰ As the hymn has it, 'O make but trial of his love, experience will decide, how blest are they and only they, who in his truth confide'.

or pastor the capacity for honest discernment of the love and will of God in the economy of their life.³⁴¹ Oden's famous shift from attention to counselling psychology to the 'classic tradition' was a moment of theological repentance. As Chenu and de Lubac 'returned to the sources', so Oden rediscovered the relevance of the patristic tradition for contemporary pastoral theology. His application of Gregory the Great's pastoral method to today's situation was valuable. Liégé would have appreciated Oden's study (Oden 1984).³⁴²

Radical-liberationist styles were identified with emphasising social context, power structures and human liberation. Liégé was aware of these perspectives. He realised successful catechesis and mission depended on understanding them. The sociological analysis of rural and urban life in France, for example, had been influential in catechetical thinking. He had read Marx and knew Sartre and Garaudy. He shared platforms with Sartre and Canon Boulard.³⁴³ He wrote critically about the ideology of power in connection with the Algerian War. And he understood 'good news to the poor' as close to the heart of the gospel.

What he did not have, as Audinet recognised, were the tools to allow the focussed analysis of feminists like Graham or Miller-McLemore or black practical theologians like Wimberley or Lartey, or structure-aware analyses like Gutierrez' or Poling's. The approach and analysis of writers and practitioners like Selby and Pattison, not to mention the South Americans themselves, go far beyond anything Liégé attempted. They would all want to raise questions about Liégé's 'overarching methodology' that showed no awareness that, for example, women, black people, gays or the disabled would need to develop their own critical approaches.

³⁴¹ There is a strong parallel between their best selling pastoral writings aimed at helping connect young people and adults to a living, contemporary, sense-making Christian spirituality which combined an inner spiritual and an outer active dimension. They are both from a tradition which, although so rich in spiritual resources, had got itself into a prevailing cultural mode that had generally lost touch with their existential application. They were both important players in the movement that renewed spirituality, a renewal which goes on growing to this day. Their common passion to express Christian spirituality as, literally, a God-send, a gift to match contemporary need unites them closely.

³⁴² Liégé's references suggest he did not steep himself in Carl Rogers, Berne or Clinebell, though he seems well acquainted with Freud, but was aware of the American pastoral counselling movement and its influence and some of its insights. Unlike Lambourne he does not take up arms against it theologically.

³⁴³ E.g. Liégé joined in public debate with Roger Garaudy and Jean-Paul Sartre on 'Marxism and the Human Person' in 1961. Liégé explained the reasons why he found Marxist humanism 'too shallow'; see Garaudy's letter to Liégé of 18th October 1961 in Dominican Archives, dossier 200; see also Lemoine (1997: 69).

5. Comparing Ecclesiologies

1. Introduction

Liégé's ecclesiology has already been outlined above (p.110f.). Anglicans like William Temple (1936) emphasise the corporate nature of the church.³⁴⁴ But Temple does not use pastoral theology to practical ends. Apart from his emphasis on submission to God's will, where Liégé might have emphasized freedom to choose God's love, Temple's views on corporateness are broadly Liégé's, but their assumptions about theology are different.³⁴⁵ The implication from Temple is that we work out practice by common sense.

Liégé is clear that ecclesiology must be established in the context of whole Tradition (Liégé 1957a: xxiv). He condemns ecclesiological reactions like anti-Protestantism (Liégé 1957a: xxiv). Roman Catholics are seen as having held on to an inherently more unifying,

³⁴⁴ William Temple, for example, in the prestigious William Belden Noble lectures given at Harvard in 1936 writes of the early church:

To the Christians of that date it made no difference whether you should speak to them as being Christians, disciples, having the Spirit of Christ, or being members of the Church. An isolated Christian would have seemed to them a thing quite inconceivable. They were a fellowship, so to speak, before they were anything else (Temple 1936: 5-6).

Neither is Liégé's call for total commitment foreign to Anglicanism. Later in the same lecture Temple writes:

What worship means is the submission of the whole being to the object of worship. It is the opening of the heart to receive the love of God; it is the subjection of conscience to be directed by Him; it is the declaration of need to be fulfilled by Him; it is the subjection of desire to be controlled by Him; and, as the result of these altogether, it is the surrender of will to be used by Him. It is the total giving of self (Temple 1936: 25).

From this Temple argues that the primary task of the church is to worship. It is to 'be itself and not do anything at all. All that it does is secondary and expressive of what it is'. It exists, 'first and foremost, to be the fellowship of those who worship God in Christ' (Temple 1936: 15). Of course he goes on to say that:

because the divine power that comes upon us and into us in worship, if our hearts are truly given there, is the power of love, this must express itself towards the others, our fellow members in that family. And so the Church, when it is true to itself, becomes the agency through which the love of God is active in works of mercy and service in the world (Temple 1936: 18-19).

But there the use of theology as a practical resource stops dead.

³⁴⁵ For Liégé, the task, precisely, of pastoral theology in a given period is to ask what kind of individual development is needed for what kind of corporate expression or, alternatively, what kind of church is appropriate for now and what does it require from its individual members. The core Christian vocation is constant: formation in faith, conversion, human maturation all leading to Christian action. But how all this is expressed and what is involved to achieve it changes across time, culture and context. Therefore Liégé's pastoral theology addresses these issues to restate in a contemporary way what the Christian inheritance means and involves. It then seeks to show how this might be applied in the church today. In general it seeks to make a critique of present church practice and to point the church towards the need for change in today's context.

communal understanding of faith than that of Protestants.³⁴⁶ Anglophone practical theology is predominantly Protestant, relevant in explaining its different starting points from Liégé. He starts with the question of what Jesus Christ's ecclesial project requires today. He responds with a pastoral theology requiring particular forms of church praxis.³⁴⁷ He rails against forms of 'Christian' allegiance that are actually the trappings of culture. Catholicism has structures of authority enabling it to regulate the praxis of the church through pastoral theology. Liégé aims both to influence the reform of the church through these structures and, meanwhile, individuals and communities.

Protestant churches have no centralized approach (Bradbury 2000). They prescribe less what they require of members. The Anglican Church, for example is pragmatic.³⁴⁸ It is the dry and Erastian aspect of this pragmatism that drove the Wesleys and Newman from the fold and led to the adage 'the Conservative Party at prayer'. On the other hand it allows inclusivity, avoids sectarianism and tolerates difference. It has engendered a rich spirituality, corporate, liturgical and sacramental that has been much admired especially in such luminaries as Lancelot Andrewes, Jeremy Taylor and William Law (Mursell 2001).

2. A contrast based on a particular Church of England study

³⁴⁶Andrew Greeley writes:

The fundamental differences between Catholicism and Protestantism are not doctrinal or ethical. The different propositional codes of the two heritages are but manifestations, tips of the iceberg, of more fundamentally differing sets of symbols. The Catholic ethic is 'communitarian' and the Protestant 'individualistic' because the pre-conscious 'organising pictures' of the two traditions that shape meaning and response to life for members of the respective heritages are different. Catholics and Protestants 'see' the world differently (Greeley 1990: 90 - quoted by Massa 2002: 323).

The 'communitarian' worldview of Roman Catholics has shaped an analogical language that has dominated Roman Catholic thought. It sees the world as a series of sacramental, analogical relationships between the human and the divine (Massa 2002: 322). This language has given rise to a distinctive 'analogical imagination', 'in which the community, viewed as the locus of grace and divine presence, is usually affirmed and protected' (Massa 2002). Protestantism, wanting to make space for the individual, rebelled against this holistic view. Luther and Calvin developed a 'dialectical language' which emphasised 'the radical distinction between the Holy and human culture' (Massa 2002: 322). It played down the sacramental community 'fearing that human communities are always, potentially, an idolatrous source of oppressive power and overweening pride that must be resisted and exposed.' (Massa 2002: 322).

³⁴⁷ So, for example, Liégé (1966a) calls for the church to abandon its wealth.

³⁴⁸ Guthrie puts it like this: 'In the understanding of this type of church individuals may hold various confessional positions, may have undergone differing religious experiences or no particular religious experience at all. The basic thing they have in common is neither a doctrinal position nor a religious experience. It is simply participating in what the Church does as a Church' (Guthrie 1982: 3).

A study of the Church of England published in 1992 and intended to help this church consider its future 'in the next decade' makes a useful partner for dialogue here (Carr 1992).³⁴⁹ The 'created' Church of England is 'a range of interactions between people' for example, between a vicar and the congregation. This interaction creates the church, involving relatedness as well as relationship (Carr 1992: 13). A church voluntarily serves others through the faith of its volunteers. Those who are served may not even be aware of this faith as such. Yet sometimes there are tensions here or resentment between congregation and the wider community. The notion of representation is key to understanding this. A mother who attends church 'represents' all the local mothers in the area. This is the context in which the Church of England functions. All churches function in and are shaped by contexts and it is an illusion for them to think otherwise. The required insight is to understand what the interactions meant and respond with pastoral creativity (Carr 1992: 13-14).³⁵⁰

This is a different ecclesiological world to that of Liégé's catechetical theology of the Word in the Church.³⁵¹ His approach to evangelism is rooted in the conviction that humans can be touched by the *Parole*, aroused to faith and to the conscious and decisive response of belief.³⁵²

³⁴⁹ The essential argument is summarised in Appendix 9.

³⁵⁰ A question that arises is what happens when this type of analysis is applied to Liégé's church? How was that created by the interactions and expectations between the people in its orbit? Responding to this question is beyond the scope of this thesis.

³⁵¹ For the idea of 'the ministry of the Word in the Church' see Liégé (1961e: 179) or Liégé (1957e) which, though mostly absorbed into the former article, has the advantage of citing his references, which include Barth (1933).

³⁵² Liégé explains the way he sees the Church's vocation in a sort of parable:

A man once lived immersed in his purely human activities, his natural communities, adopting the moral customs of his social milieu. Reflecting on life and feeling an inner call to live with total integrity he was drawn towards the possibility of religion. He found his life in question and his heart was open. Jesus Christ came as the response to this question: the man became a believer, thanks to a Christian community which took him into their catechumenate. So he became attached to Christ and to Christ's church: but this was just the first step; he needed to leave the church porch to go further into spiritual incorporation into Christ and the spiritual and social life of the People of God. By baptism he passed from the initial community of the newly evangelised and the catechumenate into the baptismal community, that of 'declared' Christians and fully active church membership. So baptism introduced him to the Eucharist, summit of the spiritual and sacramental life of the Church. And it is in living ever more intensively its Eucharistic community life that the Church in each one of its members anticipates the time of the eternal Kingdom (Liégé 1944: 16-17).

He promoted a theology of the Word, in part from his sense that contemporary catechesis ignored it; assuming faith was already there.³⁵³ From the mystery of the *Parole* he moves in steps to the ministry of the *Parole* and to the catechetical theology, urgently needed, he thought, to move practice beyond teaching from ‘pedagogic recipes’.³⁵⁴ He believed catechesis itself ‘creates Christian community’ (1955b):³⁵⁵

Belonging to the Church goes with my personal decision [for faith]. It is the faith of the Church that I appropriate; it is in the Church that it will be given to me to share it, to seek it, to express it, to celebrate it, to deepen it and to enlarge it (Liégé 1971b: 115).

He believed catechesis to be ‘indissociably dogmatic, moral and liturgical’ (Liégé 1971b: 117).³⁵⁶ He believed the task of evangelism is to uncork (*débouche*) itself into a church made amongst a human group (Liégé 1979: 117). ‘All those who have appropriated the Gospel for their own part are thus invited to live this Gospel together and to constitute what will become a Church’ (Liégé 1979: 119).³⁵⁷ Its members will mature through the faith of conversion to an adult faith, a eucharistic faith.³⁵⁸

³⁵³ For more detail see Reynal (2004: 290-340).

³⁵⁴ See Reynal (2004: 250-251) for a résumé of the importance of these categories in Liégé’s work.

³⁵⁵ This assertion is Liégé’s fourth ‘law’ for Christian catechesis. There are six laws as explained in Liégé (1960b).

³⁵⁶ This is his fifth ‘law’.

³⁵⁷ Elsewhere he writes: ‘the Gospel calls people together; it is *a priori* the source of community: by its very nature (Liégé 1975: 24).

³⁵⁸ The principle of the unity of mission is Liégé’s fourth ecclesiological principle. It relates strongly to the Eucharist: ‘pastoral thought unceasingly comes back to its Eucharistic pole’, which is a ‘royal place’ Liégé (1957a: xxvii). Reynal describes this as a *leitmotiv* for Liégé, to situate all ecclesial action within an eschatological horizon and to underline that all its mediations are ‘*votivement eucharistique*’, an adverb Reynal considers proper to Liégé (Reynal 2004: 363). Liégé sees this principle ‘protecting’ the action of the Church; guarding against ‘a hasty approach to ritual that pays no attention to what is false provided that the exterior cult is practiced, but also against ascetic moralism and against the Protestant approach to evangelism which does not give the eucharist anything like the royal place that it should have in the Church’ (1957a: xxvii).

Liégé’s assumption that it is a fundamental task of the church to enable the maturation of faith is a major theme: It was through his catechetical bias that he, in his elaboration of the prophetic ministry of the church and kerygma, arrives at his conception of pastoral theology. (Reynal 2004: 341). In 1957 he writes:

I propose to define *la Pastorale* (so that we know what we are talking about) as science or practice (science if it is a question of pastoral theology; practice if it is a question of the art of the pastoral), the science or practice of church Action towards the growth of the body of Christ’ (Liégé 1957f). In Liégé (1957a) he states his Christological and ecclesiological principles. The Christological principle is subdivided into three principles, all of interest to this discussion. First the theocentric principle. This guards against ‘pastoral pelagianism’ or ‘pastoral nestorianism’ which forgets that God is at work in the church. The crucial issue is whether the church’s action shows ‘the *true* God’ (60/61 course), since Liégé was always concerned to expose ‘false’ faces of God. Second is the principle of synergy or christo-conformity. This emphasises that God is unable to achieve his purpose without the most free,

For Liégé the church is inherently missionary because Christ wished it so (Liégé 1979: 39). If Liégé's aspirations for the conversion of modern people seem idealised or impossible, Reynal points out that Liégé 'knew what he was talking about' (Reynal 2004: 278). He himself experienced and responded to conversion as a teenager and he knew in a down to earth way what the realities of conversion were for the young people 'whom he accompanied and welcomed all through his years as an educator' (Reynal 2004: 278).

The Church of England study breathes another air. It argues the importance of distinguishing between aim and task (Carr 1992: 15). The aim of worship is dignified and worthy worship of God. But this does not account for what the practice of worship needs to survive, for describing the task of worship. For Liégé this is to make the Kingdom sacramentally visible through the celebration of the Eucharist (Liégé 1955e; 1955f; 1957g; 1958d; 1961g; 1961h; 1970; 1979b; 1982).³⁵⁹ In the Church of England, according to this study, it is 'affirming the continuing importance of that dimension to human life which is felt to be irrational' (Carr 1992: 15). Such a task puts worship 'into the larger context of human life' 'where the irrational has somehow to be acknowledged, if it is not too frightening to be borne (Carr 1992: 15). Anglican theological formulations about the church need to 'be congruent with this organisational device' which takes its lead from the external context and

responsible and engaged collaboration of the people of God, who must be profoundly human. This principle guards against 'pastoral monophysitism' which fails to recognise that God needs Christ's full humanity and the full engagement of church people (Reynal 2004: 357): hence Liégé's antagonism to '*miraculism*', '*chosisme*', laziness and passivity (Liégé 1957a: xxiii). Third is his historic principle, to argue that since God intervenes in history so slowly, neither should pastoral action be rushed. This is to oppose 'pastoral eschatologism', a lack of patience to stay with the concrete human realities that the Kingdom will need history to work through. It is the pastoral consequences of all this that particularly relate to this discussion: i) pastoral action must have a sense of growth and of halting places (*étapes*). ii) pastoral action must be seen from an adult perspective. Just as Jesus did not start on his ministry till he was adult, so the Church can only be fully participated in by adults iii) pastoral action has '*conditionnements*' (60-61course) – quoted by Reynal (2004: 359). He develops this notion in his Lille course (1966) in which he proposes a 'pastoral d' acheminement' which values '*cheminements*' (short bouts of progress), a step by step progress towards an end. His point is that the catechumenat is not just an institution but more an illustration of progressive entry into the history of salvation. It is only this perspective of 'growth' which justifies infant baptism. Liégé insists this is a Pauline perspective: 'his *pastorale* is one of growth towards maturity; it leaves childhood behind it (66 EMACAS course – quoted by Reynal (2004: 359).

³⁵⁹ These are Liégé's principle writings on the Eucharist. Liégé (1979b) is the last article, and Liégé (1982) the last book he wrote. *Lumen Gentium* (11) calls the eucharist 'the source and summit of Christian life'.

works out its appropriate ministry from this context (Carr 1992: 15).³⁶⁰ The task of the Church of England, often performed through its clergy, is ‘to interpret people’s experience of life in relation to God, thus putting them into a divine perspective’ (Carr 1992: 16).

Liégé might ask why the task was not for people to put their own lives into direct relationship with God, doing their own interpreting through catechesis in their Eucharistic community. Of what, on this Anglican model, does this ‘in relation to God’ comprise? What God? A God revealed as what, by what, asking for what, offering what? This study expresses no interest in offering theological answers to these questions. On this model the clergy retain the responsibility. The quality of the clergy capacity to interpret seems to matter more than the individual’s quality of faith. This Anglican approach emphasises the minister, the minister’s ministry, the minister’s creative moment of opportunity, the minister’s interpretation of the dynamics, the minister’s quality of engagement, and the minister as the local theologian who interprets (Carr 1992: 111-114).

The study’s view is that it is not the text of the Book of Common Prayer that holds the Church of England together but a common approach ‘to the centrality and importance of worship for its own sake’ (Carr 1992: 16).³⁶¹ ‘In worship the experiences of worshippers (and they need not necessarily be distinctively Christian), are less transformed than re-contextualised. In its new perspective people discover hitherto hidden dimensions and wonders in their lives’ (Carr 1992: 16-17).³⁶²

This is the inverse of Liégé’s approach. For him for a life to be ‘re-contextualised’ begs the questions ‘in what way?’ and how is this experience related to the Gospel? For him, influenced by Newman, Möhler, Blondel and Congar, ‘all ecclesial ministry (proclamation of the message, signs of grace, celebration of the sacraments, reading of the Scriptures) is the

³⁶⁰ This interactive existence is crucial. The Church of England does not ‘represent a paradigm of the fullness of divine action’ but ‘a significant dimension – the involvement of the divine in every aspect of life and a God who is willing always to lose rather than save himself and to risk being misunderstood by others’ (Carr 1992: 16). This correlates with the incarnation which touches the area where ‘both academically and pastorally, the Church of England operates instinctively and where its existence is negotiated’ (Carr 1992: 16).

³⁶¹ The study makes no further comment on what particular liturgy it has in mind.

³⁶² There is an assumption that the reader will be able to have a sense of what these ‘hidden dimensions and wonders’ might be. One can imagine Liégé wanting to ask this precisely and having strong views on the theological adequacy of the answer.

expression of the Word in Jesus Christ.’ (Reynal 2004: 300). The Word thus becomes the Church’s prophetic ministry, evangelisation (Liégé 1961a: 185).³⁶³ ‘The first and fundamental ministry of the Word is evangelisation’ (Liégé 1961c: 123). Liégé’s context leads him to judge the Church for allowing a living faith to become a dead religion, but to approve of recent renewals resurrecting a truly kerygmatic faith (1968c).³⁶⁴ He defined evangelisation as ‘the fundamental ministry of the Word of God in the Church, to announce the Gospel of Jesus Christ in apostolic continuity, to build the church by conversion leading to baptism’ and also as ‘the shock announcement of God’s Good News in Jesus Christ to constitute the Kingdom, in the power of the Holy Spirit, aimed at arousing personal conversion and leading to entry into the Church by baptism’ (Liégé 1961c: 124; 1961e: 186). Evangelisation arouses ‘a rupture in human existence, a passionate attachment; a total life-decision’ (Liégé 1961e: 187).

This approach to evangelisation and the task of the Church is different to that of this Church of England study. For the latter, the parish framework is critical because ‘it locates the church’s ministry by reference to the complexity of people’s lives and not by the presumed nature of the congregation’ (Carr 1992: 17). It offers care and love to people accepting their ‘human religious need’ without making further demands (Carr 1992: 20).³⁶⁵ Parish institutions welcome the vicar ‘as long as he does not ostentatiously proselytise or moralise’ (Carr 1992: 20). Its approach enables individuals to be cared for. Expectations upon the clergy and church have something ‘which is not often clearly articulated’ about their ‘having to do with God’ (Carr 1992: 23). ‘The presence of clergy allows people to acknowledge their ultimate dependence, which is always felt rather than understood’ (Carr 1992: 23)³⁶⁶. Thus, ‘the evidence is therefore that the clergy are expected to talk confidently

³⁶³ Liégé knows that Aquinas distinguished between four sorts of ministry of the word: evangelisation; catechesis; spiritual life (*de conversatione christianae vitae*); the deepening understanding of the most profound mysteries of the faith (*Summa theologica* IIIa, 71,4, ad 3um) (Liégé 1961e: 185-186). Discussed and cited by Reynal (2004: 301- 302).

³⁶⁴ Cited by Reynal (2004: 302).

³⁶⁵ Liégé would surely view this as failing people by not offering them the substance of the gospel as he understood it.

³⁶⁶ One can imagine Liégé complaining that the whole point of the Christian revelation is to show what God is like, and wondering why one should be shy of mentioning the God who has been revealed, and remaining comfortable with the acceptance of the religious needs of humans, when it is to them that the God of the gospel directly addresses himself. Liégé is highly critical of the church’s tendency to meet with ‘religious needs’ when these express a pre-evangelised religious seeking. This is a stark difference between the two approaches.

about God and ultimate meaning without becoming too transparently religious or too closely identified with those among whom they move' (Carr 1992: 23).³⁶⁷

There is an adage that 'to understand the Church of England is to understand its worship'.³⁶⁸ In the Anglican tradition holiness is expected more among the clergy than the laity. Indeed, 'People may well find it difficult to articulate exactly what is meant by holiness' (Carr 1992: 38).³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ This theology of ministry emphasises blessing a creation where God already is, and where He redeems through incarnation. It is a ministry that is willing to get involved with the mess of everyday life and understand the representative nature of not just the priest but the church as a whole (Carr 1992: 26,27). It is a ministry well expressed by Robert Runcie when he said that the Church of England is well equipped to preach the gospel to these times because it is not a church 'of hard edges – God has worked to keep our borders open... Just as we have never divided evangelism from pastoral care, so the Church of England has never separated evangelism from worship'. (Carr 1992: 28).

³⁶⁸ Being an Anglican is neither to follow a confessional formula nor code of canon law, nor to follow dogma and deduction, it is to be involved in the worship that derives from the 1662 Prayer Book (Carr 1992: 29). The rule of prayer is the rule of belief. Doctrine is determined by worship and prayer (Carr 1992: 30). 'To believe and live as an Anglican is to absorb a culture which extends from the Prayer Book services for marriage and the burial of the dead to ... a coronation'. 'It is to find oneself in solidarity with the inchoate religious instincts of the English people. Those who are overtly godly express these week by week in Sunday worship. The majority of the population still does the same on family or national occasions. Worship gives voice to those religious aspirations which, along with other factors, gives some sense of identity to "the people"' (Carr 1992: 30).

³⁶⁹ A sharp difference: Liégé would emphasise that holiness is a primary adventure for all Christians that can be spelled out and nurtured by catechesis. By contrast the Anglican approach seems to refrain from articulating the good news too closely, to refrain from the passion of a Saint Paul. For Liégé the Church is there to promote such a faith above all else. This approach shares with Liégé that practical theology is about interpreting the tradition in a way that fits with the immediate context, but in the Anglican way it is a local task for each vicar rather than the 'ecclesial' approach he describes. What this study does not reveal, which Liégé would want to know, is what precisely Christian faith is and involves for disciples. In the Anglican religion ministers help relate people to the divine, get their lives into some sort of divine context, and are so helped to manage their anxieties and find some transformation of an unspecified kind. It is careful not to compromise the unknowableness of faith, and the transcendence of God. This study therefore does not describe the content of faith beyond pointing to the theological notions of incarnation and trinity. There is no sense given of what the Good News of the gospel actually is. This must be taken for granted. But Liégé always spells it out (Carr 2002: 102- 114). The study sees as important for the Church of England a new common understanding of the liturgy, prayer and worship which reflects solidarity in offering to God the hopes and aspirations of all people and not just the congregations (Carr 2002: 39). Common prayer works 'to draw the wider world consciously into the orbit of God's love and to articulate the possibility of true community under God' (Carr 2002: 39). Inculturation is an aim of many third world churches so the Church of England should rejoice in its own inculturation. For example, the archbishop of Canterbury is invited to address a group of bankers because they trust him and they trust that he will not evangelise but has been invited 'to interpret', 'to offer a critical understanding of contemporary religion' when people fear fundamentalism and are baffled by pluralism (Carr 2002: 60). The Anglican approach to faith contrasts with Liégé's:

The metaphor of faith as a flame suggests that it is a mistake to expect belief to resemble forest fire proportions – dramatic, fierce and all-consuming – for most people most of the time. Human life largely consists of the mundane and the humdrum; human identity must be specific and local before it can encompass any wider sympathy. Of all bodies, a Christian church, committed to a doctrine of the incarnation, must take seriously the local habitations through which our humanity is shaped and mediated. They cannot be transcended or transfigured unless they are first grounded,

The theology underpinning this approach points to ‘the marks of the church’ as one, holy catholic and apostolic (Carr 1992: 117). These are analysed in terms of notions of God, particularly unity, because activity in relationships brings unity; apostolicity, because of the ‘essential outgoingness of God in his perpetual mission’; and holiness, because God’s ‘divinity is expressed through creativity’, a God ‘who can ‘bring into being new worlds’, inevitably awesome; catholicity, because God in his dealings with creation is marked by ‘sustained coherence imbued with mystery’ (Carr 1992: 118).³⁷⁰ The Church of England’s *raison d’être* is thus marked by an incarnational style, a Trinitarian structure (relatedness) and a critical pragmatism (Carr 1992: 120). This implies the values of unity, in which a congregation thinks beyond themselves to the unity of their inhabited locality; holiness as ‘the transformation of all human life . . . through its being represented before God by the worship and life of the members of a Christian congregation’; and Catholicity, implying the universality of this task beyond the parish (Carr 1992: 118-121).

On this view the faithful have a lesser vocation than envisaged by Liégé. To him, such acceptance of the minimum is complacency. Anglicans understand it differently: Appropriate

earthed and accepted. The church, therefore, works with and through specific experiences of ordinary human life. Indeed it is one of the most distinctive and potent features of Christianity that it conceives the mundane as the proper vehicle for the transcendent. Everyday life is, therefore, an appropriate base from which to glimpse the transcendent possibility and not merely a low level secular foil against which to measure virtuoso and heroic spiritual feats. No one, therefore has to be apologetic about the unheroic and unspectacular nature of much that the church habitually does (Carr 1992: 102).

The argument continues that unless the church goes with the grain of people’s tribalism it is unlikely to get ‘much of a hearing’ when it wants to be prophetic and point to the fallen nature of things (Carr 1992: 103). The need for meaning is the fundamental human need, but most of the time it subsists as a taken for granted ‘pragmatic, fragmented, a rag-bag of symbol and habit’ (Carr 1992: 103). The argument is that what is essential is to have some way to acknowledge the power of the irrational and to bring it into the sphere of meaning and that the church provides this, largely accepting the people’s passivity and their folk religiosity (Carr 1992: 104). The argument acknowledges that neither the roles of vicarious guardianship of Christian meaning and the affirmation of identity – is without its dangers. The first allows the Christian commitment of the mass of people to be whittled away through disuse; and the second can result in a flaccid acceptance of things as they happen to be. The hazard may be noticed, even if it cannot be escaped. For both of these roles and their attendant dangers are part of the church’s necessary implication in the mundane (Carr 1992: 104). This context, ‘based on the assumption that religion in Britain is neither precise nor demanding for any except its official functionaries’ and is there to manage dependency, must be understood historically (Carr 1992: 106). Establishment has made the Church of England very close to the identity of society and the nation. The parish system, as part of Tudor settlement, was a system of total national belonging with rights and duties set in a context of plurality. It has always been flexible and lack of clarity about it has meant it was, up to a point, able to cope with change.

³⁷⁰ In contrast to Liégé’s approach, no theologically historical perspective is offered.

response to the Incarnation involves commitment to human beings in their particular context, be it social, political or pastoral (Bowden 1994; Bradbury 1989, 1993, 2000; Carr 1985, 1989, 1992; Davies 1973; Ecclestone 1975, 1988; Faith in the Countryside 1990; Forrester 1990, 1997; Hardy 2001; Lambourne 1983; Mason 1992; Russell 1980; Selby 1991; Vanstone 1977; Warren 1992; Wilson 1966, 1988; Woodward and Pattison 2000 etc.). Liégé wanted his church to reform to be more true to God and better to influence the world. Anglicans are less separated from the world in the first place. They discover what it means to realise the life of the church and how they want to influence the world in close conversation with it. In modest ministries concerned with teaching, preaching, prophesying and practical ministry on behalf of Christian faith, they work with the grain of social mores and customs. It might be an evangelical error to preach the gospel assertively; more off-putting than attractive. Faithfulness means responding creatively to local possibilities.

Anglicans are not required to grow up to an adult faith in Liégé's terms. His priorities seek a church built on exploring holiness as a transforming life-long adventure. His separation of faith and religion is fundamental.³⁷¹

Whereas Liégé's Tübingen School-influenced, Congarian ecclesiology is closely connected to his pneumatology and is confident in its principles, in Britain reticence about the Holy Spirit's relationship with the church is preferred.

The Anglican church as an organisation seems more based on religion in Liégé's definition, than on faith.³⁷² Religious attitudes in Britain are an amalgam of beliefs constructed from up bringing, education and the culture of eclectic secular pluralism. Vestiges of Christian belief merge with other beliefs and superstitions (Ahern and Davie 1987; Davie 1994). Religion is often regarded as a private matter and evangelism as vulgar or fanatical. Church activities do not require a Liégé-like faith.³⁷³ Historically Anglicanism chooses not to be authoritarian.³⁷⁴

³⁷¹ Fundamental but not simple: See Reynal (2004: 473-4) for details of Liégé's intriguing *retractio* at the end of his life.

³⁷² Its own critics, like Bishop David Jenkins, share this view, accusing it of being 'at least 60% about providing comfort and security' (Jenkins 1996).

³⁷³ If Anglican clergy exhorted congregations to be more Liégé-like it might be counter-productive, with people leaving until the next vicar arrived. As a senior theologian Liégé was radical, hoping to influence all Catholics. His tradition expects leaders to be heeded.

It does not impose new theological resources, however rich, like those of 1950s France; they were not assimilated by the Church of England. From Liégé's perspective Anglican ecclesiology fails to separate faith from culture and is over-identified with social conventions.³⁷⁵ Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, through Vatican II, the Church of England had no mechanism to promote change in parishes, except for the clergy, who generally did not.³⁷⁶ The exception was the reform of the liturgy which Anglicans carried through successfully between the mid 1960s and 2000.

Anglicans have produced high quality commissions in theology, morality and pastoral care. They assume a lower doctrine of Christian discipleship than Liégé, for whom there is no question of being half pregnant with Christ. The Church of England's approach, if theologically spineless, has the merit of being tolerant and accepting. Liégé's approach, if uncompromising, has the merit of connecting the quest for authentic faith to the quest for living it. The risk with the former is that membership makes little difference; congregations remaining spiritually infantile. Liégé's approach risks excluding the many who, without his zeal, yet respond to God's love in significant ways.

Here, then, are two ways of understanding Christian discipleship. For Liégé a disciple yields totally to an exploration of their deepest freedom leading to transcendent Spirit-filled joy. Anglican disciples are those who variously associate themselves with the church. Anglicanism offers comfort and reassurance rather than strong challenge. It accepts minimal or confused faith as a basis for growth. It neither presumes to offer much nor to demand much. It accepts the psychological and cultural significance of church - allegiance as godly rather than undermining of faith. In this there might be some institutional self-interest: its future depends on maintaining the goodwill of benefactors.

³⁷⁴ There is a view that Anglicans tamed faith deliberately as a reaction to the decades of deadly religious conflict (Rev Giles Fraser on BBC Radio 4's 'Sunday' programme - 31st December 2006)

³⁷⁵ It is but one sample from forty square miles in north Wiltshire dating from 1990 but, in my experience, the theological renewals of the twentieth century including those of the biblical theology movement, ecumenism, Vatican II, the doctrinal questions raised by Robinson, lay renewal, inter-faith dialogue and so on had made little impact on Protestant churches at all. The general ethos was that of the 1950s.

³⁷⁶ When a theologian, David Jenkins, was appointed bishop of Durham in 1980 the gulf between the theology of the parishes and the times was revealed in the media.

6. Comparing content, interests and concerns ³⁷⁷

1. Introduction

An analysis of the contents of Liégé's output may be found in Appendix One.

Liégé's pastoral theology may be described as prophetic, Roman, radical, French and catechetic; quite unlike any British type. The British boundaries around this subject and its diffuse subdivisions are difficult to define (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 414). For example, the work of Michael Wilson, a former leading generalist British pastoral theologian, almost

³⁷⁷ There is no equivalent to Liégé in Britain, not even an aspirant for the roles he played since they were dependent on the French context. But the diverse initiative-takers were working at similar, overlapping themes: Liégé had ten primary theological concerns all having counterpart British theologians. They often work in several of these ten domains. The point is not to limit by definition but to portray the rough parallels:

- I. Liégé was a generalist and popularising theologian. A British counterpart here would be John Robinson.
- II. He called on the Church to conform to the Gospel by matching its theology with its praxis. Here Liégé is the ecclesiologist prophet. British counterparts include Peter Hinchcliffe, Leslie Paul, John Robinson again, Kenneth Leech, Monica Furlong and David E. Jenkins.
- III. Liégé the catechist sought to catechise the individual and the congregation. The word has different connotations in Britain. Theologians working in the French sense of it include Leslie Francis and John Hull.
- IV. As a theologian of Christian community life, Liégé sought to point to the essential corporateness of Christian life. His British counterpart is R. A. Lambourne.
- V. As a theological educator Liégé sought to promote priestly formation and lay leadership. Among his British counterparts are A. Dyson, Michael Wilson, Paul Ballard and the writers of the official publications of the relevant Church authorities.
- VI. As a systematic theologian Liégé sought to establish a framework, a syllabus and a method for pastoral theology. In Britain his counterparts are Martin Thornton, A. Campbell, Paul Ballard, Stephen Pattison, Wesley Carr, Elaine Graham and Laurie Green.
- VII. Liégé sought to engage with the human sciences paralleling the pioneering of Leslie Weatherhead, Frank Lake and the British theologians influenced by American initiatives. Liégé's social and moral theology overlaps with the work of British writers like Jack Dominion, Michael Jacobs or David Lyall.
- VIII. Liégé sought to promote the theological and evangelistic possibilities of homiletics. His British counterparts would include Michael Ramsay, Trevor Huddleston, Archbishop Anthony Bloom and, with their distinctive emphases, Evangelicals like David Watson.
- IX. In Liégé's popular writings on prayer and holiness both for young people and adults he sought to articulate a psychologically appropriate spirituality for today. Here counterparts are H.A. Williams, Kenneth Leech, Gerry Hughes or John Powell who, though American rather than British, has sold widely been influential in Britain.
- X. As a missiologist Liégé sought to improve missionary practice at home and abroad by establishing a contemporary theology of mission responsive to local situations. British counterparts would include Mervyn Stockwood, Ted Wickham, Ernie Southcott, Joost de Blank, Alan Ecclestone, Chad Varah, John Collins, Eric James, Trevor Huddleston and Walter Hollenweger.

defies classification. Of the six subdivisions suggested below, his book *A Coat of Many Colours*, gathering up his lifetime's interests, touches on each (Wilson 1988).³⁷⁸

One difficulty is that even the wide boundaries now given to this subject are hardly sufficient to cover the British equivalent to what Liégé covers: Catechesis, dogma, history, the communion of saints, incarnation, miracles, sacraments, prayer, mission, evangelisation, renunciation, kerygma, vocation, conversion, Vatican II, ecumenism, institutional church reform and the Trinity. British writing on such issues often belongs to thinkers who would not regard themselves as practical theologians.³⁷⁹

A second difficulty is that American influences have so dominated British practical theology and still do, that it cannot be debated outside this context, and the distinctive contribution of British writers to the global discipline is hard to assess.³⁸⁰

Liégé and British practical theology share the same journey 'from hints and tips to hermeneutics' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 408).³⁸¹ They share a focus on 'everyday, lived experience' and 'the turn to the human' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 408) and the method of 'critical dialogue' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 409) between contemporary experience and Christian traditions.

Liégé's output shows he has an interest in all of the most important areas of British practical theology's concern. These may roughly be classified:

2. Six key areas of British practical theology's concern

³⁷⁸ See also Ballard and Pritchard (1996).

³⁷⁹ Strikingly, none of these eighteen subjects appear in the Index of the Blackwell Reader on Pastoral and Practical Theology (Woodward and Pattison 2000) though it touches on a few of them.

³⁸⁰ The collective influence of Boisen, Hiltner, Clebsch and Jaekle, Clinebell, Nouwen, Farley, Oden, Tracey and Browning (the list could be longer) has shaped the wider climate within which British practical theology is more like the weather. For example Pattison and Lynch's delineation of pastoral and practical theology into three styles is illustrated exclusively by theologians writing in America (Pattison and Lynch 2005). One consequence of this is that there is a significant body of practical theological writing that is known about but less developed in Britain. However some key British writers are distinctive for their critique of American writing.

³⁸¹ Although in France it is less 'hints and tips' and more 'manuals' and 'recipes' (Liégé 1971)

1. *The purpose, nature, methods and academic status of pastoral and practical theology and its hermeneutical relation to other disciplines*

British pastoral theologians have given considerable attention to this issue (Whyte 1973; Dyson 1983; Wilson 1983; Ballard 1986; Green 1987; Wilson 1988; Pattison and Woodward 1994; Ballard and Pritchard 1996; Ballard 1999; Ballard 2000; Woodward and Pattison 2000; Ballard 2001; Graham 2002 (1996); Pattison and Lynch 2005). Included within this category is writing about pastoral theology and feminism and post-modern theory (Graham 2002 (1996)) and the Scottish School, the Presbyterian, Calvinist influenced Whyte, Forrester, Campbell and Blackie. Under the same heading might also be placed those whose practical theology responds to cultural pluralism and diverse social contexts (Pattison 1994; Bennett-Moore 2002; Lartey 2003).

This area was introduced in Chapter 8. The contrast with Liégé is the focus here. The significant overlap has to be dug out, because the context and language are distant but the underlying issues are close. French and British practical theologians both had to find appropriate methodologies.³⁸² British practical theology employs a much more sophisticated hermeneutical dialogue than can be found in Liégé. Thus the sociological approach of scholars like Robin Gill, Leslie Francis, Grace Davie, Rob Towler, David Martin and Douglas Davies and the implicit religion researchers is not matched by Liégé. Neither does he compare with the rural specialists such as Jeremy Martineau, Anthony Russell or Andrew Bowden. The only overlap is in the desire to offer insight into religious and ecclesiastical realities concerning their purpose and meaning.

Since Liégé's death the obvious developments in British practical theology relate to post modernism and feminism, best represented by Elaine Graham who also represents the

³⁸² A useful text to illustrate this is by Michael Williams (1986). Williams exposes the problematic gap between theology and life as inherited in the modern West. He examines the history of this dichotomy, looking at it in sociological, psychological and philosophical terms briefly referring to the Old and New Testaments, Aristotle, the Scholastic era, Hegel and Marx. He sees the deductive method, 'pastoral theology as application' in *Lumen Gentium* and identifies 'some elements' of Schleiermacherian applicationism in Thurneysen and Tillich's method of correlation (Williams 1986: 43f.). He then outlines solutions that use the hermeneutical approach drawing from Groome, Farley and Browning. This scheme parallels the fashioning of Liégé's pastoral theology through the route of French catechesis, *le Saulchoir's* approach to history, philosophy and theological method and Liégé's openness to the human sciences.

approach known as public theology, a phrase first associated with Reinhold Niebuhr (Werpehowski 2005: 205). A second area relates to culture, pluralism and society. *Parole et Mission* was concerned to relate theology to new contexts but it did not aspire to the sophistication of Emmanuel Lartey (2000; 2003), Ballard and Pritchard (1996), Kenneth Leech (2001), Gordon Lynch (2003) or Hooker and Lamb (1986). A third area relates to justice and economics.³⁸³ A fourth, perhaps the most far reaching, development in the subject since Liégé's death, is the sheer broadening out in scope of the areas practical theologians are now addressing. Examples include writing on anger (Campbell 1986), shame (Pattison 2000), management (Pattison 1997), feminist and womanist pastoral theology (Miller-McLemore and Gill-Austern 1999), neuroscience (Hesse and Arbib 1986), disability (Eisland 1994), sex and sexuality (Stuart and Thatcher 1997), black practical theology (Lartey 2003), diet (Bringle 1992), burnout (Sanford 1984), MBTI (Francis 1997), ecology and the environment (Northcott 1996). The list could be much longer: for example, including debt, ageing, music and the arts, masculinity, child abuse etc.

2. Institutional church issues

Some leading generalist theologians have connected their theology with the life of the church (Hardy 1996, 2001; Jenkins 1976, 1987, 1988a, 1988b; Robinson 1960, 1965). Much writing in this area is known only by specialists. There is a body of British practical theology that presupposes the British, even the English context though there is the output from the Scottish Presbyterian context, from Wales, Ireland and diversity of British Protestant churches, all of it far removed from Liégé's preoccupations as a French Catholic. The Scottish academic contribution of Whyte, Blackie and Forrester is significant here. In particular there is the work arising from the context of the Anglican parish system with its distinctive history, culture, opportunities and limitations.³⁸⁴

³⁸³ William Temple's writing on this is of course impressive and the William Temple College (now Foundation) aims to examine the Christian understanding of society (Ballard 1986: 15). Scholars who exemplify of this development are John Atherton, Duncan Forrester, David Jenkins, Ronald Preston and Christopher Baker.

³⁸⁴ This is the style of Carr's (1992) analysis examined in the previous section. Its might be called the ecclesio-psycho-social- approach to Anglican ministry in England. It is the approach of the Grubb Institute (Ecclestone 1988) Building on the tradition of Baxter and Herbert, the approach offers an interpretation of pastoral ministry using psychodynamic concepts but within a national and cultural setting. The equivalent in Liégé's output is his writing on faith and culture, or 'when religion is not faith' as he would put it, in the context of mid 20th century Catholic France. In Britain this context has spawned titles like Russell (1980), Davies, Watkins and

3. Pastoral Care

Liégé does not share the same concept of or interest in pastoral care as the grand subject, understood in its own right, that American and British Protestants see it as. In Britain in the 1960s there were significant developments in the field of pastoral care, symbolised by the founding of the Association of Pastoral Care and Counselling. The launch of 'Contact' has already been mentioned. In Britain, unlike France, the notion of pastoral care is closely associated with that of counselling and the two subjects are often linguistically linked.³⁸⁵

In 1965 S.P.C.K began their 'Library of Pastoral Care' series. These covered such subjects as the care of the sick, the elderly, the bereaved, adolescents and those in hospital (Child 1965; Steer 1986; Autton 1966 1967 1968; Hare Duke 1968).³⁸⁶

One area which would have particularly interested Liégé is faith development and the life cycle. Though this has been the speciality of James Fowler in the USA it has been built on here by writers like Michael Jacobs (1988). Close to this is educational research (Francis 1981) or John Hull (1985) in faith and maturity, a subject close to Liégé's heart but much less

Winter (1991), Ahern and Davie (1987) and major Church of England reports which may legitimately be thought of as on the margins of practical theology, like *Faith in the City* and *Faith in the Countryside*. Edward Bailey (1997) on implicit religion belongs here, as does the sociological work of Robin Gill (1992 1993). Also related to this area is the work on professionalisation, ministry and pastoral care. This can either be from a sociological standpoint (Towler and Coxon 1979) or related to psychology, boundaries, ethics and role (Campbell 1985) Some of this work does not stem from universities but from individuals working in the field who draw on their own experience and study to offer their reflections and insights: For example, W.H Vanstone (1977), Alan Ecclestone (1975), Christopher Moody (1992), Robin Green (1987) or Nicholas Bradbury (1989). Evangelical examples are Stephen Croft or Derek Tidball (1986).

³⁸⁵ For example, Wayne Oates places them together as one of his four headings for the duty of the pastor (Oates 2002). R.S.Lee (1968) explains the difference as being that whereas counsellors have been thoroughly trained, pastors trained just in care will 'not be specialists in counselling except in rare instances' and 'be called on to use counselling only occasionally', though 'their pastoral work should be based on counselling methods'.

³⁸⁶ This series becomes, in the 1970s the 'Care and Counselling series'. By the 1980s, when it becomes the 'New Library of Pastoral Care', it exemplifies an approach which unites the many perspectives: the individual, corporate, social and political perspectives as well as counselling, congregational studies, and praxis based liberation and contextual theology. There is a sophisticated use of personal experience and case study in British pastoral theology that does not exist in Liégé. The New Library of Pastoral Care series, for example employs this approach as do some Chapters of the Blackwell Reader (Woodward and Pattison 2000) and countless journal articles. Professional chaplains played an important role in the development of these texts.

scientifically informed than this more recent work. A recent example is Pattison (2000) on shame.

Pastoral care, counselling and lay formation come together in the writings of Michael Jacobs (Jacobs 1982, 1985, 1987, 1988). Jacobs compares with Liégé in two ways. First he is one of a significant group of British writers who contribute to but also bring their theological critique to pastoral care and counselling. Like R.A. Lambourne (1983), James Mathers (1977), A.O. Dyson (1983), Peter Selby (1983), A. V. Campbell (1986), Stephen Pattison (1983, 1988), David Lyall (1995) and other prophets he attends to the need to correct an over-emphasis on individualistic care with the corporate, the social and the political. Secondly, he is, with John Hull (1985), one of the two British writers bent on connecting faith to human maturation (Liégé 1958b; Jacobs 1988).

What connections are there between these initiatives and Liégé? When the bibliography of Lambourne (1963) is analysed two points are striking: One hundred and twenty one of its one hundred and twenty eight references concern books written during this period; and the overlap between their subject matter and Liégé's output is considerable. Of Lambourne's references, forty-nine are concerned with material that Liégé was then writing about. Lambourne cites twenty-one works from biblical studies, twenty-one about theology and doctrine, sixteen about the church, twenty-six related to psychology and psychiatry, sixteen related to sociology, and nine about medicine. It is in the fifty-eight references to works about the bible, doctrine and the church that the overlap is most obvious. Liégé was more linked to catechesis, Lambourne to medicine and psychiatry. But they both root their concern for church renewal in biblical and doctrinal studies. This is a pre-mid-1960s assumption they share.

A similar point can be made about Frank Lake, whose work was the entry point into the psychology-theology dimension of pastoral studies for many in Great Britain (van der Kastele 2002: 56). Although his book *Clinical Theology* did not appear until 1966 his movement was established during the 1950s (Lake 1966). Lake was a medical missionary, a psychiatrist like Lambourne, who wanted his theology to correlate with psychology. They share with Liégé their fundamental appeal to the Bible. In Lake's case the inspiration was

Emile Brunner 'who directed him towards the dynamics of the adult Jesus, portrayed in St John's Gospel' as a model for human self understanding; a model of interpersonal relationships in which the adult Jesus is the norm (van der Kastele 2002: 56). It aimed to improve pastoral practice by developing self-awareness, listening skills and awareness of primal feelings. Lake wrote:

If we believe in truth, we shall need to listen at one and the same time right down to the truth of this desperate person's history, and right down to the Truth himself. ...crucified upon the cross' (van der Kastele 2002: 56 quoting Lake 1966: 81).

Liégé, Lambourne and Lake share an approach which still has confidence to assume a direct connection between God as revealed in the Bible and the God of today's faith without inserting as many critical filters as is now normal. They wanted to make faith live. But Lake, like all participants in the pastoral counselling movement, wanted pastors to be equipped with specific skills and psychological knowledge far beyond anything in Liégé.

Liégé is more comparable with Martin Thornton (1956) whose focus was on 'religious insight, spirituality, sacraments and prayer' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 64). But Liégé goes beyond Thornton in his openness to the questions of the secular world and in seeking lay as much as clergy spiritual formation.

Also comparable are Liégé and Michael Wilson whose focus was on the church (Wilson 1983; Wilson 1988). Three points especially connect them: Their shared assumption that faith must connect to life, not just beliefs; their emphasis on worship; and their shared concern for community.³⁸⁷ However Liégé does not share Wilson's knowledge of or interest in health and medicine.

4. Christian formation

Liégé shares with British writers a concern for Christian formation, both ministerial and lay. The writings of all this Chapter's sections overlap here, as they all involve Christian

³⁸⁷ There is interesting overlap between Liégé (1975) and Wilson's Chapter 'Growing Community' (1988).

formation.³⁸⁸ In Britain there were similar calls for lay formation, for example *We the People* (Bliss 1963) or, with an even more expressive title, *God's Frozen People* by two Free churchmen (Gibbs and Morton 1964). Such works reflect a more ecumenical and interdisciplinary approach, following pioneers like Paulo Friere, Gustavo Gutierrez, Jose Bonino or Juan Luis Segundo. Notable in Britain is the work of Laurie Green (1987).³⁸⁹ A vast output of theological – pastoral – spiritual writing has been produced in Britain in the last forty years, too vast for specifying here, but all contributing to Christian formation. Much of this presupposed the cultured, broad scholarship of writers who draw on science, philosophy and literature: A trio of examples might include Michael Ramsey (1982), J.G. Davies (1973) and Gerry Hughes (1985).

5. Ministerial training.

The founding of the ISPC in 1950 was a significant institutional act of practical theology. By creating an institution to do theology in practice the French church was years ahead of Britain. Similar Church of England proposals were not published till 1976 (Dyson 1976). Birmingham University's DPS course was the first example of something equivalent in Britain in 1964. Liégé, in 1950, had grasped the 'wholistic' magnitude of the practical theological task: the transmission of faith. Transcending the question of faith making intellectual sense, it encompasses Christian-human formation comprehensively. Liégé was responsible for introducing the educational way of the theology of praxis (Reynal 2004: 189). His concern was that his students should both understand and 'do' their theology in catechesis. More than a new method, it was a new approach, swiftly attacked by the then still dominant scholastic theologians. The old way of doing theology was challenged and decisively changed.

³⁸⁸ Liégé's output on this subject is extensive. By the mid 1960s his and his colleagues', especially Congar's, prophetic writings have become enshrined in the Council texts and their language of the 'People of God' has become commonplace in all mainstream denominations. It is important to understand that the notion of the 'People of God' is much theologically richer than the mere denoting of lay ministry in the church, though of course it includes it (Zizoulas 1993).

³⁸⁹ His promotion of theological reflection with simple methods able to be used in ordinary parishes, Liégé would have liked very much.

An English theological student in 1951 would have been able to attend no such seminary.³⁹⁰ The British story is fully described by Ballard (1986: 9-18, 26-37; 2000).³⁹¹ It includes the initiatives in pastoral psychology, clinical pastoral education (CPE), the work of Lee, Autton, Weatherhead and seminary projects such as the Cuddesdon 'Littlemore scheme'. Many experiments, influenced by the theory and practice of recent adult education, were made first in seminaries then more broadly. They might be associated with an institution; a hospital,

³⁹⁰ An English snapshot is provided by Nicolas Stacey, a dynamic young priest of his generation. He chose Cuddesdon Theological College (1951-1953) because 'it had a magnificent tradition for training faithful and devoted priests of the Anglo-Catholic persuasion' (Stacey 1971: 34). The lectures were on the Bible, Christian Ethics, the Prayer Book and Doctrine. He learned 'the various theories of the Atonement' and 'all those heresies ... about the nature of God and the person of Jesus', which could not get him interested but, he was taught, to study which was 'most important' to understand the present day and meet the deeper needs of members of the congregation (Stacey 1971: 35, 38). He continues:

Our training in the practical pastoral work of a parish priest was really very thin. Alumni vicars who were making successes of their parishes would drop in for an evening's lecture to tell us how they did it. Devoted ladies from the Church of England Sunday School headquarters would descend on us for a day or two to put us on the inside track of Sunday School teaching, and then we had the odd session on subjects such as developments in modern psychiatric methods. Occasionally we preached in neighbouring village churches and visited wards in Oxford hospitals. We each preached one sermon before our fellow students after which there was a general discussion on it (Stacey 1971: 39).

Had Liégé been on the Cuddesdon staff in Stacey's time he would have introduced the biblical, kerygmatic, patristic, catechetical, pedagogic, ecumenical, ecclesiological, liturgical, historical theological, missionary, pastoral, Thomistic, Eucharistic, spiritual, and philosophical renewals all finding lively expression in France. Specifically he would have imported his enthusiasm for: Adam, Aquinas, Arnold, Augustine, Barth, Balthasar, Bergson, Bernanos, Biensfeld, Blondel, Bonhoeffer, Camus, Canisius, Chenu, Colomb, Congar, de Coninck, Coudreau, Dander, Daniélou, Dertillanges, Drey, Gilson, Godin, Guardini, Hirscher, Jungmann, Kierkegaard, Lakner, Leidel, Lotz, de Lubac, Marcel, Maritain, Möhler, Mounier, Newman, Otto, Hugo Rahner, Sailer and Sartre. He would have appeared as a whirlwind! It is a matter for some regret that the lack of communication between French and British pastoral theology deprived seminarians of much of the best theology available during a twenty-year period.

³⁹¹ The bibliography cited by Russell (1980) offers a good general survey of the range of recent writing around the theory and practice of ordained ministry: Olive Brose, *Church and Parliament* Oxford 1959; Dunstan GR ed. *The Sacred Ministry* 1970; Michael Hocking, *A Handbook of Pastoral Work* 1977; Lash, N. and Rhymer, J. *The Christian Priesthood* 1970; Peter Laslett, *The World we have lost* 1965; Leslie Paul, *The Deployment and Payment of the clergy* 1964 and *A church by Daylight* 1973; Russell *Groups and Teams in the Countryside* 1975; G. H Tavad *The Quest for Catholicity. A study of Anglicanism* NY 1964; R.H.T. Thompson, 'The Church and the Proletariat' *Theology* lxxv May 1958: 179; G.M. Trevelyan *English Social History* 1946; F. West *The Country Parish Today and Tomorrow* 1960; S. Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis* 1976; On sociology of professions/clergyman's role: Berkes, N. 'Religious and Secular Institutions in comparative Perspective' in *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* 8 (16) 1963: 65; Blizzard, S.W. 'The minister's Dilemma' in *Christian Century* 25 April 1956: 508; and 'Role Conflicts of the Urban Protestant Parish Minister' in *City Church* vii (4) September 1956: 13; and 'The Parish Minister's Self-Image of his Master Role' in *Pastoral Psychology*, Dec 1958; Joan Brothers, 'Social Change and the Role of the Priest' in *Social Compass* 10 (6) 1963: 477; Bunnik, R.J. 'The Ecclesiastical Minister and Marriage' in *Social Compass* 12 (1-2) 1965: 93; Fletcher, J.H. 'A Comparative view of the Parish Priest' in *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* 8 (16) 1963: 44; Jarvis, Peter 'The Ministry: Occupation, Profession or Status?' in *The Expository Times* (June 1975); David Martin *A Sociology of English Religion 1967* and *a General Theory of Secularisation* 1978; Niebuhr, H.R. and Williams, D.D. eds. *The Ministry in Historical Perspective* (NY 1956); Rawson, S. Bryman, A. and Hining, B. *Clergy, Ministers and Priests* (1977); Robert Towler 'The Changing Status of the Ministry' in *Crucible* May 1968; Wilson, B.R. 'The Paul Report Examined' in *Theology* vol LXVIII 1965: 89; and *Religion in Secular Societies* 1966 and *Contemporary Transformation of Religion* 1976.

university department or particular church or diocese. Limited at first to the issues of clinical theology, these trainings broadened to include human and spiritual growth. Designed to promote personal insight, they were uncoupled from exclusive allegiance to one denomination or institution.

By the 1980s, renewal in priestly formation and ministry in France and Britain came to share much in common in spite of everything.

6. Chaplaincy in diverse contexts

Liégé's chaplaincy to the Scouts was notable because in post war France leading theologians engaged in such ministries. Its context was the worker-priest movement, the *Mission de France* and the ministry of Cardinal Suhard and Chenu (1955). Such men wrote influentially on spirituality for youth and practical living. But it was not a chaplaincy with specialist skills like psychodynamic counselling. British chaplains by contrast have made an important contribution to practical theology in their own right and from their own context, that is, ministry to an institution, a chaplain's distinctive role. Hospital chaplains especially, with their specialised skills, have played an important role in British pastoral theology. Operating themselves in the context of a psychiatric or general hospital they have advanced pastoral studies by writing influentially about aspects of pastoral care for a general audience, addressing highly transferable pastoral insights. There has been a constructive theological alliance between chaplains and university academics, offering a critical analysis of ideological assumptions, professionalism, institutional practice and the theory and practice of pastoral care and counselling. Lambourne, Wilson, Campbell, Ballard, Pattison and Lyall lead here but there are many contributors. The following description could be greatly expanded. For example, the diverse articles of *Contact: the Interdisciplinary Journal of Pastoral Studies* as well as the more than twenty titles in the SPCK New Library of Pastoral Care make a critical contribution to this area of study.

Norman Autton's work has already been mentioned (Autton 1966; Autton 1967; Autton 1968). In 1971 Heji Faber (1971) wrote an innovative book exploring the hospital chaplain as a clown. A ground breaking book from the mental health chaplaincy perspective was

Watching for Wings by Roger Grainger (1979) . This was built on impressively by John Foskett (1984). Stephen Pattison (1994) has also written, like the French worker priests before him, of the need for chaplains in a psychiatric hospital, to take sides with the patient. Pattison, and other once-Birmingham academics, Michael Wilson, Peter Bellamy and R.A. Lambourne have also contributed to the critical debate about hospital chaplaincy and the role of chaplains (Pattison 1980; Wilson 1971; Bellamy 1986; Lambourne 1983).

Two influential and important books by hospital chaplains were Peter Speck's book on care during illness, *Being There* (1988) and his book on bereavement in collaboration with Ian Ainsworth Smith, *Letting Go* (1982). Learning, in part, from the professional practice of their own institutions, John Foskett, with David Lyall (1988), have also written influentially about supervision in *Helping the Helpers*, and Michael Jacobs (1989) has written about appraisal in *Holding in Trust*. Lyall's important *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context* (1995) is also informed by his experience as a hospital chaplain.

Industrial Mission has been more influential through practice than written theology. Its ministry to industrial structures through, for example, the South London Industrial Mission, has tended to be prophetic and political. Their chaplains have influenced the Churches' attitudes to social responsibility, justice and power. It is a ministry calling for considerable diplomacy, as chaplains must negotiate their role at every level of the organisation. It is one area of practical theology that learned from the French experience as George Velten's book, *Mission in Industrial France* (1962) shows. It 'is not well documented publicly, though there is a considerable occasional literature' (Ballard and Pritchard 1996: 41).³⁹²

7. Comparing methods

French and British practical theologians both had to find methodologies appropriate to their time and culture.

1. Comparing the methods of Liège and Browning

³⁹² However, see Taylor (1961).

Browning's influence is so strong in Britain that it is useful to compare and contrast them directly. Fundamentally they share the sophisticated method of correlation that Liégé adopted in the early 1960s. Browning's version is more complex than Liégé's and his human science conversation partners more integrated into the process than in Liégé's simpler method. But Liégé is interesting in pre-dating Browning's method, and for his own originality.

Both theologians want to secure practical theology as an academically respectable discipline as philosophically and scientifically defensible, and to clarify its place within theology. Liégé aims to establish it as a science pursuing a particular branch of truth. Both want to set it within its cognate disciplines. Browning (1991) emphasises the phronesis tradition via Augustine, Aquinas and others. Liégé (1980: 173) also wants to recover Augustine's close-to-life pastoral approach. Browning wants to coordinate practical reason and tradition. Both reject scholasticism as rational deductive knowledge of God based on first principles. Both have a modern, subject-focussed understanding of theology as systematic reflection on the historical self-understanding of a particular religious tradition. Browning presupposes Boisen's 'living human document', and Liégé the pedagogic research of the catechetes. Both see culture and faith as interactive. Both want an end to an 'applied' model in which pastoralia applies principles derived from dogmatics. They reject what they see as Barth's theory to practice model.

Both would agree on maintaining an ethical perspective. Neither can be accused of reducing pastoral theology to counselling. They base their theology on Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and Pentecost, though Liégé makes a much more of this than Browning for whom it is an almost totally unspoken underpinning. Both see all theology as 'practical' and practical theology as its own discipline within theology. Both draw on myth, story, legend and symbol as well as doctrine. Both draw on philosophy as a primary dancing partner: Browning on hermeneutics and pragmatism; Liégé on Aquinas, Blondel's philosophy of action, Mounier's personalism, phenomenology, existentialism and literature.

Both adopt a praxis-theory-praxis model assuming it is basic to theology. For Liégé this would follow from the Incarnation. Both start by locating the issue historically and making

an analysis of it. They both then reach back to scripture and tradition, to classic texts, for illumination, debate and dialogue.³⁹³

Their methodological process is similar: Browning (1991) first asks how to understand the concrete situation for present action (a total analysis). Then he asks, 'so what should our praxis be here?' This involves putting the answer to the first question into dialogue with theology. Thirdly he asks, 'how do we critically defend the norms now established?' Finally he asks, 'how shall we get there?'

Browning's approach is epistemologically more sophisticated with its five levels: the visional; obligational; tendency-need; environmental-social; rule-role. His range of conversation partners is wider than Liégé's. On the other hand Liégé's approach is perhaps easier to use in practice. There is evidence that his students enjoyed the challenge it gave them.

2. Methods of pastoral and practical theology in Britain

British practical theologians have been strongly influenced by Don Browning's revised correlational method, itself shaped by significant tributaries, and tend to adopt the process of 'a kind of conversation between theory, theology and practice' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 13). This three-way dialogue is the approach taken by Pattison who suggests a 'critical conversation between people's own ideas, beliefs, feelings and perceptions; the beliefs, assumptions and perceptions provided by the Christian tradition; and the contemporary situation which is being considered' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 134).

A more sophisticated version of this method has been developed by Elaine Graham (2002) in which practical theology is seen as 'transforming practice' that aims to help faith communities both practice and articulate their faith in a more closely connected way (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 74). Laurie Green and Emmanuel Lartey, both adopting a

³⁹³ Liégé does not use his language but would, I believe, be content with Tracy's view of practical theology as 'mutually critical correlation of the interpreted theory and praxis of Christian faith and mutually critical correlation of the theory and praxis of the contemporary situation' (Tracy 1983).

‘pastoral cycle’ or ‘process approach’, once again influenced by Browning and those who shaped his ideas, have also given attention to method (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 130).

Beyond this dominant model, British practical theologians adopt appropriate methods for their research depending on subject matter but generally inductive and interdisciplinary requiring high quality interpretation (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 9). One example of this would be Wesley Carr’s attempt to elucidate the connection between systematic theology and pastoral practice with the help of ideas from psychoanalysis (Carr 1989).

3. Conclusion

Liégé has much in common with the methods of British practical theologians. He uses a method of correlation, a dialogue of disciplines that can also be described as a critical conversation but in which theology is the senior partner. He sees the world through the modernist meta-narrative of salvation history, believed as revealed by God. Some of the issues he wishes to settle through his method are too fluid, ambiguous and fragmentary for it to manage. It has not been especially influential in French or international practical theology as a distinctive method. But it was an original and pioneering model that well fitted Liégé’s aim to promote a pastoral theology that used theological criteria to disclose what reforms the church needed to face modernity, cultural diversity and change.

British practical theology tends to be content to articulate theory, data, ideas and analyses. It offers frameworks for understanding. It assembles the fruits of particular studies and research. It covers topics. It tends to leave the issue of application to the reader. True, some British work is more confessional, as if preaching, or sometimes actually preaching. Harry Williams’ collection of sermons, *The True Wilderness* (1965) is amongst the finest flowerings of Anglican pastoral theology. But he has never been understood as a practical theologian.

Chapter Ten: What is the value of Liégé's pastoral theology to pastoral and practical theology in the UK?

1. Introduction

Post war French theology was a golden age but it is unknown in Britain that pastoral theology was part of this. Liégé was its pioneer and initiator, a 'founding parent'. British pastoral theologians admire their seminal figures like Weatherhead, Lake, Lambourne, Blackie and Wilson, and Liégé is offered here as a candidate for adoption into that gallery, though separated by the Channel.

Liégé's systematic approach entails a broad definition and perspective, encompassing strands that British practical theology tends to keep separate, and stimulating thought about its future direction.

Liégé's view on the status of pastoral theology within the wider discipline of theology, and its relationships with the institutional churches, dogmatics and philosophy, suggests questions: How is Christian faith best described today? What does it offer and ask of today's disciples? What are the best resources to nourish them?' Unlike Liégé, British churches and their practical theologians do not tackle these questions as their primary task. Yet these questions are crucial for practical theologians.

Liégé's aims focussed on the reform of the praxis of the church. In Britain little has been done to develop the art of making a theological critique of this. Liégé offers the principles and a '*criteriologie*' for this as fundamental planks. Such an approach is needed in Britain to relate faith and church practice to culture and the implications for change. Liégé's approach reveals how much British church life relies on custom and practice; on pragmatic judgements based more on cultural and institutional need than on theological judgements.

Liégé was primarily an evangelist, a member of the Order of Preachers. He therefore used different discourses for different people, according to context. He found ways of articulating

Christian faith that attracted many, including young people, because its language connected with them. He communicated a 'hot', personal and theologically well-earthed faith, drawing on the best current interdisciplinary scholarship. He could write in plain language and communicate with many constituencies. How do British practical theologians compare? His model challenges British practical theologians to emulate his breadth of communication.

Liégé's prophetic, scandalous, uncompromising pastoral theology is a large-scale strategic response to his sense of the major cultural issues. He envisages a radically changed church appropriate to 'post Christianity'. He therefore provokes a debate about practical theology as a 'prophetic' discipline or as a 'culturally pastoral' discipline with the church in role of chaplain to the culture. He seeks to discern the will of God for today's church, and seems to gather up Britain's many disparate prophets from Southcott to Huddleston to Leech to Jenkins and to put them under one theological roof.³⁹⁴

To take Liégé's pastoral theology seriously, British churches would need to convene a sort of equivalent to Vatican II; a wholesale theological examination of the question 'what kind of church praxis do we need now and why?' The absence of this results in a lack of corporate vision or answer of the kind offered by Vatican II. Though we have no equivalent, we can learn from Liégé to keep the idea alive that church praxis ought to conform to the gospel and, in doing so, take account of our whole inheritance, rather than the parts of the tradition individuals happen to like. Liégé's approach integrates Catholic theology with human growth, spirituality, church belonging, sacramentality, and action, in one whole; a way of life.

2. Liégé's weaknesses: The argument against being interested in Liégé

Liégé died in 1979. Twenty-eight years on why not ignore him? His writing is dated. He assumes the innocence of a synthetic, modernist worldview unthreatened by the epistemological fragmentations of postmodernism. His world is united, albeit of different

³⁹⁴ The British Birmingham School of pastoral theology in the 1960s were far from being detached observers. They were committed to the aim of making their theology help the churches be more socially useful and relevant. But even the Birmingham School, would tend to shy away from explicitly addressing the will of God, as if theology could discern it and theologians could prescribe appropriate action on the basis of knowing it.

cultures. His God reigns over a meta-narrative, whose story is hard to preach under the terms of postmodern engagement. He may be France's most celebrated pastoral theologian, but he never wrote his intended *magnum opus*. He writes from the limited perspective of mid-twentieth century Roman Catholicism. The post war years were a time of inflated hopes and over-Romantic ideals for both church and society. The change wrought by Vatican II perhaps heralded the end of the 'Christian' era, not the start of a creative, new one matching the pluralistic context. Hopes are not high for a reformed Catholicism, incorporating the insights of feminist analysis and Liberation Theology, replacing patriarchy, outmoded hierarchy and dependency-creating dogma with co-responsibility, interdependence and openness to new data and analysis. Moreover Liégé's uncompromising approach is off-putting and expects too much of secular people with domestic responsibilities, interests and commitments. Institutional research exposes Liégé's demand for church to conform to the gospel as naïve. Liégé lacks the capacity to 'say it slant', not even attempting the nuances of the peculiarly British 'wisdom' style of BBC Radio 4's *Thought for the Day*, also represented by writers like John V. Taylor, Gordon Mursell, Rowan Williams, Alan Ecclestone, Bill Vanstone, Harry Williams or Alastair Campbell, who gently coax the religious sensibilities of the reader, pointing them towards a more integrated and godly sense of themselves and the world. Unlike Wesley Carr and others he fails to articulate God's purposes by way of interdisciplinary analysis, in which religious faith is but one, albeit integrative strand. Liégé so much wanted to convey the gospel for *today* that the results inevitably dated fast.

These comments carry a valid, albeit lightly sketched, critique. This Chapter is based on the assumption that Liégé is worthy of attention in his own right as a pastoral theologian, and that interest in him is as valid because of his differences in time and context, rather than in spite of his being dated and Modernist.

3. Liégé is of historic interest because of his significance for French practical theology

Liégé was formed as a Dominican when the renewals of de Lubac and Daniélou were thriving and with Chenu and Congar as his teachers. To this he imports the theology of his time in Tübingen which enriches his thought and significantly informs his pastoral theology.

His avid general reading, especially of literature, enables him to pepper his popular writing with vivid images, illustrations and quotations which bring it to life.

Partial critical assessments of Liégé's significance for French theology appear in Refoulé (1980); Lemoine (1997); Routhier and Viau (2004), Viau (1987, 1993), Adler (1981, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2004) and Reynal (2004). The association of Liégé with the great Karl Rahner by Foullox (1995) is of special importance because of the international status of these volumes (Alberigo and Komonchak 1995). All these assessments have been described in Parts One and Three. They concur in regarding Liégé as the pioneer and initiator of pastoral theology in France, who dominated this field during the three decades of its evolution from around 1950. His influence on French pastoral theology can hardly be over estimated. They are clear that all French pastoral theology flows through him, and emphasise the debt to him of subsequent French practical theology.³⁹⁵

So even if Liégé's work turned out to have little significance for British practical theology he is of undoubted historical interest.

4. Liégé's different reading from British accounts of what is of critical importance in the history of pastoral theology means that he draws on, and is influenced by, different sources and so arrives at a different vision of practical theology.

There are a number of versions of pastoral and practical theology's history by British writers. Ballard (2000), Campbell (1972), Forrester (2000), Graham (2002), Pattison and Lynch (2005) and Whyte (1973) all make references to it. Given the large scope of the subject and the equally large number of candidates for mention, it is not surprising that, whilst being broadly parallel and complementary, these writers route their accounts through somewhat different examples. The final choices may seem almost arbitrary. The point of briefly examining three of them here is to show that what they have in common is a bypassing of what were the most seminal influences on Liégé. Whereas Liégé (1980: 174) values much in the nineteenth century tradition of practical theology and especially the achievements of the

³⁹⁵ For a single account that conveys the sense of Liégé's seminal importance for Francophone pastoral theology in a way that is impossible to find in English, with the sole exception of Viau's, *Practical Theology: A New Approach* (1999) which makes it explicit, see Routhier and Viau (2004).

Tübingen School and in particular the work of J. -B. Hirscher, Sailer, Drey and Möhler, Alastair Campbell dismisses nineteenth century pastoral theology as ending up on 'on the scrap heap of old confusions' (Campbell 1972: 86).

It is odd that theologians like Drey and Möhler are ignored by British practical theologians yet taken seriously by writers like Hans Küng and Stephen Sykes in systematics despite, in Liégé's phrase, their 'restoring the honour of pastoral theology'(Liégé 1980: 174).³⁹⁶ This results in Liégé's and British conceptions of pastoral and practical theology being radically different. It is sufficient for this purpose to take accounts by Whyte, Forrester and Graham

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In 1973 *Theology* featured an article entitled 'New Directions in Practical Theology' by J.A. Whyte of St Andrews University, Professor in this subject from 1958 to 1986. The trajectory of Whyte's article is typical of a British approach. Its trajectory is as follows: Regret that until recently it has been 'hints and tips', not theology proper; it has been focussed on clergy training; discussion of the relation between theory and practice; practical theology's place within theology; the seminal work of Schleiermacher; the recent uncritical

³⁹⁶ See, for example Küng (1976) and Sykes (1984).

³⁹⁷ *Concilium* shows that Roman Catholic pastoral theology has recently been more ecumenical than Protestant thought. For example, the Blackwell Reader (Woodward and Pattison 2000) has nothing in the title or covers to warn the reader that Roman Catholic thinking has largely been excluded. On page xiii and the first page of the Preface it is stated that it is the Protestant tradition from which it largely draws. This point is made as if in passing, as if it might have said 'from which this Reader just happens to draw', as if no further elaboration or explanation is required. In the Introduction to John Patton's Chapter, the Editors say it is about 'influences that have shaped contemporary (mainly Protestant) pastoral theology in the USA' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 49). This seemingly innocent descriptive remark, slipped in in brackets, from the Liégé perspective, invites questions: *why* is it mainly Protestant? Apparently this question is not one the Editors expect their reader immediately to ask. Is it as if the answer ought to be obvious? Or that it is dealt with in some other book (if so it is curious the book is not referred to)? In this context it is interesting that the entry on Protestant pastoral theology in Burck and Hunter's (1990) *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling* is twelve columns long and on Roman Catholic pastoral theology it is only four columns (Kinast 1990). The Roman Catholic bibliography is one quarter of the Protestant bibliography. The Protestant bibliography mentions six works from the nineteenth century: C. Harms, *Pastoral theologie* (1830); E. Pond, *lectures on pastoral theology* (1847); 2 works by Schleiermacher (1811, 1830 and 1850); W.T.G. Shedd, *Homiletics, and Pastoral Theology* (1867) and J.J. Van Oosterzee, *Practical Theology* (1878) and A. Vinet, *Pastoral Theology* (1853) as well as books from the 1940s, 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s. The Roman Catholic bibliography lists nothing earlier than the 1960s (one book), 5 from the 1970s and 10 from the 80s. That is all. One is bound to ask where is this dictionary's sense of Roman Catholic pastoral theology's history, and why are there these discrepancies? (This Dictionary in its entry on Vatican II miss-spells *Gaudium et spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, in every single mention of it, as *Gadium*) (McCarthy 1990).

reliance on human science in the USA; the present state of flux and a diversity of current developments.

Schleiermacher is his starting point for the 'new direction' in Europe wherein practical theology was seen as the 'crown', a function of the church, with the purpose of serving it. He mentions, before turning to educational developments in the USA, that Barth, Brunner and Tillich worked within Schleiermacher's scheme and under the same assumptions.

Another leading Scottish practical theologian, Duncan Forrester opens his discussion of 'practical theology as an academic discipline' by saying that 'Christian theology had, of course, existed before the Enlightenment; indeed its origins go back to the very beginnings of the Christian faith' (Forrester 2000: 33). That said, Forrester's next sentence is, 'Prior to the Middle Ages, theology was studied by scholars and monks, mainly in monastic settings'. He very briefly mentions Anselm, Aquinas' use of Aristotle, Duns Scotus and 'the Protestant Reformers'. Universities had theology at their heart, along with medicine and law, and saw theory 'as directed towards the goal of practice'. He then introduces the 'early modern university', Berlin's foundation in 1809 being 'a notable turning point', as 'properly only concerned with *Wissenschaft*, a scientific commitment to relate everything to universal rational principles' in which theology has to justify its place 'and the scholar who did this most effectively was the eminent theologian, Schleiermacher' (Forrester 2000: 35). From Schleiermacher he moves to Barth, Thurneysen, and Rahner, whose disciples include Metz and the South American Liberationists. Finally he mentions Hiltner and Pannenberg. Forrester's account is ecumenical in mentioning Rahner and his disciples (Forrester 2000: 39, 40).

A contrasting example is Elaine Graham's Chapter on 'Pastoral theology in Historical Context' (Graham 2002: 56-82). Like the above accounts hers focusses on Schleiermacher's work and legacy. She then moves through Washington Gladden and Clement Rogers to the connections between pastoral theology and the modern psychologies, then to Clinical Pastoral Education and pastoral counselling. She then picks up on Tillich and the method of correlation, before finishing with Hiltner, Thurneysen, Lake and Oden.

It is remarkable that when such accounts come to mention the Second Vatican Council, too important to be ignored, they write as if its pastoral documents appeared *de nibilo* in the 1960s as official Catholicism (Ballard 1986: 21; Graham 2002: 79, 131) This misses the decades of serious, laborious, pastoral theology lying behind them, led, in France, by Liégé throughout the 1950s.

Liégé (1957a) divides the history of pastoral theology into seven periods.³⁹⁸ Sharp differences between Liégé and British approaches arise in the way pastoral theology is conceived as a result of his different reading of history and these different influences.

5. Liégé's pastoral theology offers British practical theology a significant and different model from any British model.

1. A Comparison

To sense the strong contrast between current British and francophone practical theology one can compare two publications: *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (Woodward and Pattison 2000) covers its historical perspective, approaches and methods. It covers its nature, definition, purpose, resources, place within theology, subject divisions and relations with the human sciences. Claiming to 'represent a good overview of topics that are currently regarded as important in the whole area' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: xv) it then includes: sociology; liberation theology and politics; ecclesiology; morality; spirituality and postmodernism; suffering and healing; counselling; sexuality; culture, interfaith questions and

³⁹⁸ Here is a summary reminder: The Apostolic period he regards as normative. In the Patristic period, the Fathers, often Bishops, drew a rich pastoral theology from their daily life. Third is the impoverished medieval period; too pragmatic, too concerned with discipline, too scholastic, rarely explicitly theological, and out of contact with the People of God. The fourth, Tridentine, period lacked an adequate ecclesiology, was insufficiently corporate and overly spiritual or ascetic. The Enlightenment saw the first university Chairs in pastoral theology but these were not seriously theological, particularly under Marie-Thérèse. The nineteenth century Tübingen School was a crucial renewal. It went back to patristic sources, drew from German romanticism, and developed a richer ecclesiology that led to a renewal in catechetics and liturgy. Finally there is the twentieth century renewal, in continuity with the Tübingen School and blended with the kerygmatic theologians of Innsbruck. This tradition was continued in France by ecclesiologists like Congar, de Lubac, de Montcheuil, and also by missionary pastors like Cardinal Suhard. This is the theology reflected in the 'current' liturgical movement, in catechetical and parish renewal, religious sociology, *Action Catholique*, and youth movements (Liégé 1957a). When Liégé introduces F.-X. Arnold's pastoral theology to the French reader, adding at the same time a summary of his own, he pays special debt to the two important Schools of Tübingen and Innsbruck (Arnold 1957).

race; congregational studies; psychiatry; management; evaluation; performance. It makes no reference to French practical theology.

Contrast this with the most recent and comprehensive Francophone overview of practical theology, Routhier and Viau's 819 page, *Précis de Théologie Pratique* (2004).³⁹⁹ After an opening chapter on the evolution of Protestant practical theology, Adler offers an account of Catholic theology from 1945 to Vatican II, which roots it, academically, in Liégé.⁴⁰⁰ After discussion of epistemology, methods, basic concepts and scope, the *Précis* offers 570 pages to the headings: 'to proclaim', 'to celebrate', 'to develop' and 'to support' using verbs, it says, to emphasise action (Routhier and Viau 2004: 6).⁴⁰¹ All three books Viau suggests as introductory reading for the (200 page) section 'to proclaim', have 'catechesis' in the title. Indeed the first title (*Adults and Catechesis*) is strongly Liégéian (Alberich and Binz 2000). It is important to say that though the references to Liégé in the book are significant (Adler's paragraphs (pages 30-32), and Viau's inclusion of him in a chapter entitled 'The Founding Acts of Practical Theology', he is not much further credited explicitly in the text or referred to in the bibliographies. But it is clear that the book continues to evolve his themes: there are chapters on: mission and evangelism; proposing the faith and sharing the gospel; from awakening to the religious spiritual experience to awakening to faith; Christian initiation and Christian identity; reading the Bible as a basic practice; practical catechetics; preaching in

³⁹⁹ The Preface starts in a way that complements the approach of the *Blackwell Reader* (Woodward and Pattison 2000) and shows the emerging international confluence of the discipline in recent decades:

La théologie pratique is a domain in full expansion at the moment but still rests largely misunderstood as to what its essential components are. Its focus is on the practice of believers both individually and collectively. Starting out from concern about the practice of ecclesial institutions, it is equally concerned by all social practices with religious resonances. Essentially its task is to articulate a critical discourse concerning on the practices inherent in the various Christian traditions and the way they perform (*performativité*) in the contemporary world.

It is an integral part of theology. Yet the fact that it is situated at the confluence of the two universes of theory and practice gives it a particular colour. Because to grasp and give an adequate account of practice requires not only a good empirical understanding of the subject, but a solid capacity to interpret. Contemporary practical theology resents itself in two complementary modes: either as a specific theological discipline, oriented towards the field of religious practice in the Church and in society, or as a global theological approach dominated by reflection on the practice of believers. What these two approaches have in common is in being transdisciplinary, in other words, in dialogue with the other domains of theology and the human sciences

For a few decades practical theology has occupied an increasingly important place in the francophone world. This relatively new evolution explains in part why, until now, there has been no work in French explicitly dedicated to making a synthesis of it.

⁴⁰⁰ including attributing to him a wrong year of birth.

⁴⁰¹ As Viau (1987) credits Liégé for pioneering with the verb '*agir de l'Église*'; see above.

Protestant perspective; helping adults in the pilgrimage of believing; the witness of practical theology; inculturating and indigenising Christian faith; six Chapters on 'religious expression and the celebration of the sacraments', one simply entitled 'prayer'; eleven Chapters on developing the Church for the 21st century; and nine Chapters on Christian action and presence in society.⁴⁰²

2. Liégé's pastoral theology is apostolic and evangelistic

Liégé writes as if on behalf of Jesus (Marlé 1980: 55). His pastoral theology is rooted in apostolic and evangelistic intention, a strong contrast with British practical theology. It is intended to inspire faith, and starts with urgent, apostolic questions rather than, say, liberal rational questions. Liégé paints his theology and faith onto the canvas directly, like an artist. He does not approach it at arm's length like an art historian. He assumes the need for a developing pastoral diagnosis of contemporary cultural problems to which the 'Good News' responds. It is a movement through a focus on religion, to attention to a general cultural malaise, and finally to a focus on institutional conflict (Reynal 2004: 251, 418ff.) Has British practical theology partly become detached from evangelism and lost something in the process?

Liégé's core theme was how all human existence is integrated to the evangelical message by the action of the living church (Refoulé 1980: 155). His theology articulates the 'Good News' of God's Word for human beings in modern terms having faced the appropriate challenges. He presents this as a way of life, action and existential commitment based on a decision taken in freedom. It involves a spirituality, an ecclesiology, and a Trinitarian theology of creation, redemption and fulfilment. It is neither just theory, nor a set of actions but an integrated praxis, the vocation equally of the church and of individual disciples. One of its strengths is that central to its purpose, rather than in passing, it attempts to exploit the full

⁴⁰² Anglophone authors, almost without exception, always feel far from Liégé's world. This book's authors, by contrast, mostly come from the heart of Liégé's world, albeit 30 years on: This ecumenical volume has 51 mostly Roman Catholic contributors: 10 from Paris (1 Jesuit, 1 Protestant 8 from Liégé's Institut Catholique), 24 from Canada (where Liégé spent 16 summers), 3 from Lille (where Liégé taught courses every year for more than twenty years), at least 6 Protestants, 4 from Strasbourg, 1 from Rome, 2 from Brussels, and 7 Swiss.

meaning of the Gospel on which the church is founded. It avoids a narrow focus by envisioning all human creatures as its horizon and the church's vocation as set within that.

Liégé therefore assumes that pastoral theology's first task is to create the discourse required. This presupposes a diagnosis of contemporary needs and accessible language to express the corresponding 'good news'. He is therefore looking for sophisticated cultural, social and psychological analyses of the needs and a lively theological response. His motive is unambiguous: evangelisation. He takes it for granted that the primary purpose of theology is to articulate the universal faith in terms designed to meet the particularities of a given situation, so constantly be re-expressing itself.

He starts with the Word of God as broken into his own life. He expresses this personal faith, again, just as artists' paintings express themselves on the canvas, in contrast with the art historians' critical reflections upon paintings. His approach is similar to St. Paul's: converted to faith in Christ, his writings wrestle to articulate its meaning in practice for his communities. It is not merely a personal expression. Paul's rabbinic tradition shapes what he struggles with. He has his own agenda. But he writes to further the faith of his readers.⁴⁰³ Responding to the unbelief of the modern world, he offers his vision of faith and practical discipleship.

Liégé takes theology seriously as something to be put to work in the service of evangelism. He centres on the worthwhileness, glory, liberty, and significance for life, of becoming a Christian and the rich nature of fellowship in Eucharistic community. His task is to articulate the gospel God's People and the beloved creatures of God's world. New Testament is not an eclectic collection of insights, but the portrait of God's revelation to humankind in Christ. And contemporary pastoral Christian theology, whatever else it expresses, must express what this means in today's terms. Thus Liégé's pastoral theology is committed and confessional by definition.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰³ Theologians in the same mould include St Augustine, Martin Luther, Saint Ignatius Loyola and Thomas Merton.

⁴⁰⁴ Augustine was in dialogue with the Donatists and the Manichees. But he did not define his theology, as some British practical theology is defined, as being the dialogue with their material. His theology was the articulation of faith that he brought to and that emerged, deepened, from the dialogue.

Liégé represents the practical theologian as preacher. Much of his writing has the feel of preaching. It appeals to the heart's desire. Augustine wrote 'Give me a man that loves, and he will feel what I say. Give me one that longs, one that hungers, one that is travelling in this wilderness, and thirsting and panting...give such, and he knows what I say...' (Augustine of Hippo). Liégé writes with and appeals to such passion. He wants to articulate what difference it makes to living and feeling, not just thinking, to be in relationship with God. He does not write theology as an intellectual exercise in practical reason, philosophy, and hermeneutics, though he does these things, he writes asking himself, 'what do I need to say to transmit the faith I have so you may have it too?' If you have faith he asks himself, 'what can I say to you from my experience of faith that will help you deepen yours?' Of the church he asks, 'what do we need to be and do in order to live the faith which God gives us and which belongs to us?' His writing is not about 'right believing' as such nor about 'right doing' as such but about right relating with God, about what it means freely to respond to God's invitation to faith. The book in homage to him speaks first of the void felt by those who owed their Christian faith to him even more than their theology to him (Refoulé 1980).

Liégé was 'stunningly aware of the urgencies of our times', someone of whom you can say 'I live but not I for Christ lives in me' (Schmitt 1980: 20). This apostolic and evangelistic thrust underpins his whole approach and all his writing.⁴⁰⁵

3. Ecclesial

Being apostolic and evangelistic it follows that Liégé's primary perspective is ecclesial. Jesus' life, passion and resurrection led to Pentecost, the coming of the Spirit upon the Church. Liégé shares with British practical theology the shift towards a focus on lived experience, but the assumption in Britain is that the lived experience in question is that of individuals, or people in general whereas Liégé's focus, which seems odd to the British Protestant mentality, is that it is the lived experience of the church that is in question. This is manifest in his

⁴⁰⁵ A parallel to Liégé's approach may be found today in the writings of the British Dominican, Timothy Radcliffe OP whose books, interestingly, are religious best sellers in their French translations: e.g. Radcliffe (2005).

repeated use of favourite vocabulary such as *'l'agir de l'église'*, *'l'Action eccésiale'*, *'Action pascale'* or *'l'être-ensemble des chrétiens'*. In a key article Liégé writes:

The springboard of pastoral theology is *'the today of the church's experience'* (Liégé's italics), the lived Christian experience as incorporated into the current experience of the Church. The questionings arising from ecclesial experience will be the point of departure for a new interrogation of its Tradition and a verification of its given dogmas about the Church' (Liégé 1971: 63).

He continues that through the work of pastoral theology the church can rediscover an appropriate way of being for today 'reoriented and strengthened in what it is able to become conscious of in its praxis; pastoral theology is *praxéologie'* (Liégé 1971: 63). He is explicit that:

The very life of the Church consists of the experience of the being together and the acting together of Christians: the community. It will be fruitful critically to think about the Church's achievements concerning community and to welcome the multiple questions that arise so as to reinvent the Church for today as the offspring of the Event, truly fraternal, bearer of witness, charged with confessing and celebrating the faith (Liégé 1971: 63).

Liégé's focus on the lived experience of the church entails his concern for its praxis. He believes distorted practice is as much faithlessness (heresy) as distorted belief. His ecclesial focus, in other words, entails a concomitant prophetic focus.

4. Prophetic

Liégé calls the church to be led by its theology. Theology is not merely to be a justifying or rationalising resource, called on to explain decisions made for institutional motives, it should drive the institution (Liégé 1957a: viii-xi). Liégé's most far-reaching question to the church institution is how far does it conform to its inherited gospel (Liégé 1957a: x). Liégé's argues that pastoral theology offers the means and theological criteria to discern what changes are needed (Liégé 1957a: xvii – xviii). God's agenda challenges the church's internal, institutional, societal, cultural, historical and self-interested agenda. Authentic faith has become distorted and diminished by the culture in which it is embedded. The agendas must be separated and collusion ended.

Apostolic and evangelistic theology centres on the church's vocation for God's world. Thus it is necessarily prophetic because the church fails to conform to the gospel. Liégé's theology therefore focusses on catechesis, reform and praxis. The most radical aspect of Liégé's and Coudreau's I.S.P.C. course from 1950 was its dedication of a day a week to '*la pratique*', to catechesis (of adults as well as children and adolescents), and its pioneering of what soon came to be called *la théologie de la praxis* (Refoulé 1980: 133). That is why it is *praxéologie*.⁴⁰⁶ The prophetic role Liégé ascribes to pastoral theology is elaborated above in Part Two. The issue to be addressed below concerns British practical theology as *praxéologie*; how it accomplishes its prophetic role and what it might have to learn from Liégé.

5. Catechetic

How do you express your life as total commitment to Christ? How are you engaged in a lifelong process of conversion? Where are you a prophet to church and world? For Liégé faith should confer a clear idea of life's purpose and make the appropriate values explicit (Liégé 1979: 47-100). The disciple works out their vocation as a priority (Liégé 1965: 38). They will be in a habit of regular prayer and liturgical participation (Liégé 1965: 55). There will be an internal equilibrium between cognitive knowing, cathectic attachment and lived ethics. There will be a sense of an evolving faith and a maturing personality (Liégé 1965: *passim*). In Liégé's description the life of faith will be intensely lived, marked by the Holy Spirit, replete with liberty and joy, confident in the Resurrection and the defeat of death, analogous to the life of someone in love with God as the Beloved (Liégé 1965: 119, 125). Inevitably it is a faith to be shared and proclaimed. Only such a faith matches up to the New Testament. Liégé asks church members to think about how their faith relates to this expression of faith (Liégé 1965: 54). He believes faith can be lived in every milieu. But its meaning cannot be taken for granted. It must be built on a decision, and have a shape, a content and a practice (Liégé 1965: 119). If authentic it is not passive or semi-conscious. It must be articulated, confessed and lived (Liégé 1965: 36-55). The test is whether you or God are directing your life. And are you stronger as a result? Liégé's view of faith presupposes taking sides: either God is in Christ or there is no transcendence there. The dated feel to this approach is illustrated by the contemporary cultural strangeness of the idea of taking sides.

⁴⁰⁶ This word is currently used in francophone Canada to describe practical theology.

On the crest of existentialism's wave, Liégé's challenge had an impetus which is lost today.⁴⁰⁷ He might argue that the missionary task is now more urgent and that there is nothing in faith that a good missionary cannot explain.

For Liégé it follows directly from his evangelism, and everything above, that pastoral theology will be fundamentally catechetical. It assists Christian disciples in the '*cheminements*' (little steps) by which they grow in maturity of faith. Catechetics are fundamental because practical theology is primarily about the transmission of faith rather than the arguing of ideas. Furthermore, transmission of a faith presupposes a lifetime of conversion, learning, growing in wisdom, repenting, maturing and, to use his word, ripening (Refoulé 1980: 12). Moreover, given his ecclesial, corporate understanding of the gospel this over-a-life-time education into Christ is equally a corporate and an individual pilgrimage. It occurs in individuals and their eucharistic home. Catechesis nurtures the individual and the community in growth and integration of faith, involving liturgy, spirituality, theology, general openness to learning, and appropriate action in the world. To underplay or neglect catechesis within pastoral theology would be a contradiction in terms for Liégé. What is the value to British practical theology of such an assumption, and what might be learned from it?

For Liégé and his colleagues, the high moment of catechetical revival in France came around 1959. They may have suffered much official condemnation and rejection. But this had not stopped their work bearing fruit. This year and the next saw 'the tipping point' characterised by certain crucial shifts in thinking. Henceforth catechesis was understood to be something needed by adults, not just children (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 230). Rather than thinking of catechesis as something for a class of children, catechetes began to devise a pastoral strategy for the whole parish. They began to think of liturgical formation rather than didactic liturgical instruction and to think of the transmission of a "Parole" rather than merely the explanation of a doctrine. Catechetical discourse had flourished accordingly. In the important national Congress of 1955, Joseph Colomb had spoken of a catechetical '*mouvement*' (Adler and Vogeleisen 1981: 193-224). This thinking had entered the seminaries. Within ten years a three hundred year old era has

⁴⁰⁷ On the other hand Liégé's approach to an 'adult faith' is still being drawn on by contemporary writers. See Giguère (2005: 105 note 2) which mentions *Adultes dans le Christ* as a book in French which deals with the subject the author is treating.

closed. From 1968 we will find a new form of catechism very different in form, conception and presentation from the old 'questions and answers' approach from a book apparently containing all that it was needed to know. Ader and Vogeleisen (1981: 540) end their long book with a quote by Liégé as a tribute to his contribution to this process.

Audinet (1975) neatly summarises Liégé's approach: Liégé made the following distinctions of the 'degrees of Christian catechesis': First, there is 'catechesis of initiation, or fundamental catechesis' (Audinet 1975: 77). This refers to the first contact, the teaching of faith during baptism preparation or teaching of a child preparing for first confession and communion:

It conveys the message of salvation in its entirety, though in an elementary manner, with special attention to the various factors involved - doctrine, liturgy, life. On the quality of this first-stage catechesis all subsequent development depends (Audinet 1975: 77).

Next there is 'permanent catechesis'. Here the essentials are developed throughout life and the practical implications of the gospel are drawn out for life's various situations. Preaching aside, this can happen through courses, study-circles, conferences and so on. Finally, there is 'perfective catechesis' (also called Sapiential) which is directed to those whom 'a special mission or vocation impels to a deeper penetration of their faith'. It can mean 'wisdom' in the theological sense, mysticism or contemplation (Audinet 1975: 77).

6. Systematic

Liégé's pastoral theology is apostolic and evangelistic but nearly two thousand years had elapsed between times, building the church's tradition all of which must be taken into account for an adequate understanding of today's gospel. Liégé is first and foremost, by professional formation, a systematic theologian (Adler 2004: 29). This differentiates him from British pastoral theologians. In Britain it is not until the twenty first century that systematic theologians start to focus on the practical (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 408). Liégé's pastoral theology evolves out of his fundamental and kerygmatic theology. This develops into a theology of pastoral catechetics. This in turn becomes his pastoral theology. Audinet, Adler, Reynal and Viau show that in France it is with Liégé that, for the first time, *la pastorale*

becomes theology. (Reynal 2004: 251). Liégé's framework, as was seen in Part Two, is straightforward. He divides the subject into three sections, the prophetic, the liturgical and the caritative. He governs the subject by three principles, Christological, ecclesiological, and the unity of mission. There is no such overarching structure for framing pastoral theology in Britain. He does not propose a system so much as a systematic approach to asking the key pastoral theological questions, which must be continuously re-asked. To conform to the gospel, Liégé suggests, the church must be prophetic, sacerdotal-liturgical and embody love in action. All Liégé proposes are these three subject signposts to enable pastoral theology to be pointed towards its aim.⁴⁰⁸ He then suggests three principles to guide it. Coherence, not uniformity is critical: He proposes a method for asking appropriate questions guided by appropriate principles.

The content of Liégé's output is infused by a contemporary reading of Thomism in conjunction with 'elements of the philosophical thought of his times' (Reynal 2004: 250). In particular, as noted, he was inspired by phenomenology, existentialism and Blondel's philosophy of action. Liégé's diverse writings 'touch many domains', be they 'apologetic, *la morale*, the sacraments, faith, ecclesiology...' but they 'contract themselves into one place (*lieu*) which he himself calls "pastoral theology"' (Reynal 2004: 250). The interest and importance here is not grasped by viewing this theological place (*lieu théologique*) as 'a particular domain' but as 'the "theological place" that he deliberately chose from the start of the 1950s and which he held to till the end' (Reynal 2004: 250). Reynal does not see it as a 'new theology'.⁴⁰⁹ Rather

this was without any doubt a new way of doing theology. All the witnesses presented here affirm this. In relation to their theological formation in the great seminary or one of the faculties of theology, it was a new, vigorous language which lent support and enthusiasm to their apostolic tasks. They recognised themselves in this 'pastoral theology' (Reynal 2004: 250).⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁸ There will need to be a *pastorale prophétique*, a *pastorale liturgique* and a *pastorale caritative* (Liégé 1957a: xx).

⁴⁰⁹ He disassociates Liégé's output from '*la théologie nouvelle*' (Reynal 2004).

⁴¹⁰ Reynal's summary analysis of the way Liégé's theology evolves is important and helpful: 'Very quickly P. -A Liégé became known through his theology of faith' which was 'rooted in his study of fundamental theology' (Reynal 2004: 250). This faith is only possible through the Word 'which touches man and can arouse a decisive response in him, a believing response' (Reynal 2004: 251). So Liégé develops a theology of the Word which moves from an exploration of the 'mystery of the Word' to the 'ministry of the Word' in its various stages (Reynal 2004: 251). From here he develops a catechetical theology far removed from 'the angle of pedagogic

Liégé's output is encapsulated within a coherent frame like a house built on a single foundation but whose many rooms are needed for different purposes. There is an architectural unity to the building: study of faith, leads to study of the Word. This leads to study of catechesis which leads to study of the ministry of the Church in the world. His study evolves through Liégé's changing cultural and institutional context. As such it has an inner theological logic that explains the varied nature of his total oeuvre.

Liégé's theology thus has an architecture that British pastoral theology lacks. The task below is to ask if this difference is significant for British practical theology.

6. Liégé's model of pastoral theology provides a new perspective for examining British practical theology: a summary of the issues and questions.

1. British pastoral theology is not primarily evangelical

Stephen Pattison (2007) sees all his writing as evangelical, not a simple transmission of the kerygma, but an articulation of what his faith in God's love means in practice, in relation to a given subject. His hope would be that something of the gospel would be communicated in this way and contribute to the readers' faith development. The approach and style is less direct than Liégé's. It presupposes a British context where practical theology is much less explicitly evangelically conceived.

recipes' (Reynal 2004: 251). Reynal's thesis shows that it is from this bias towards a catechetical theology 'that he enlarges his perspective to one which is generally pastoral' (Reynal 2004). 'From here he progressively elaborates a pastoral theology of which he creates almost all the pieces and whose scientific character it behoves him to justify'. And this is the base of Adler and Reynal's claim that Liégé, the systematic theologian, is a pioneer: 'in France it is with Liégé that *la pastorale* becomes theology and no longer a collection of practical recipes merely for the use of pastors' (Reynal 2004: 251). In approaching pastoral theology as a science, Liégé develops a methodology of reflection in order to engage with the significant contemporary questions and issues, the 'provocations of theology' as he put it (Liégé 1971a). Reynal's thesis shows that in achieving all this Liégé is not only the producer of an original work of theology but also one that has a unity and a pertinence (Reynal 2004: 251).

Pattison may see all his writing as evangelical but he does not define it that way (see above:). British practical theology is normally defined more as a critical conversation removed from its ecclesial marriage.⁴¹¹

There are of course excellent rationales for British practical theology having somewhat distanced itself from evangelical and ecclesial engagement in order 'to cope with a wide, open and developing sphere of activity' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 7).⁴¹²

The challenge is whether in relinquishing this evangelistic stance for a more dispassionate academic one, something has been lost at the heart of practical theology. What is British practical theology's equivalent of Liégé's announcing the Gospel? The issue can be expressed like this: it is the difference between saying 'in the interdisciplinary study of human well-being it seems that the strand which is faith can make the following measurable differences' and saying 'there is, we believe, something fundamental to human well-being offered in faith

⁴¹¹ Alastair Campbell, as stated above, sees practical theology not as the evangelistic proclamation of something but as the study of something. Elaine Graham, as stated above, sees pastoral theology as 'critical theology of Christian practice' (Graham 2002). Her definitions are not explicitly evangelistic but do pick up Liégé's emphasis on practice as well as on his faith community focus (Graham 2002)

⁴¹² These rationales are well articulated by Campbell (1972); Dyson (1983); Ballard (1986); Campbell (1986); (Pattison (1988); Browning (1991); Davie (1994); Ballard and Pritchard (1996); Ballard (1999); Ballard (2000); Woodward and Pattison (2000); Ballard (2001); Graham (1996); Lartey (2003); Pattison and Lynch (2005). Yet Liégé's witness prompts a question to British practical theologians: how do you understand your role as evangelists, since the theology you are engaging with is a living faith not just a system of thought? Pattison's view was stated above. Graham tries to help faith communities articulate and practice their faith (Graham 2002). Duncan Forrester writes from a standpoint committed to his church in Scotland. (Forrester 1990 1997 2000). Campbell's *Rediscovering Pastoral Care* (1986) is concerned to offer a fresh vision of pastoral faith in pastoral action. A good deal of British practical theology is evangelistically, even ecclesially committed. But it generally refrains from making this explicit. British practical theologians may or may not, privately, hope their writing will serve an evangelical purpose, but this is rarely able to be detected from their writing. It is impossible to know from the majority of writings what matters most to the author about God and why. The reader does not discover what Ballard, Pattison or Graham believes about the Event Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit's animation of the church and its vocation to build the Kingdom. We do not learn how or why these authors pray, what they think is important about holiness, what it means for them to pattern their life on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, or what their experience of Eucharistic *koινωνia*, the New Testament hallmark of Christian life, actually is. Yet these matters lie at the heart of Christian faith. Liégé's pastoral theology goes on to reflect on practical issues on this basis. But until we know what inspires faith in the first place, what reasoning backs it up, why it is good news for contemporary problems and, in general, what it consists of, it is hard to see how and where this writing is directly evangelistic. And what is the distinctive point of Christian pastoral theology without this? And must not contemporary pastoral Christian theology, whatever else it does, express what this means in today's terms?

True, the present context of practical theology is often that of a secular university where the climate of religious studies prevails and confessional theology cannot be justified. There is no room for proselytisation. Liégé's *Institut Catholique* is a Roman Catholic university founded to promote theology for the church. Nevertheless has the presupposition of apostolic faith now been generally dropped from the task of practical theology or not? If not, where is it expressed in accessible language? It seems unclear, and this lack of apologetic is a weakness. Liégé announces the gospel as the BBC announces the news. The issue is, in what language is it best announced and what are its practical implications?

and in today's world we need the interdisciplinary study of well-being to understand and describe what this means, and what it implies for practice.' Practical theology's place in human well-being studies is either about history – 'this is where faith has helped or not helped human well being' – or it is about faith's possible contribution to human well being – 'this is where faith can help it'. This presupposes a basis of faith. The issue can be approached critically: 'faith-claims about well being are confirmed/denied by analysis of the evidence'. But is this 'faith seeking understanding'? How does British practical theology decide its boundaries? Liégé reminds us that pastoral theology needs committed, 'gospeling' theologians because it was initiated by God's Word. It is either an exhausted historical phenomenon or a living faith, needing Old Testament prophet equivalents, a St Paul or St Augustine, the prototype pastoral theologians. A non evangelistic approach may be academically credible. Liégé raises the question of its theological justification.

Elaine Graham's *Transforming Practice* (2002) is significant here. Her introduction to the postmodern condition is exemplary and clear, her intention being to help practical theology appropriately establish its sources and norms to guide practice. She believes, with Liégé, that cultural experience and social trends can be legitimate sources of divine revelation (Graham 2002: 3). She helpfully examines the purposeful activities of the faith community as 'the performative expression of Christian truth-claims in a plural society'. But why fail to offer an account of the nature and ground of the faith that faith communities actually have? Agreed, British practical theology needs updating and in Britain clerical and therapeutic paradigms have dominated. But the problems set by postmodernism include rather than bypass why a faith community might choose a faith and the question of what it consists of, and how it might be articulated for the next generation. Graham uses the word Divine with little hint as to what she means by it (Graham 2002: 49).⁴¹³

Graham makes no reference to the discontinuity, because of postmodernism, between the Christian faith Liégé presupposed, and faith today. What are we to understand that post modernism has done to Liégé's account of faith? Is it meaningless? Immoral? Incomprehensible? And what is to replace it? How does Graham hope her Habermas-influenced thought can be articulated as a message of good news to the Scouts? What gospel

⁴¹³ How does Graham justify such an old fashioned idea as *kenosis* in a post modern world?

does Graham lead the reader to? Graham claims that practical theology ‘enables the community to practice what it preaches’. Liégé would agree. But he would want Graham to go on, which she does not, to tell the reader about what it preaches and what this means in practice. Graham never shares her assumptions about faith communities.

Graham’s critique of modernist, bureaucratic, rational, institutional religion and her affirmation of postmodern spiritualities are valid. But she does not spell out what these spiritualities are, what they are based on and how they are to be transmitted to children. How does Graham hope they will find their place on the agenda of the Church of England’s General Synod? An institutional church needs its practical theologians to ask institutionally-shaped questions. This is the practical theology Liégé engaged in. Graham’s critique of Cupitt and Millbank is useful. But what Liégé would miss is a critique which builds theology from the church’s present institutional realities, including grass-cutting and the fete. Graham does not connect, as Liégé does, what her ideas mean for today’s churches. Liégé would ask what Graham wanted church congregations to do?⁴¹⁴

Graham betrays how conditioned she is to think of practical theology in terms of pastoral care (Graham 2002: 45). Liégé’s focus on *l’agir ecclesial* means he never makes this assumption. He is free from the whole issue of professional pastoral care to individuals in which counselling is separated from the worshipping community, (as Graham laments) of ‘much of the twentieth-century pastoral care movement (Graham 2002: 46). She is emphatically not speaking for Liégé. He preaches love in action for justice through the church as sacrament based on the biblical revelation of God and holds no part of the psychotherapeutic, individualist view criticised by Graham. Graham’s feminist insights are powerful and constructive (Graham 2002: 47). But again it is hard to translate them into institutional practice in a given situation. And some of her ‘new’, ‘revised’ and ‘restored’ emphases, albeit not the explicitly feminist ones, are already present in Liégé. When Graham quotes Lyon (1995) as restoring ‘a broader definition of pastoral activity as encompassing not only individual care and counselling, but a diverse set of pastoral *practices*’ (Graham’s italics) (Graham 2002: 48), she expresses something Liégé took for granted: ‘The care of the church is constituted by the whole variety of ways the life of the church seeks to promote

⁴¹⁴ In fact Graham is herself deeply engaged in action on behalf of the issues she writes about.

the flourishing of God's creation in enactment of the gospel: through worship, prayer, Bible study, fellowship, social ministry, music, preaching and so forth' (Lyon 1995: 97) (Graham 2002: 49). Liégé could perfectly well have written that fifty years earlier. British practical theology has only had to 'restore' itself from its problem of over-individualised pastoral care because it lost the perspective of *l'agir ecclesiale* in the first place (Graham 2002:52). Liégé's locus for all pastoral theology, his *lieu*, was always broad in its horizons (Graham 2002: 52). Similarly, with Liégé's perspective Graham would not be calling to reduce the tension between 'building up the community' and social action in the first place, because the point of building up the community is, precisely, to build the Kingdom (Graham 2002: 53). Pattison (1993) is suggesting a 'wider understanding of Christian formation' in 1993. Liégé was insisting on it in 1953. That is what his catechetical pastoral theology is all about.

So when Graham comes to offer her post twentieth century critique, she refers to Schleiermacher, Tillich and Hiltner but it would be helpful, especially given her explicitly historical approach, to have her critique of Liégé.

Why might he be of interest to Graham? They have much in common. He too wants to change not interpret the world. He wants to offer 1960s France, especially its young, an alternative to Marxism (Reynal 2004: 500). Like Chenu he struggles against *la théologie baroque* with a theology that is concrete and historical and present to his time. He fights to rehabilitate *catéchèse*; to end the *pastorale* of 'the time of Christianity' and against any authority and legislation not based on the gospel. He struggles to reconcile the church to the modern world, to release it from clerical dominance, and promote it as a sacrament of salvation and communion for all. He supports inculturation (Reynal 2004: 499, 500). He wants to transform *l'Eglise en acte*. He wants human beings to flourish fully in rapport with the divine and to promote human freedom. He too has a method. He too wants the action of the church to be responsive to problems and in synch with prevailing philosophy, ethics, and knowledge. He too wants to debunk outmoded thought and practice and critiques the status quo in the name of justice. He too seeks good preaching, liturgy, common action and appropriate community. He too is open to the future to questions. His is a 'mosaic' approach, dealing with the today. He articulated much of Graham's critique of pastoral theology. His theology is in philosophical partnership with thinkers like Blondel. He holds

together a broad intellectual range and links it with every day life. He too is concerned to establish an appropriate relation with history and the human sciences. But he holds firmly to what originally triggered the Christian movement which Elaine Graham seems shy of. The transforming practice he seeks is fuelled by that content. It remains unclear what Graham's understanding of the Good News is. What is her equivalent of Liégé's '*Dans la ligne de la triple mission pastorale de Jesus-Pasteur, l'agir pascal de l'Eglise se manifeste comme prophetique, liturgique, hodegetique*'? (Reynal 2004: 487). In *Transforming Practice* Graham tries to reframe practical theology in postmodern terms. In the process she offers a critique of the shortcomings of practical theology in recent times. Sometimes the two become confused. Liégé's theology was modernist and Graham is right to expose the need for its reframing. But he was not guilty, just by being a modernist, of being too clerical, too individual, too patriarchal, too sexist, or too reliant on psychology. He made these criticisms himself.

Graham sometimes seems more like an updating of the implications of love in the light of modern insights, such as feminist insights, than theology.⁴¹⁵ This is cultural enlightenment not theological innovation. Christians already know they are to love each other. This message is not something new about God and God's revelation, albeit new insight about human well-being. It is important not to over identify liberation for womanity, liberation from oppression and covert sexism and what women need in order best to flourish, with matters intrinsic to kerygmatic faith, the resurrection of Jesus and Pentecost. Practical theology must link but distinguish the two.

Liégé writes from the heart. Even when theorizing or attending to some nuance of language, he stays close to the existential drama of conversion and orientation to God. By contrast, many articles in *Contact* feel religiously disengaged. They make a fragmentary contribution to a fragmented subject. They explain a piece of focussed research. They cover a discrete, often specialist, topic. They do their academic duty.

British practical theology has no equivalent to writing like Liégé's. In the nearly thirty years of varied parish experience of the present writer, corporate Christian life in the Church of England, for example, seems more a matter of taste or local tradition. It is not based on a

⁴¹⁵ for example Graham (1996: 49-51,128-30;182ff.)

pastoral theology worked out for today. There is no corporate catechetics, mission or formation. Despite Temple (1936), deep in its mindset there is a reluctance to act on the corporate nature of belonging to the church. It seems acceptable to belong as a consumer on your own terms to suit your own tastes. The notion of a 'we' definition of Christian faith is rare. Learning and mission are not its core activities. Learning is optional. And failure to learn goes unchallenged, unacceptably so for Liégé. For Liégé, only those who take conversion, formation and corporate action seriously are authentic Christian disciples. This is not the culture of the Church of England, whose average congregation makes assumptions far from Liégé's. Enjoying the comfort of evensong feels limp by comparison with the adventure Liégé had in mind.⁴¹⁶

2. British pastoral theology tends to be individualistic

As noted above (220; 248) British theologians increasingly recognise this individualism. Ballard (1999: 306) puts it succinctly: 'There is a need to overcome the individualism in pastoral care which is reinforced by contemporary attitudes to religion'. Liégé battled hard against the abuse of Christian faith that would understand it as a granting of salvation to individuals for their private possession (Liégé 1957a: xxiv). In Britain pastoral theology has been largely implicit and embedded in institutional practice, especially the ministry of the clergy in parish pastoral care.⁴¹⁷ Until the 1950s, its pastoral tradition may be traced through such figures as Richard Baxter, George Herbert, John Keble, Edward King, Clement Rogers, Martin Thornton J.G. McKenzie, L. Dewar, H. Guntrip, Leslie Weatherhead, Frank Lake,

⁴¹⁶ For him, since the church is the eschatological and sacramental community who recognise the living God in the Event of Jesus Christ, climaxing in Easter and Pentecost, Christians will want to seek to embody this Gospel by a total commitment to God's Kingdom. They will therefore live in the 'glorious liberty' of intimate relationship with God and for the fulfilment of God's purpose for humanity (Liégé 1978a: 38). Their 'personal commitment to the story' would expect them to say, as quoted above, 'I meet God each day when I wake up. He is like an indispensable companion and I cannot imagine living for five minutes without him. He is the life of my life, the strength of my strength, the love of my love' (Liégé 1978a: 36). But in the Bybrook benefice of North Wiltshire, for example, an inherited and inherently stable way of rural church life is sustained by the reassurance of occasional church attendance, singing hymns, listening to Scripture readings and participation in the religious and social culture still evoked by 'the church'. Being 'a good Christian' means, in rough but fair caricature, living 'a decent life', attending church at Harvest Festival and Christmas and supporting activities like the church fete. It involves very little knowledge of or interest in theology, church history or the application of theological insight, such as God's bias to the poor, in practice. It is also true that sometimes there are individual exceptions to this generalisation, the faith of such people much more resembling the spirit if not necessarily the articulation of Liégé's approach to faith.

⁴¹⁷ See Chapter 8.2 above.

Norman Autton, and R.S. Lee. It tended to be atheoretical, a tradition of good pastoring, focussed on the individual and more concerned with allowing new human science and theological insight into pastoral practice than with establishing a pastoral theology.⁴¹⁸

A noticeable feature of British practical theology is its ‘repentance’ from the 1970s of having for twenty years or so been too focussed on the pastor/individual axis and on a psychological/counselling approach, at the expense of theology.⁴¹⁹ UK pastoral theology can hardly imagine any other trajectory for the history and development of its subject. For example, in her influential book, *Transforming Practice*, Elaine Graham describes her and others’ dissatisfaction with much recent pastoral/practical theology and the search for new paradigms. She notes the concern for an adequate definition. As often in British practical theology she refers to the recent dominance of therapeutically-derived models of care. It

is (sic) being displaced by a rediscovery of wider horizons: pastoral activity as entailing liturgy, preaching, Christian nurture, social action, community formation, spiritual direction’ and announces that the ‘shift from *pastoral care* to *pastoral practice* (Graham’s italics) will be a recurrent theme of this book’ (Graham 2002: 52).

She is writing in 1996. Yet all the features of her new paradigm are explicit in Liégé’s model as it developed in the 1950s. He wrote books about most of them. Had British theologians discovered Liégé, they could have discovered this ‘new’ paradigm sixty years ago. Liégé never fell into the trap of an uncritical acceptance of secular theories and therapies at the expense of theological models (Pattison 1988; Graham 2002: 46, 52-54) see also (Pattison 1993: 194ff.).

Liégé’s model included the human sciences but remained grounded in theology (Liégé 1971a). Whereas the norm saw them as ‘auxiliary sciences’ to aid *la pastorale*, (as for example, at the Fribourg congress in October, 1961), Liégé gave them an integrated place in the ‘*acte théologique*’, but no more than their place (Reynal 2004: 486). He feared that they might become the ‘new magisterium’ of the church, warning that they must not become ultimate references for a subject that must always ‘situate itself firmly in faith’ (Liégé 1971a: 68).

⁴¹⁸ Scotland adds its academic tradition of practical theology through Alexander Duff (missiology), James Whyte and James Blackie (a theology of practice).

⁴¹⁹ Critiques of this approach are found, for example, in the writings of Lambourne (1963, 1969, 1983); Selby (1983); Campbell (1972); Pattison et al (1994, 1998, 2005), Forrester (1997, 2000) and Lyall (1990, 1995).

Unaware of his existence, British pastoral theology missed Liégé's warnings, allowing both over-influence by the human sciences and over-focus on the individual.

3. British pastoral theology is not consistently prophetic

However, there were British prophets who also railed against over reliance on the human sciences and exaggerated individualism. Among them was R.A. Lambourne who emphasised the corporate nature of Christian faith (Lambourne 1963, 1969, 1971, 1983a, 1983b).⁴²⁰ Like Liégé, Lambourne thinks out his pastoral theology in the context of obedience to God's will. This is not something British practical theology habitually addresses. But Lambourne's pastoral focus is on neighbourhood pastoral care. There are also British writers like John Robinson (1960, 1963, 1965), David Jenkins (1976, 1987, 1988a, 1988b), Monica Furlong (2000) or Ken Leech (2001) who ardently desire a radical reform and renewal of church praxis according to theological principles. But these somewhat lone-voiced prophets are not, like Liégé, aspiring to develop a systematic pastoral theology on the basis of the lived experience of the church.

A reading of Liégé exposes the seriously underdeveloped capacity of British practical theology to guide and govern the praxis of the churches according to theological criteria. This does not seem to be a task the churches expect of pastoral theologians and accordingly they do not commission it, or rarely. Academic practical theologians may well not see it their task. There is no popular clamour for it. No one is obliged to respond to reports like *Faith in the Countryside* (1986) in practice. The institutional churches have no authority structures for ensuring that the praxis of the church is shaped by the criteria of practical theology. So on the whole it is not. Cultural drivers displace theological imperatives. Psychological need, especially for comfort and security, and sociological influences shape its praxis instead.

Liégé is clear that examining the praxis of the church via practical theology is a necessary task for the church without which it is distorted by cultural factors. Liégé therefore sees the evangelisation of religion as a priority (Liégé 1965a). He challenged practice based on culture, comfort and religious needs rather than pastoral theology.

⁴²⁰ See Appendix 6 for more on Lambourne

Liégé would be impressed by the British churches' infinite activities and good works involving millions of people: work for charities, retreats, political action for justice, involvement in the arts, practical schemes of pastoral care, deep personal devotion expressed in a myriad ways, work with youth, the disadvantaged, the elderly or the needy, multi-faith activities, involvement in education, health care and the family – the list could be much longer. The Church of England publicly expresses itself in a liturgical and devotional tradition of great richness, in family and community celebration of life events, the cycle of the seasons, national and international events, even taking a lead on certain issues by judicious use of its place in the Establishment. It maintains a presence in every parish that aims to remind parishioners of the possibility and mystery of God, not being loudly fervent in its evangelism but quietly assuming the possession of, in a sort of Winnicott sense, a good-enough Christian faith. In short, its culture is rich, morally commendable, reassuring, deeply meaningful to those involved and to many beyond them.

But what Liégé would miss is the necessary coupling of this with what might be called the faith of St. Paul. The faith nurturing this culture is, by his lights, underdeveloped. There is a tension between its evident worthwhileness and whether, in Liégé's terms, it can be theologically defined as true to the tradition rooted in the Gospels.

Liégé's challenge is, thus, to have a stronger view than is normative in the culture of British churches of what Christian discipleship entails. When Professor David Jenkins (2002) was appointed Bishop of Durham, his asking of fundamental practical theological questions was widely criticised as not the job of a bishop. For Liégé it is a basic vocation of every Christian.

Anglican culture emphasises the freedom of the individual to interpret their understanding of being a Christian in their own way. Whereas Liégé believes being a Christian entails learning and outcomes, Anglicans prefer to understand that being a Christian means different things to different people in different places and that its contribution is to allow the differences to be tolerated first, without specifically demanding too much. Liégé's challenge here is to ask where such gentle tolerance has become bland. Liégé assumes faith is a

response to an initiative taken by God. Anglicans tend to assume that faith is 'what I happen to find that I believe'.

Liégé starts with the nature of faith. Anglicans start with 'going to church' either as a child or later, because attracted by some aspect of 'going to church'. Many nominal Anglicans hold an even more tolerant position, summarised by the attitude, 'you don't have to go to church to be a Christian'. Here faith has been reduced to something like the attitude 'do no harm to people and try to be kind'. Many parishioners would be offended in their faith if their vicar were to challenge this. Indeed to go to church with no faith at all is often regarded as acceptable. Anglicans often feel, and often rightly, that those who attempt to attract attention to their faith are counter-productive witnesses. For Liégé, to choose faith is to make a difficult choice. In the contemporary crisis of faith this may mean a catholic church of quality rather than quantity (1961a: 43). In Liégé's theology you cannot separate 'ideas', 'practice' and 'spirituality'. Liégé was himself converted as a teenager. Why should not teenagers or adults be converted as he was?

Liégé assumes being a Christian is by definition a committed ecclesial endeavour. Anglicans accept that individual piety is sufficient. Catholics belong, as it were, to a crowd surging forward to a common goal: to Catholics, being a felt part of that community, with a common tradition, authority, liturgy and corporate identity seems basic. Anglicans may or may not be aware that they too have these aspects in common but their Christian identity is usually more individualistic than essentially corporate. Anglicans rejoice in autonomy, difference, tolerance, and acceptance, but from Liégé's point of view can appear complacent about putting faith into practice.

4. British pastoral theology is not catechetic

Ballard (1999: 306) admits as much, pointing to 'the dominance of the pastoral in contemporary practical theology, rather than the other classical fields of homiletics, liturgics and catechetics'. Liégé and his colleagues' attention to catechetics has no counterpart in Anglican pastoral theology. The SPCK *New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies* (Carr 2002) has no entry for catechetics. It uses the word, in explaining, under its terse entry on practical

theology, that clergy traditionally study homiletics, liturgics, catechetics and poimenics, but says no more than this (Carr 2002: 276). It contains no theological discussion of catechetics as a pastoral issue. In the Church of England an influential report in 1988, *Children in the Way*, adopted a 'pilgrimage model' that emphasised all-age learning and all-age worship. But there is no Anglican equivalent to the intense catechetical struggles that have pervaded France from the 1930s and raged particularly fiercely during the 1950s and 1960s (Adler and Voegelien 1981, *passim*). One Anglican academic, Leslie Francis (1981), has worked in this field, mostly on a project basis involving specific psycho-socio-educational research, and in nothing like the depth of his French catechetical counterparts.⁴²¹ An educational specialist, John Hull (1985), has written excellently, from a multi-disciplinary human science perspective, on the factors which prevent Christian adults from learning. And Michael Jacobs (1988), more associated with care and counselling, has nevertheless written on the threshold of adult catechetics. In particular he has built on James Fowler's 'faith development' research to link maturing in faith with human maturation (Fowler 1981). This is an area sharing and developing Liégé's concern for the nurture of a truly adult faith.

However catechetics is not central to British practical theology. When Ballard and Pritchard (1996: 5) introduce the content practical theology, they mention the topic of growing 'in understanding of the life of discipleship' (Liégé's catechetics) in passing, within an expanding context and range of interests.

For Liégé catechetics, mission and theology are inseparable. *Parole et Mission* was founded for the renewal of missionary theology, for changing practice on the ground. The French church managed catechesis nationally. British practical theologians sometimes write as if they do not themselves know whom they expect to put their ideas into practice, for example, Forrester (2000: 203-220) on mission. Liégé was able to draw on the church's catechetical structures to organise his endeavours.

⁴²¹ See for example: *His Spirit is With Us: A project approach to Christian nurture (how 5-11 year olds can learn to become part of a worshipping church)* Collins 1984; *Rural Anglicanism – a future for young Christians?* Collins 1985; *Teenagers and the Church: a Profile of Church-going Youth in the 1980s* Collins 1984; *Partnership in Rural Education: Church Schools and Teacher attitudes*, Collins 1986 London; *Religion in the Primary School*, Collins 1987; also a number of co-authored pamphlets.

The priorities of evangelism and praxis informed by theology entailed catechetics for Liégé. The adage 'you do not know what you do not know' is apt here: the British churches do not know that they do not know how important catechesis is to their enterprise. Obvious to Liégé, it is not apparent here that without serious engagement with the complex issues of its transmission, it cannot be expected that Christians will reach maturity of faith either spiritually, theologically, psychologically, liturgically, corporately or in practical response to social or global issues such as justice (Liégé 1955d, 1957b, 1958b, 1958c, 1960a etc.). To put it sharply, British Christians are generally not, by Liégé's standards, remotely mature in any of these respects, and without taking catechesis much more seriously it would be impossible to expect they would be (Liégé 1958b).

Why is this? British pastoral theology does not ask catechetical questions. Is it perhaps more concerned with thoughts than practice? It lacks a vision of what a fully adult faith looks like; integrated, knowledgable, emotionally intelligent, prayerful, eucharistic and linked to action. Lacking such a vision, it misses Liégé's starting point; therefore catechetical questions do not arise. British churches manage without the need to prioritise faith development, satisfactorily driven by other needs, not necessarily religious, let alone Christian. They tend to accept whatever faith their members happen to have. Maturation and integration of the praxis of faith is not a vital issue for most congregations.

All Liégé's concerns flow as tributaries into the river of catechesis. How is the lived experience of the church to be one in which Christians are nurtured and matured in faith? How is the call to lifelong conversion into Christ to be realised in practice? How are Christians to relate to the culture around them? What does it mean to be a holy congregation? How is the sacramental life of the church to find practical expression in a congregation and issue in appropriate missionary, pastoral and political response to the world? What resources are available to assist individuals and congregations to grow in Christ? How are congregations to become 'living stones'? How can biblical scholarship and theological ideas be put to the service of maturing the faith of individuals and congregations? How are insights from the human sciences to be incorporated into the transmission of faith? These are all primary questions for the pastoral theology of Liégé, but generally not in Britain.

Liégé and British practical theologians make different assumptions. For Liégé these questions are central, but in Britain they appear as confessional; questions for the churches themselves to answer; the questions of the already committed. They are not the critical questions appropriate to academics in a secular university.

The challenge of Liégé's theology is that it asks British theologians for responses to his questions. To answer them requires further research, and accessible language, able to nurture congregations.

5. British pastoral theology is not systematic

Ballard (1999: 298) writes, not just of pastoral and practical theology, that: 'Under Anglican influence, English theology has largely been historical and philosophical rather than systematic or practical'. That and why Liégé's pastoral theology *is* systematic, though not 'a system' is explained above (p.243). This distinction is important. Woodward and Pattison rightly argue that contemporary practical theology is unsystematic, and 'flexible and provisional' because continuously re-engaging 'with the fragmented realities and changes of the contemporary world' and so attempting to provide 'shafts of light' rather than 'final answers' (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 14).⁴²²

Liégé presupposes that the criteria for theology are given by the unchanging gospel message. Like Karl Rahner's *Theology of Pastoral Action* (1968), Liégé's work can be applied to concrete situations but does not take the final step in the necessary four-fold process required to make decisions which must be worked out locally.⁴²³ Liégé's work has to do with the first

⁴²² A good example of Liégé's readiness to emphasise the provisional would be his handling of anthropology in Liégé (1962b) Here the human scientists J.-M. Pohier, A. Plé, D. Dubarlé and the philosopher E. Borne, among others, had engaged with biblical scholars such as Jean Daniélou and A.-M. Henry about the meaning of the kerygma. Liégé points to the need to recognise that human anthropology is at present 'in full mutation' (1962b: 325). It is possible to put in place 'only some provisional elements' of 'anthropology's critical synthesis' (1962b: 325). He warns of an over confident kerygmatics that, without a sufficiently critical edge, 'is nourished by illusions' (1962b: 325-326). Reynal (2004: 309-310) discusses the significance of this Colloquy.

⁴²³ It is evidence of the influence of Liégé and French pastoral theology that in his Preface to this book, the American Daniel Morrissey, OP chooses to use the French word '*pastorale*', as he explains in a footnote, 'to express pastoral action or pastoral activity. Each Christian is responsible for a particular *pastorale*, a particular

three steps: a re-thinking of the basic Christian kerygma to render it communicable for his times; the correlation of the gospel to contemporary culture and society in an interdisciplinary communication that is as much homo- as theo-centric; and weighing the recent pastoral experience of the church, including recent experiments in community, liturgy, education, the religious life and style of witness. The fourth step of deciding on and implementing action must depend on cultural and political context and be realized in local churches.⁴²⁴ On the other hand, his aspirations for pastoral theology's role are broader than Forrester's counsel that practical theologians should confine themselves to fragmentary offerings (1997, 2000).

Alastair Campbell addresses the nature of practical theology in a seminal and well-known article (Campbell 2000).⁴²⁵ He writes that, by the turn of the last century 'the discipline became divorced from important new movements in systematic theology and biblical studies' and he explains why (Campbell 2000: 79). Liégé was a systematician, in the avant-garde of biblical scholarship as well, whose pastoral theology was wrought out of systematic theology, and given his passionate output for this issue from 1950, Campbell's judgement is surprising: 'There appears to have been little interest in recent theological writing in the construction of a comprehensive definition of practical theology' (Campbell 2000: 80). A discovery of Liégé would have offered him a rich, contrasting view. It is odd that Campbell notes with enthusiasm Bonhoeffer's 'celebrated' question of what Christianity really is for us today, and laments Hiltner's failure to respond to it. But Bonhoeffer's question precisely expresses the ethos of post-war theology in France, and Liégé's entire endeavour was a response to it.

Campbell (2000: 83) starts his quest for re-definition of practical theology by asking 'why the things that are done by Christians are done, and what their relationship is to things done by

mission in which he realizes God in his own society. Because the term is so apt for the subject matter of this book it is used frequently; it is not a Rahnerian term, however' (Morrissey 1968: Footnote 3).

⁴²⁴ Both before Vatican II and since pope John Paul II's post 1978 revisionism the local church has been given insufficient significance. The Council of Trent emphasised only the universal church. Vatican II renewed the significance of the local church, dismantled the former absolutising language about the church and remembered the provisional character of theology and the possibility of changing its norms. Liégé was part of the team that fought for this renewal. He would not have appreciated the back-peddalling of the curia in the last thirty years.

⁴²⁵ Originally written in 1972 it has been published in Forrester (ed.) 1990 and in Campbell (2000).

non-Christians?’ This is a very difficult question to respond to. Do we really know why anyone does anything? Liégé might prefer to ask what are the things *to* be done by Christians? What does faith mean for their praxis? For what they claim to do as Christians may amount to heresy, a failure to be faithful, and practical theology is the critical discipline needed to decide..

When Campbell (2000: 84) goes on to relate practical theology to ‘the whole economy of salvation’ he is close to Liégé’s preoccupations of the 1940s and 1950s (Liégé 1946a, 1954d). He states that today ‘missions’ can be seen not as on the periphery of the discipline but can ‘move into the centre of its concern’. It was precisely to encourage this theological move that Liégé and his colleagues sought to found a journal in 1946!⁴²⁶ The first edition addresses Campbell’s issue precisely.⁴²⁷

It would seem to follow that had Campbell discovered Liégé he would have written a very different article. He would hardly have chosen the theology of Thurneysen as a pivotal case study illustration, because his ideas are so narrow and weak in comparison to Liégé’s that he, rather than Thurneysen, would have helped Campbell take the discussion further and deeper.⁴²⁸ Liégé (1955b, 1957a, 1960b, 1971a, 1977a) addresses the issue of how pastoral theology and the rest of theology relate in several key articles and his pastoral theological method is worked out in conjunction with it.⁴²⁹ Equipped with some knowledge of Liégé, it

⁴²⁶ in 1953 which finally was allowed to appear as *Parole et Mission* in 1958 (though the seeds were sown in 1946) (Henry 1980: 101f.).

⁴²⁷ In the editorial Liégé and his three colleagues explain that the reason they have chosen to put ‘mission’ in the title at a time when other journals, embarrassed by colonialism, are dropping the term is for ‘strictly theological reasons’. It is, they say, a key word, used by the apostles. It is theologically important to link the invisible mission, the eternal mission of the Word and the Holy Spirit, with the visible mission of Jesus, the apostles and the church. Its aim is, precisely, to put thinking about *la théologie missionnaire* into the centre of theology, given the necessity to relate the whole tradition of the church to the realities of life today and ‘all that animates current movements and thinking’ (Liégé 1958).

⁴²⁸ In short, the way theologians like Chenu, Congar and Liégé interlink the Word of God, incarnation, Christology and the historical and social dimensions of the human situation in terms of individual and ecclesial faith and praxis goes far beyond Thurneysen’s work and avoids the pitfalls exposed by Campbell. Unlike Hiltner, Liégé never falls into the trap of pragmatism. Neither is he seduced by secular disciplines. Liégé’s pastoral theology is not, like Thurneysen’s, ‘subservient to biblical and historical theology’ or ‘effectively subsumed’ ‘under dogmatic theology’ (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 81, 83). It works in partnership with them. He gets much further than Thurneysen in analysing this relationship and his analysis is still part of the debate today.

⁴²⁹ Not least because he had colleagues, notably Jean Daniélou, not to mention the Roman Curia and many bishops, who disagreed with his views and who had to be taken on at a high level of theological sophistication.

seems unlikely that Campbell would have covered the church-world relationship just with reference to a WCC document, Fletcher, Robinson and Lehman.⁴³⁰

Neither did Liégé succumb to the 'liberal optimism of the 1960s with its confidence in secular institutions' (Campbell 2002: 84). It seems reasonable to conclude that both Campbell's article and Graham's analysis would have been differently written if they had encountered Liégé (Graham 2002).

British pastoral and practical theology is notoriously difficult to chart (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 414-421). Liégé's provides a framework to hold together many of the domains of British practical theology. Under its umbrella one can put most of its aspects and also some important British theological writing (e.g. H.A. Williams) that would not be classified as pastoral by its authors.

This might be of particular interest in Britain where the strands lie so separated. Liégé covers the spectrum of what is developed somewhere, but rather autonomously, in Britain.⁴³¹

⁴³⁰ Liégé was working on this subject in depth throughout the 1950s and his writings, along with those of his colleagues, disproportionately influenced Vatican II, whose Constitution on the church and the world lies as much, if not much more, behind the 'option for the poor' and Liberation theology as anything produced by the names mentioned by Campbell (Liégé 1957c, 1957l, 1957r, 1961t, 1962a, 1962o etc.),

⁴³¹ He attends to the rational-liberal concerns for well grounded epistemology and hermeneutics through to the liturgical and devotional concerns of subjects like the Eucharist and holiness which he also wrote books about. He unites Lambourne's concern for corporateness with Selby's concern for politics. He unites the insights of biblical, patristic and Thomist scholars with the philosophy of Blondel, Maritain, Mounier and Bergson. Like Dan Hardy he is as concerned for the flourishing of the Church as he is for the well-being of society and God's world. He is concerned with both adolescence and adulthood, and with the political and social as much as with the individual. For example, his work takes some account of the psychological, like R.S. Lee or H.A. Williams. He does not develop it much, though his pupils like Audinet do and become famous for it, but he is concerned to examine sociological perspectives, like R. Gill and E. Graham. He is central to thinking concerned with catechetical, pedagogic and andragogic issues of the transmission and development of faith through life like L. Francis, M. Jacobs, J. Hull. He is involved in issues of ministry, ministerial formation and pastoral care, like W. Carr. He is central to the debate about the nature of pastoral theology as an academic discipline, like A. Campbell and P. Ballard. He is strongly involved in the theological trends that prefigure Liberation Theology, concerned with justice and God's action in society, like S. Pattison, K. Leech and L. Green. He is concerned with theological perspectives on culture, like E. Lartey. He is writes about Christian community, like R. A. Lambourne and J. Vanier. He writes extensively on spirituality and spiritual formation, like G. Hughes. He writes about moral issues like O. Odonovan and J. Dominionian. He writes about mission like Croft. He writes about a great deal else as well.

He is also interesting as a charismatic type like David Watson, Anthony Bloom, Trevor Huddleston or the leading promoters of the Alpha Course. For thirty years he surfed France engaged in an evangelistic pastoral ministry of chaplaincy, preaching, teaching, conference and retreat-giving and counselling. Like John Robinson or David Jenkins he was often in the limelight of controversy and in the media. Like a generalist theologian such as John Austin Baker or Richard Harries he was widely read in accessible books presenting Christian faith

His achievement invites practical theologians to examine how their subject hangs together in Britain. It is understandable that specialists are separated by their different interests. But Liégé takes it for granted that theological coherence must be established by bringing the disparate concerns of practical theology into a framework. For Liégé, it is obvious that all his concerns are entailed by the theological logic of his faith. In Britain no accepted map exists to relate these concerns together. Is this lack of synthesis not surprising? Why does no one connect the concerns of Ballard, Graham, Carr, Pattison and Jacobs and even relate them to the interests of Hardy, Ford and Young not normally considered practical theologians?

Hardy is like Liégé in being a ‘big picture’ ecclesologist who writes about the church and its mission in relation to fundamental theological principle, historical, cultural and social context and theologically holistically, for example, in relation to worship, the eucharist and other sacraments, spiritual formation, holiness, biblical studies, salvation and the breadth of Christian doctrine (Hardy 1996, 2001). But does Dan Hardy consider himself primarily as a practical theologian? Liégé assumes as normative for a pastoral theologian to assume the backdrop of the entire theological tradition and be concerned with its fundamental themes of evangelism, salvation, worship, corporate church life dedicated to holiness, and God’s Kingdom as announced and incarnated by Jesus and continued through Pentecost and the church. Practical theologians in Britain make no such assumption.

7. Some constructive suggestions for British practical theology in the light of this Liégéian critique

1. Make a map of British practical theology and see what it reveals

Ballard (1999: 306) reinforces this point when he speaks of the increasingly recognised need ‘to draw these strands [of practical theology] together so they can mutually inform one

in the broadest terms. But he was also, and increasingly, an administrative academic caught up in the running of a large university institution. Like Hugh Bishop CR, the Superior of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield for fifteen years either side of the 1960s, he had a private ministry to the highest in the land, and even abroad, that few people knew about. All in all his sphere of influence, his activities, concerns and writings cover a vast canvas.

another, not least in recognising the cross disciplinary nature of all branches of practical theology.’

There is no overarching volume that coordinates the endeavours of British practical theology, seeing what they amount to as a whole, how and where they fit together, and where they do not. If British practical theology had a fuller sense of its own geography, it could make more strategic decisions about what research areas were neglected and what issues and subjects were in need of further attention.

2. Make a diagnosis of what is the situation to which the gospel is good news

Tillich’s diagnosis of ‘existential estrangement’ and his suggestion of Jesus as the ‘New Being’ offered a systematic treatment of the question in the contemporary human condition to which the gospel was the answer. This simple method of correlation has been superseded by more hermeneutically sophisticated revised methods of correlation. Today’s postmodern context works against grand existential solutions. Nevertheless, a reading of Liégé reminds British practical theology of the need to pay close pastoral attention to finding an accessible and contemporary language to express the shock of the Gospel as good news not just concerning special and particular pastoral situations but in terms of general applicability and relevance. Writers who get near this at the moment are Richard Holloway and Giles Fraser. In British terms they follow a tradition through William Temple, John Robinson and David Jenkins.

3. Organise parish life on the basis of theological criteria

British practical theology, recent church reports and individual analysts are strong on writing about the place of the church in contemporary society (Ballard 1996; Carr 1992; Ecclestone 1988; Hardy 1996, 2001; Warren 1992). The essays in Hardy’s *Finding the Church* (2001), for example, are brilliant theological assessments. Alas, they are far too difficult to be able to affect parish life on the ground. There is very little expectation in the British churches that theology will be put to work in a parish and make a difference in and to practice. Most parishes bring little critical practical theological analysis to their work. This, at least, is the

experience of the present writer based on three decades of extensive pastoral experience (Bradbury 1989, 2000).⁴³² Liégé would be greatly dismayed by the lack of interest and engagement. British practical theologians should take up the cause. It is a leadership issue.

4. Think in terms of cradle to grave corporate Christian formation and take catechetics much more seriously

The Church of England and the other British churches must take catechetics, in Liégé's sense, seriously, in order to realise mature local Christian communities of the kind Liégé has in mind in books like *Être-ensemble* (Liégé 1975a) and *Allez Enseignez* (1979a). John Hull is one British practical theologian who understands this, and has pointed out the problems (Hull 1985).⁴³³ Again it is a leadership problem.

5. Forge accessible discourse – translate philosophical abstractions into ordinary language

Liégé was an academic, like Dan Hardy. Unlike him, Liégé writes extensively, especially in his eight books, for a popular readership, especially for young people. He translates his academic scholarship into language that is very widely accessible. He writes for the academic community. But he writes far more for the general public. Elaine Graham's publishers claim her book *Transforming Practice* (2002) will be of interest to students and those in Christian ministry (the back cover): they will need to be exceptionally well versed in philosophical abstractions if they are to make much sense of and find practical help from Chapters five, six and seven.

Similarly, Hardy's brilliant and inspiring writing on the sociality of evangelical Christianity is hard to understand without a highly advanced education (Hardy 2001: 79–94). Is the message something like this? 'Humans share many tough challenges and hardships, but life in the church can console as long as it truly expresses the meaning of baptism and eucharist'.

⁴³² See also Fraser (2006).

⁴³³ See also Bradbury (1989: 72-83).

It is hard to say. But Liégé would want Hardy to restate the nub of his message for ordinary people.

Graham (2002) and Hardy (2001), or Carr (1989) in what was supposed to be an accessible pastoral tool, his book *The Pastor as Theologian*, may address the problems of the times, but their writings are too abstract, too difficult, too theoretical, and insufficiently illustrated with concrete examples to be of practical use in a parish. Their use in that context would depend on the advanced skills of a highly educated mediator and this is a serious limitation. Liégé assumed it was his vocation as a pastoral theologian to write for the general public. He stands as a challenge to British academic theologians who, for whatever reason, do not express themselves in a popular and accessible discourse as well as a rarefied academic one.

6. Establish a vision of what the church is for and why, and how this should be expressed in practice

What do British Christians want churches to be and to do? Contemporary British practical theologians in the academy and the institutional churches may be asked: What is your vision of what your praxis would look like if it were all it could be, ‘firing on all cylinders’, its mission in full spate and truly accomplishing its vocation? What praxis should replace that of ‘the age of Christianity’ and reform today’s church? For example, is Establishment appropriate? It is bound to be a vision of local eucharistic community in which prayer, theology and action, for example for justice, are lined up and integrated. This presupposes the catechetical initiatives described above. The Churches show themselves willing to take initiatives in mission, as was shown by the ‘Decade of Evangelism’. These can have little impact until church members themselves are far more mature in their faith along Liégé’s lines. As Timothy Radcliffe OP, former Master of the Dominicans, puts it in a passage that could easily have been penned by Liégé:

All the Christian Churches have in recent years been making a big push to spread the gospel. Certainly in the Catholic Church there has been a lot of talk about evangelization. Dioceses and parishes have drawn up ambitious plans to let people know about our faith. Usually these have had little effect. We talk about love, freedom, happiness, and so on, but unless our Churches are seen really to be places in which people are free and courageous, then why should anyone believe us? Jesus

spoke with authority, not like the scribes and Pharisees, and his authority was surely his manifest freedom and joy. His words made an impression because they were embedded in a life that was striking, reaching out to strangers, feasting with prostitutes, afraid of nobody (Radcliffe 2005: 2-3).

This is a key passage for understanding Liégé. It evokes both the spirit and message of his life and theology. It is because he believes this so ardently that he devotes his pastoral theology to the endeavour of helping the church and its communities, congregations and individual members become more mature in their faith. British churches need to use their practical theologians to catch a vision like this and work to put it into practice.

British churches engage in the reworking of doctrine, but much less in the analysis of practice based on theological criteria (Doctrine in the Church of England 1938; Christian Belief 1970; Believing in the Church 1981). Church members might agree that this was a worthy aspiration and that the church is less than it should be, but would generally have little stomach for the task of separating out faith from culture, religion from faith. This would be too exposing. As one parishioner in Wiltshire pleaded with the present writer, in discussing the possible need to adapt the church to the modern world, 'all I ask is that you change nothing in the church till I die'.

7. Find out more about francophone practical theology

Whatever reasons there might have been for French pastoral theology to remain unknown in Britain during the 1950s, today there is more opportunity for cross-Channel dialogue. British research would do well to investigate Canadian and French practical theology more than in the past and thereby gain an enlarged perspective and fresh ideas which, precisely because they come from a contrasting context, may add value and insight.

8. Conclusions

1. Liégé's model of pastoral theology exposes as insufficient the British diagnosis of the contemporary human needs, questions, issues and practical problems in response to which the gospel is 'good news'. He would seek to know where that

diagnosis was addressed in a popular and accessible articulation of Christian faith for today.

2. For him a set of fundamental catechetical questions would follow. He would ask with what discourse this 'good news' was communicated catechetically in Britain to enable the transmission of this faith in practice. In other words, what were our catechetical aims, assumptions, methods and practices? He would be interested in the initiatives being taken in Britain to enable the lifelong growing in faith of adults, how congregations were being helped deepen their corporate faith, how our pastoral theology helped them in practice, for example, to engage with the political, moral, and social issues of the day.
3. He would expect practical theology to be diagnosing, with the help of pastoral theological criteria, where the churches were inappropriately colluding with culture and social expectation, to the detriment of their authentic life and witness. He would be interested in how British practical theology was taking the prophetic lead in church reform, helping the church adapt to what it needs to be today to conform to the gospel. Indeed, he would be seeking to find the practical theologians' vision for the church of tomorrow and to discover the ways in which they were equipping the faithful to realise such a church in practice.
4. He would be interested in what missionary initiatives were being taken to develop a discourse that took pluralism seriously but articulated the 'good news' in relation to it. In the context of interfaith dialogue he would be asking what criteria were being developed to balance faithfulness to Christ with openness to the divine and to the grace mediated by other religions (Liégé 1969b, 1971i).
5. British practical theology is, famously, 'all periphery with no centre' (Pattison and Lynch 2004: 414). Why? This description is not often examined critically but more taken for granted. Might it gain from having a centre or what might its centre look like? British practical theologians seem willing to let this discipline be a meeting room in which diverse conversations are encouraged (Pattison and

Lynch 2004: 411-412). The role of practical theologians is to hold the ring, provide methods, ask questions and contribute some, always fragmentary, ideas from their own, nearly always highly specialised, particular area of interest and research. Because there happens to be a universally agreed syllabus or approach, it seems we are expected to accept that practical theology is a diffuse and fragmented subject not merely as a description, true enough in itself, but as an assumption that a systematic approach with a controlling centre and clear paths to the periphery is unlikely to be helpful. We see this diffusion as appropriate to, or inevitable in postmodern, pluralistic culture. Indeed, welcoming conversation partners to an interdisciplinary hermeneutical round table is our core business. The point is not that our assumptions are mistaken, but that they shape our outlook. In short, there is no systematic British pastoral theology on offer and this is no coincidence. Liégé's systematic framework challenges this assumption. It does not address every subject, but it offers a vantage point from which to look at any issue. It is more than a method for arranging meeting room conversations. Its centre is the Word of God, its periphery the praxis of the church in the context of the world. It is an evangelistic pastoral theology because of its fundamental belief that God's character has been and is being revealed and that human beings are created to inhabit relationship with God within the church, itself a divine initiative, as the basis and fulfilment of their lives, as well as their sustaining fuel. In the service of this divine initiative pastoral theology is called to do its (fragmentary) best to articulate what the praxis of this faith, as yet abstract, or a matter of possibilities, past mistakes and current issues, should be today, from the universal level of the world church to the most local level of individuals-in-Christian-community.

6. Liégé offers a guiding perspective for pastoral theology's task. He would be interested in the specialist research of any British practical theologian. His challenge and interest to British practical theology is not that he questions the subject matter of its agenda. It is that it so often seems to address this agenda dislocated from helping the church of the gospel, the church's reason for being, to realise this gospel in practice. It would puzzle Liégé that in Britain the core

task is being attempted so piecemeal, eclectically, haphazardly, so dependent on individual people happening to have particular interests. Indeed it is the product of just such diverse individual initiatives making it a largely 'hit and miss' enterprise, with nothing to coordinate it and no attempt to think in terms of the whole. So what we take for granted as inevitable, that practical theology is a diffuse, multithreaded, chaotic, largely unsorted collection of insights and interests, appears to Liégé as a strange failure of British pastoral theological responsibility to do its job for the church. For if at least some scholarly practical theologians are not engaged in the highly skilled tasks of thinking out and themselves embodying, what the current praxis of the church needs to be, how can local congregations know what decisions to take, and how to think and act faithfully for today?

7. In Britain we do not conceive of pastoral theology as Liégé does. His assumption is that it is a crucial imperative for the church, without which it simply cannot function as itself. We do not think of pastoral theology as offering the decisive reasons for radically reforming the church. We do not assume the fundamental importance of having pastoral theological ideas waiting in the wings, as Liégé's were in 1959, so that when something like a Third Vatican Council is called (or even General Synod) we can be in the vanguard, arguing for the reforms suggested by the criteria of pastoral theology for the praxis of the church. The basis of the meaning of church life and faith remains largely theologically unexamined. The institutional churches themselves do not commission pastoral theology of Liégé's kind, though occasional Reports about particular topics may include a section on theology.⁴³⁴
8. Liégé defined pastoral theology in 1957 as 'the theological science of ecclesial action (Liégé 1957a)'. His pastoral theology shows how he went about this task and what it makes possible. British pastoral theology has no Liégé. But given the reference point of Liégé, we can see why our assumptions and unasked questions may seem odd outside our perspective. The suggestion is that to give some

⁴³⁴ For example, *Faith in the Countryside* (1990) has a Chapter entitled 'Theological Reflections'.

thought to Liégé's approach to pastoral theology gives us some significant questions: for example, what is our theology of church reform? What is our theology of the praxis of the church? Only when we have answered these questions can we be clear about the appropriate role of pastoral theology in the change process, not a claim British practical theologians can make at the moment.

9. Liégé would be puzzled by practical theology in Britain today. It would seem over-focussed on the pastoral care of the individual at the expense of reflecting on the corporate task of the church. It would seem to underplay the place of the church in the divine scheme of things, and what the church needs to be to incarnate its vocation. He would be puzzled that it makes little attempt to help the church conform to the gospel, accepting an extreme degree of blur between culture and religion in church life, which to him leaves dormant and unrealised most of the vitality and potential of Christian faith. He would be puzzled by how little it focusses on the blessings of 'life together' in Christ and that it seems almost to have abandoned evangelism. Why, he would wonder, neglect some of the finest pastoral theology such as that of the Tübingen and Innsbruck Schools? And why it is often written at such a high level of theoretical abstraction as to be unusable by congregations? Most surprising of all, why does it almost entirely neglect the complexities of catechesis and mission, the issues of how faith is transmitted, which lie at the heart of pastoral theology.

8. Liégé's legacy

Liégé stands as a challenge to the postmodern declaration that Grand Narratives no longer make sense. The story of Revelation's unfolding, culminating in the Word made Flesh, made such sense to Liégé that he lived his life on the basis of it. If practical theology were to abandon this narrative it would have no discourse in which to do its business. Some theologians, like Cupitt (1984), advocate an end to Liégé's kind of traditional theology. Perhaps Liégé has theological value in being foolishness to the postmodernists and a stumbling block to their theologians. He expressed his faith so that boy scouts could

understand it clearly. Can postmodern theologians express their faith so clearly? If not, how will the scouts be addressed? If the writings of St Paul can still be read and understood in churches then so can the theology of Liégé.

Liégé significantly developed pastoral theology as the church's discipline for examining the action of the church. Through Liégé it became recognised in France as an integral theological discipline. And this recognition coincided with the pastoral emphases and thrust of the Council. Just as dogmatic theology exists to elaborate the dogmas of the church, and historical theology exists to elaborate the theological ideas of the church in their historical context, so pastoral theology's purpose, in Liégé's understanding, is to provide the discipline that shows the church how to act. It elaborates what the Christian revelation of God through Christ, and Christian salvation and Christian fulfilment mean in practice for action today for each Christian disciple and community, and as the universal Church. It addresses itself to particular contexts. It draws on all the theological and secular disciplines as required that throw light on whatever is being considered (Reynal 2004: 485).

Liégé was original in developing and emphasising the 'today' of the church's experience and was one of the principle theologians to show in what way and how the praxis of the church is a true locus of theology. Just as the biblical theologians place themselves amongst biblical and biblically related texts, so pastoral theology is done in a new place: the lived experience of the church as it is actually happening today. So it could never be a case of abstracting tips or practical recipes from mere principles. It analyses in detail the church's experience in a given situation today and, from there it develops its conversation with Tradition, dogma and current practice. A critique emerges in the light of the gospel and contemporary knowledge and insight, that leads to renewed theory and practice.

Drawing on his Christological and ecclesiological principles, Liégé developed a set of criteria as a reference point to help direct and stimulate church action. Just as the church can be doctrinally in error, so does it err in its practice which must be 'true' not just efficacious. Pastoral theology is a science precisely because it researches into truth and has instruments for doing so (Reynal 2004: 483).

Liégé was original in his way of working with other disciplines. He privileges church history, the human sciences and certain philosophies: He always makes a critical reading of the relevant history of whatever is his subject. History, he believes, releases creativity and imagination about the present, not least how it has become conditioned. He is less at ease with the human sciences, though he draws on them and is clear they are needed. He uses them especially at the start of an analysis, to establish the 'real life issues' of the situation to be theologically examined. He then uses them during the theological elaboration to mediate between the language of belief and that of culture. He uses them in the conclusions of an analysis to ensure the practical orientations for church action are appropriate in today's culture. Unlike some others he did not see them as 'auxiliary' sciences but he was concerned that they should not be over-influential, as if a new secular magisterium.⁴³⁵ They needed to take their place in the dialogue but not become ultimate reference, which belonged to faith alone. Liégé recognised that all theology draws on philosophies, especially systematic theology. His own pastoral theology privileged philosophies of action, of the person, and of history, especially existentialism and phenomenology (Reynal 2004: 486).

In being the prime mover in the creation of the UER, Liégé went far in ensuring his own legacy by creating the institution which would carry forward and evolve his pastoral theology. Today it is the leading national institutional influence on pastoral theology and catechetics (Reynal 2004: 514). The debt of Canadian *praxéologie* and of Vatican II to Liégé has already been acknowledged above.

9. Liégé's own life as an embodied, evangelist- pastoral theologian provides an interesting recent example of a significant model of Christian discipleship

Chapter two explained that Liégé recognised the need to be steeped in the reality of faith in order to communicate the faith. Long *convivence* is necessary. He knew that verbal preaching was useless unless the preacher lived their faith. Preachers can only preach what they live. Like Henri Nouwen, he believed that unless theologians are authentic in their faith they cannot translate their ideas into living catechesis, for him, as important as academic articulation.

⁴³⁵ Reynal (2004: 486) gives further details in footnote 1785

The relation of lived holiness to the theologian's task is an issue made explicit in the work of one of the twentieth century's most influential Roman Catholic theologians, Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988) and analysed by Victoria S. Harrison (2001).⁴³⁶ Harrison shows that Von Balthasar links this relation through his understanding of revelation.⁴³⁷

For Von Balthasar the true purpose of theology is to help human beings move closer to God.⁴³⁸ A theologian's lived holiness continues revelation and is apologetic for the Christian faith. How a theologian's life is lived should therefore be united to their theology to further God's revelation. Like Liégé, Von Balthasar believes, as Harrison puts it, 'that certain attitudes and actions are fundamental to Christianity – and hence the Christian form of life – because they derive from Jesus of Nazareth as he is portrayed in the Gospels' (Von Balthasar 1989: 252). Again, as Liégé undoubtedly assumed, since 'the structure of revelation is such that knowledge can only be realised in action, then any separation between living a holy life and genuine theology is precluded (Harrison 2001: 253).⁴³⁹

⁴³⁶ Von Balthasar is not alone in insisting on understanding this relationship theologically. Harrison (2001: 255) quotes Bernard Häring (1978: 94) in her footnote 22: 'Christian faith is not a system of abstract concepts, not a philosophy, and even less an ideology. The study and teaching of theology have to be understood as a saving event, an experience of God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying presence, and as a sign of the encounter with God that derives from his having called us'.

⁴³⁷ Harrison is quoting from 'Theology and Sanctity', in *Explorations in Theology 1: The Word Made Flesh* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press 1989)195. For Von Balthasar, being a theologian is a God-given vocation 'to bear witness to Christ through passing on, interpreting and thus continuing God's revelation' (Harrison 2001: 248). For him

genuine Christian theology is revelatory: the theologian's principal task is to reveal God. And in this tight link between theology and revelation lies the potentiality of theology to be apologetic for the Christian faith – a potentiality which can only be actualised if the theologian manifests her own holiness....any separation between Christian theology and the holy life is problematic because it radically undermines the possibility of theology constituting part of God's revelation and, thus, having the potentiality of moving people to adopt the Christian faith (Harrison: 2001: 248).

For Von Balthasar the mental faculties required by a theologian must be set in the proper context. Reason and living faith together are needed. He sees the saints as exemplary here. Harrison quotes him: "They never at any moment leave their centre in Christ. They give themselves to their work in the world, while "praying at all times" and "doing all to the glory of God" (1 Tim. 5.17; 1Cor. 10.31). When they philosophise, they do so as Christians' (Harrison 2001: 250).

⁴³⁸ Harrison (2001: 250) quotes further from Von Balthasar (1989): True theology aims 'to bring out the meaning of what has been revealed'. This involves 'bringing men and their whole existence, intellectual as well as spiritual, into closer relation with God. Any intellectual procedure that does not serve this purpose is assuredly not an interpretation of revelation, but one that bypasses its true meaning and, therefore, an act of disobedience'.

⁴³⁹ It is a fair supposition that Liégé would have known Henri de Lubac's work along these lines. Harrison (2001 255) points, 'especially' to *Histoire et esprit: l'intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Aubier 1950).

These views are in strong contrast to the assumptions of many, perhaps most, theologians in contemporary secular European universities. But they connect profoundly with this study's interest in the challenges offered by Liégé. From its point of view the theological value of Liégé's life is that he embodied the Christian faith articulated in his writings. It is because Liégé is a practical theologian that he integrates his ideas with his practice. What would be the logic of arguing, on the basis of one's faith, for a practical approach that one did not want to adopt one's self? Liégé does not just commend the theology that liberates the poor and the preferential option for the poor as good ideas that theologians are justified in arguing intellectually, he incarnates this approach in his own practice. Christian theology only exists out of a claim that what is being struggled with is wrestling with the experience of the living God. Without this there would be no discourse of revelation. Dialogue between living faiths is a valid academic activity but it presupposes people of living faiths to engage in it. The idea of a 'thinker about' Christian faith who has never prayed is thus a contradiction in terms. How could you be a thinker about Spanish literature if you had never read any? Thinking about faith presupposes some experience of the experience on which faith is based. Religious faith cannot, by definition, be reduced to the realm of 'ideas' because primarily it is an experience, not an idea. Trying to write theology without the experience is like trying to programme a computer to write poetry by feeding it Wordsworth.

The theological value of Liégé's life is, secondly, that it was in what he did, as much as what he wrote, that he was true to his theology. In an obituary, Jossua (1979b) writes that he was unable to continue his academic life and writing after the Council with anything like the creativity of the decade before it. No doubt this was in part because of the sheer weight and demands of his official positions. But Jossua locates the problem chiefly elsewhere: 'he did not leave an oeuvre to the measure of his gifts' despite his 'legendary capacity to carry on working', 'quite simply because he was devoured by multiple appeals from the groups, institutions and people whose lives were supported by his robustness' (Jossua 1979b: 16).

Jossua goes on to credit him, both in and through his writings and his own person, with a number of pastoral achievements where writing and personality are blended: he was the first in France to write from the Catholic side on religious tolerance; he was the first to have the lucidity and courage openly to challenge the doctrines of penal substitution, original sin in

Augustine's version of it, the absence of salvation outside the Church, and hell; he was the one capable of proposing a theology of God and of conversion completely emancipated from the scholastic approach; he was the one who outlined a paschal theology, a theology of the eucharist and a theology of marriage; he was the first to challenge at the roots the doctrine of 'natural morality' taught with authority by the Church; he refused to accept the casuistry around contraception, accepting the neutrality of methods as long as the purpose was true; he had an openness to sexual issues won through his own sensitivity to and contact with so many young and marginalized people that made him find the Church's unyielding dogmatism in the face of tough lived questions quite scandalous; he was the one who helped the church discover the decisive importance of really understanding what unbelief is about, what missionary responsibility is, and why pastoral care could be more true by being more exacting (Jossua 1979b: 16).

He continues:

An 'adult' faith, a Church made up of the faithful, mustered by politically free ministers, uncompromised by any temporal institution – he was resolutely 'laïque' – collectively capable of bearing witness to Jesus Christ: these themes can appear out of date. To Pierre-André Liégé they seemed so new, so urgent and so worthwhile that he consecrated all his energy to them for twenty-five years. His horizons expanded, but, rocklike, he did not move (Jossua 1979b: 16).

Jossua concludes by acknowledging that he owes to Liégé 'an unchanging force, or flame, in my faith' (Jossua 1979b: 16).

Liégé's life is characterised by apostolic pastoral activity – in chaplaincy, preaching, letter writing, conversing, teaching, giving retreats and conferences, pastoral counsel, visiting those in need, and in liturgical activity in relation to pastoral need, for example, his willingness to travel to celebrate mass on the anniversary of someone's death. It is further characterised by his failure to achieve his ambition to write a properly scientific pastoral theology as he had intended because, following St Dominic, he chose pastoral action as a priority over academic output.

Liégé's life is interesting enough to be included in Michael Walsh's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, of six thousand five hundred Christians chosen from the hundreds of millions who

have ever lived who have best met his criteria that, 'in their public lives, their commitment to Christianity played an important part' (Walsh 2001: vii). British practical theologians today are challenged by Liégé's approach to examine the relation between life and theology. He was a transformative theologian who aimed not just to interpret the world but to change it. For him this involved confronting his own Dominican brethren. It involved many years of sustained criticism from the hierarchy of his church. It involved the deliberate choice to put pastoral involvement with people, teaching, preaching, chaplaincy, letter writing, giving conferences and retreats, writing popular books and diverse articles or Chapters, and constant travelling in France and sometimes travelling the world, before the *magnum opus* he wanted to write and which his colleagues hoped for and expected.

He was committed to incarnating the love of God in action. Despite the depth of his loyalty to the Church, faithfulness to God as his theology understood God, required him to stay true to his thought and convictions even when they brought him into conflict with the church in terms of theology, church practice or moral teaching. He did not compromise his beliefs for any institution. He was a man of friendship for whom shared eating and drinking were milestones of life and a primary model of celebration. Liégé's is a model of total self-giving in freedom who said, 'I like my choice'. There is much in the Gospels to inspire such a lived response to Christ and much in Christian tradition to uphold it as a model of sainthood.

British writers like Trevor Huddleston or Ken Leech are perhaps parallels. But in general the British model of Christian life is more compromised and more domestic. Anglican priests may be married. A good and valid Christian contribution can be made from a life that also supports a family and lives in reasonable security and prosperity. The life of prayer and Christian commitment does not need to be all consuming. Liégé would enjoy much in this, would believe his church might learn something from it, and would by no means censor it. But he would notice that even *Thought for the Day* contributors tend to admire exemplars like Desmond Tutu and Mother Theresa. He would press our practical theologians to face up to a radical question: what form of Eucharistic community living is suitable for Christians living in the era of post Christianity?

Liégé's way of being a Dominican is one model of doing justice to the Christian tradition of living.

10. Liégé's limitations

Liégé's urgent appeal for total commitment to Christ through the church seems to risk a less than fully human response to life by short-circuiting its god-given contradictions, mysteries, unknowns, ambiguities, appropriate wondering at the sheer difference of other faiths, and many necessary compromises. Humans are invited to collaborate with God. But all people of good will, peace, compassion and generosity have a place in assisting God even if they do not know it. Church people have a particular responsibility to collaborate because they have, for many reasons, by no means all virtuous, become associated with that group who consciously espouse the Christian credo. Protestant churches and theologians belong more to this category. The church for them is not made up of God's shock troops, an élite who lead the struggle for the conversion of the world. It is made up of compromised people, whose humanity inevitably comes before their religiosity. The churches are an institution inevitably compromised, as all human institutions are, by history, culture, conflict, division, disagreement and complacency. From this viewpoint Liégé's aspirations can look naïve and idealistic.

Today this account appears dated in presupposing a pre-demythologised view of Scripture. The whole meta-narrative myth of revelation which Liégé assumed is deeply problematic today. But what is current practical theology's relationship with it? It is an issue less than fully attended to. The myth is neither rejected outright, nor accepted outright nor clearly reframed. An encounter with Liégé is bound to raise this issue and show it is as currently in need of further thought.

Within its stable tradition, Anglicanism has made ample room for renewals, missions, campaigns of evangelism, youth movements, negotiated change to practice, and a tradition of theological scholarship led by scholars and learned clergy who preach and teach it in parishes. What differentiates it from the church Liégé longed for is its relaxed, tolerant patience. It walks where Liégé wanted it to run. It does not share Liégé's sense that God's cause requires immediate, urgent action and seeking to go the extra mile. It is a tradition

built more on faithfulness to a certain spiritual, devotional and pastoral way of life than on faith as Liégé understood it. Where Liégé saw the status quo as the starting point for working out how to take the missionary campaign forward, Anglicans tend more to accept it as the basis for modest improvements.

Liégé might complain that Anglicans do less than they could to analyse what their faith implies for practice and that the fact is Christian faith must do justice to the Bible on which it is based. The Anglican reply might be that the times of the Bible are not our times and its context not our context and that our way of living this out is appropriately adapted to these changed circumstances. Why should the Holy Spirit not work as well through these structures as through Roman Catholic ones? Anglican structures are suited to a fragmented world, not the hegemonic one of the era of Christianity. This would be to play Liégé at his own game.

Liégé's theology was strongly contextualised by its time. Its messages either struggle to belong to the changed context of today, or have found their voice by being assimilated into the work of theologians since, or are still relevant and distinctive but generally unheeded. Part of his impact on young people was in being an enthusiastic spokesman for the various theological and spiritual renewals of the epoch. It is hard to imagine a church representative achieving the same success today. Glastonbury, hip-hop, climate change, the Iraq War and many other issues command the attention of the young before church affairs. Islam is as much or more in the news as Christian faith. There are exceptions, like the Brothers of Taizé, whose approach to faith is very similar indeed to Liégé's, and which still attracts youths in their thousands, as do some Evangelical rallies.

Liégé had great confidence in his faith as the answer to the deepest questions of modern people. But my teenage children and their friends do not have confidence in the questions to be asked, especially if they are grand questions, never mind a particular set of answers. They are far from connecting with the elaborate myth, doctrine, history and authoritarian hierarchy of the Christian church. They are unlikely to be persuaded by Liégé's view of faith because their cultural shaping convinces them that there are no easy answers, only a pluralism of faith options of which the Christian tradition is one, with no particular a priori

claim to be any more true than the others. Liégé's confidence in the church as the community able to embody this compelling faith is even less shared by my children. They see the church as a well-intentioned but deeply flawed institution. It is not that they are against it so much as that they are preoccupied with physical, social, intellectual and artistic activities with which its life does not connect. I believe my children represent the overwhelming majority of young people. I also know young people whose whole life revolves around the church but, as Liégé predicted, they are a small minority.

Conclusion

The presentation of Liégé, the initiator and pioneer of pastoral theology in France, was the primary academic purpose and value of this study. It has introduced Liégé's thought, life and action to English speakers and shown that British practical theologians can learn much from this. It adopted a comparative approach, using Liégé's pastoral theology, virtually unknown in Britain, as a lens for a critique of British practical theology's strengths, weaknesses and isolation. It has attempted to offer some new, contrasted ideas, and thereby enlarge the scope of understanding generally found in British practical theology.

In view of the lack of cross-fertilisation between British and French practical theology, the thesis sought to use Liégé's work to make French Catholic pastoral theology more accessible to English readers. It offered translations of primary and secondary French sources to present and then discuss Liégé's thought and context.

Liégé's theology and action were shown to be inseparable, making him an interesting and exceptional exemplar of Christian discipleship. Examining what shaped Liégé's life and thought and outlining his theology and pastoral theology and offering comparative historical perspectives made it possible to critique British pastoral theology in a historically informed and contemporary setting. That critique was achieved by comparing aims, styles, definitions, ecclesiologies, interests, content and methods. On this basis, the thesis examined the value of Liégé for British practical theology and drew some conclusions.

The methods used by the thesis.

The methodology of this study was based on the textual analysis of primary and secondary sources, and interviews.

One method used was description. Liégé's personality was portrayed to convey the essence of the man. Description was used to place Liégé in social, ecclesiastical and theological context, to explain how creative renewals in France stimulated Liégé to launch his pastoral

theology and pointed forward to the theology of Vatican II, and to present Liégé's own theology.

A second method used was chronological analysis, employed particularly to examine Liégé's pastoral theology as it evolved from 1955-1977.

A third method was comparative analysis and contrast. This method was based upon comparing the analysis of Liégé's work with that of a small but representative selection of British academic practical theologians through samples of their writing. This enabled the study to be critical, to evaluate and to draw conclusions. It was deployed to show how French and British practical theology shared the challenge of coming to terms with the modern world, and how the momentous changes since Liégé's time have left his world far behind. French practical theology was shown to have emerged through the practical. It was produced by systematicians. It became successfully established as a university-level academic subject. It contributed to the victory over neo-scholasticism. The study evaluated the originality of Liégé's pastoral theology with its three primary subject areas, prophetic, liturgical and homiletic pastoral theology. It showed how the pastoral theology of the times provided a critical discourse in the years of turbulence following the Second Vatican Council, as the French church struggled with far-reaching change from a Counter Reformation ecclesiology to one of openness and dialogue. During this time, the church renewed the place of the *Laos*. It changed from the time of the application of catechism manuals to the time of practical theology for an exploded *diaspora* of situations. And it evolved from pastoral theology towards a theological hermeneutics of Christian action. The comparative method was also used to portray the sharply contrasted British context with its different historical and cultural variables but sharing the same deep shifts and transitions.

The main arguments of the thesis

Liégé embodied his pastoral theology in the action of his life

The testimony of those who knew him well, such as Congar, Jossua, Marlé, Schmitt, Coudreau, Rendu, Henry, Cruiziat, Refoulé and many others, combines to reveal Liégé as

having united his masterful theological scholarship with his faith and discipleship. His huge, enduring, impact on colleagues, friends, students, congregations and individuals through his intense engagement with a multiplicity of institutions, conferences, seminars, retreats, liturgies, pilgrimages, meetings and personal encounters was an effect of his being ‘inhabited by the gospel’. This authenticity struck contemporaries as a quality of supreme personal freedom and self-possession even through protracted conflict. They point to the seamless link between his forceful, paschal faith and his personal communication, flowing from a united heart. His exceptional capacity to be *present* to those he was with was widely observed and partly explains his influence on so many.

Liégé’s pastoral theology was original, pioneering, seminal and historically significant

Liégé played a highly significant role in the renewal of theology, catechetics and ecclesiology in post-War France. His pastoral theology introduced kerygmatic, catechetical discourse and methodology. It started from and returned to practice, and was capable of the transmission of faith. Employing existential language, personalism, phenomenology, and Blondel’s philosophy of Action as well as Thomism, it acted like water poured on the desert to refresh neo-Scholastic doctrines that had become desiccated and detached from personal faith. The new, every-day vocabulary of his theology made a great impact on catechetics. His definitions and method were original. They focussed on on *l’agir* of the church and linked reflection on the permanent nature of the church to a study of the self-realisation of the church in its actual situation in the contemporary world. He focussed on *la pastorale de l’ensemble*, using the phrase ‘People of God’ and other phrases that anticipate *Lumen Gentium*. Liégé’s drive to reintroduce the core message of the gospel to religious practice, ‘to evangelise religion’, was a radical prophetic approach. For Liégé to do the wrong thing was as serious as to believe the wrong thing. He established Paschal criteria for church action. He attacked the non-theological pragmatism of current catechetics that offered no such criteria. He proposed three pillars for pastoral theology: the principles of the Incarnation (or Christological principle), the *Durée* (or ecclesiological principle), and the Unity of Mission principle. He then sub-divided the subject into Prophetic, Sacerdotal (or liturgical) and Royal (or caritative or hodegetic) pastoral theology. He established the practical as a theological *lieu*,

and developed a method for including the human sciences in theological thought and introducing experiential learning into practice.

Liégé achieved a new status for pastoral theology at the ICP, establishing its scientific character as its own theological discipline. He was famous in the 1950s for his inspiring Word-based theology of faith. He personalised dogma by presenting faith as human dialogue, as something to be received by the whole person, as something pointing to a mystery not a mere proposition, and as something always to do with God's love. Liégé had success in promoting faith as a rupture, a passionately made decision and a risk, leading to the adventure of holiness and prayer that required nurture and maturation through all life's phases.

And though Liégé's subsequent legacy is less certain, as Adler summarises, pastoral theology was not an add-on in France. It was born at the very time when French theology turned to the practical, as catechetically-focussed systematicians immersed themselves in new contexts and practices. Liégé stands as a pioneer in this field. Moreover, Viau regards all Québec contemporary practical theologies as tributaries flowing from Liégé's ground-breaking theoretical developments.

Contrasting cultural and historical contexts go far in explaining differences between French and British practical theology

It is hard to over-estimate the significance of context in explaining the differences between French Roman Catholic and British Protestant pastoral theology. The study has tried to show that it was in response to his context that Liégé's pastoral theology was prophetic, radically concerned with praxis, corporate, catechetical, missionary and homiletic. The cultural context of British practical theology made it more concerned with establishing pastoral opportunities than reform, more concerned with pastoral care than catechesis, more pragmatic than theologically principled, more shaped by individual initiatives than by a grand Council, more academically dispassionate than evangelistic. It made British practical theology generally more fragmented, regional, denominational and haphazard than Liégé's output.

Liégé's style of pastoral theology was also shaped by his context. Because his concerns were, perforce, very wide ranging, his style was broader than the three mainstream Protestant liberal-rational, neo-traditional confessional and radical- liberationist styles. It therefore drew from a broader range of historical, philosophical and systematic theology than much in British writing. On the other hand it, did not develop a hermeneutical relationship with the human sciences to anything like the extent that both francophone and British practical theology have succeeded in doing subsequently.

Context also explains the sharp ecclesiological contrasts between Liége's Catholic understanding and that of Protestant and Church of England theologians. Liégé wanted a renewed church to present the gospel more effectively to the world. Protestants have tended to feel closer to the world in the first place. Again, Liégé is driven by theological principle; Anglo-Saxon Protestants, especially Anglicans, are more pragmatic. Where Liégé wants to confront religion and culture with authentic faith, Anglicans want to build on pastoral opportunities that go with the cultural grain. Where Liégé seeks the total transformation of a disciple's life, British theologians encourage clergy to make pastoral interpretations on the assumption that God might already be present in experience. These two different ways of understanding discipleship relate to context. Liégé's uncompromising approach risks alienating people. British theologians risk under-challenging people and so failing to lead them towards a mature faith and radical Christian praxis.

Liégé's wide choice of theological subjects is also influenced by context; that of the Catholic Church's attempts to come to terms with the era of post-Christianity. British practical theology, taken as a whole, actually deals with an even broader range of pastoral topics than Liégé. However, in Britain only a few theologians have worked to connect practical theology with church praxis or catechetics. In Britain the overwhelming emphasis has been on pastoral care, giving British practical theology a proud tradition in this field.

Liégé's pastoral theology has implications for British practical theology

Focussing on principles, criteria and praxis, Liégé makes a critique of religion and culture from the viewpoint of faith that is foreign to British practical theology. He raises the

dilemma of whether radically to reform the church for post Christianity or to be chaplain to the prevailing culture. The whole-scale review of church praxis that Liégé called for has not happened in Britain. British practical theology remains more pragmatic than principled. It could learn from Liégé's insistence on calling the praxis of the church to conform to the gospel according to theological criteria, and thus to far-reaching change. Indeed, Liégé's thought and work highlight the need for a Protestant equivalent to the Second Vatican Council. In Britain there has not been a high level confrontation between the theological and ecclesial inheritance from the past and the theology and practice appropriate for the churches today.

British practical theology could profitably make a map of the subjects it covers, coordinating interests and concerns. By bringing its many strands together British practical theology could start to make a clearer diagnosis of contemporary existential problematics. On the basis of this it would be easier to propose the gospel as an answer to contemporary human needs and articulate a vision of the church that best conforms to this good news. Theological criteria for praxis, once established by Dioceses, parishes or local church assemblies, would, I believe, lead more effectively than at present to the building up of the mature Eucharistic communities with the adult-faith Liégé longed for his church to consist of. He believed that effective catechetics, lifelong Christian nurture based on practical theology, was a precondition of achieving this. British theology tends not to assume this and has not emphasised it. British practical theology can learn from Liégé to stress the centrality of catechetics if church members are to be helped towards holiness grounded in freedom, and lived out in corporate action for justice, in service of God's kingdom.

British pastoral theology in the 1950s could have benefited from acquaintance with developments in French pastoral theology.

Though a knowledge of Liégé by British practical theologians could not have been expected in the 1950s, it can be surmised, in retrospect, that, had his work been known, what many see as the major deficiency of British practical theology might have been avoided. It would have been seriously warned against over-dependence on the human sciences and loss of connection with the theological tradition as a whole.

Secondly, British catechetics might have been transformed. Hastings condemns weak catechetics as ‘the Church’s greatest avoidable failure’ in the 1950s (1987: 438). Had the ideas, spirit and methods of the French catechetical renewal been transmitted into British pastoral theology, it seems reasonable to suppose this might have made a considerable difference to the quality and quantity of Christian nurture in British churches.

Future research

Clearly this study represents a tiny fraction of the research that might be undertaken in this field. The most obvious avenue for further exploration, is further inter-denominational, inter-linguistic, comparative study of post-Liégeois francophone practical theology as found in Europe, Canada and Africa, outlined by Adler (1995, 1996, 2004). The comparison of the *Blackwell Reader* (Woodward and Pattison 2000) with the French *Précis* (Routhier and Viau 2004) in Chapter 9 was enough to show how far apart from each other francophone Catholic and anglophone Protestant practical theology still are.

More specifically it would be an academic benefit for a researcher critically to present the work of Audinet, a highly original practical theologian, who broke the mould in France of doing practical theology from within the ecclesial enclosure. Other francophone individual practical theologians such as Adler, Viau or Joncheray might also be studied comparatively.

One further specific research project should be critically to investigate the history, content and remarkable achievement of French catechetical renewal, from its emergence in the second decade of the twentieth century with L. Hénin and C. Quinet, through the work of Marie Fargue, Françoise Derkenne and Colomb, up to the present day. Fieldwork research into current catechetical structures, methods and practice across the French dioceses would be particularly valuable (Adler and Vogelesen 1981: 143-230).

It would be beneficial for a relationship to be forged between one of Britain’s departments of practical theology and a French *Institut Catholique* such as that of Paris or Toulouse or

Strasbourg. Equally profitable would be a relationship with the practical theology of a francophone university such as Laval, or Montréal.

The achievement of this study is of course very modest; a few steps along the way of exploring and contrasting two viewpoints. But from the start I have tried to convey, through the life and theology of Pierre-André Liégé, a vision, close to my heart, of a church renewed through the tool of practical theology. I have discovered the inspiration of Liégé as a pastoral theologian in his own right. And I have made the contrast with Britain because, as one who practises here in this field, I believe practical theology is critical to the future of theology as a whole. Though he died in 1979, I believe Liégé can still be a powerful source of hope and encouragement for the theological community in the twenty-first century.

Appendix One: The contents of Liégé's output

Reynal's painstakingly researched bibliography comprises 433 entries (Reynal 2004). The writings by Liégé consulted by me are those referenced in the main text. To give an overview of Liégé's entire output I have written this appendix, including significant writings I have not myself consulted (though may have read discussion of), and which I have included in the Bibliography, as below, for the benefit of further researchers. In order to complete the picture of Liégé's themes, I have alluded to the subject matter of further less important writings in this appendix, but not included them in the Bibliography, as it is beyond this study's need. Where Liégé wrote more than 26 items in one year, I have begun the alphabet again (e.g. 1962aa, 1962bb).

1. *Liégé's Writings from 1946 to the start of the Vatican Council*

1946- 1950

The context of Liégé's early writings is presented in Chapter 3. From 1946 –1950 there are ten bibliographical entries covering Thomism and the theology of faith (1946b), the shift from apologetics to fundamental theology (1946c), salvation outside the Church (1946a), the 'soul' of the Church (1948c), the deliverance of man (1948b), the mystery of the Church (1948a), the Christian interpretation of historical events (1949a), the communion of saints (1949b), Aquinas and Blondel (1050a) and *Humani Generis* (1950b).

1951 -1956

From 1951 - 1956, there are one hundred and four entries of which forty eight are articles for *La Route des Scouts de France* and five for *L'aumônier scout*. These are articles aimed at inspiring young people towards a living faith but which also respond to current events.

This period includes nine substantial encyclopaedia entries on: The sources of Christian faith (1952b); The believer and theological reflection (1952c); Dogma (1952d); The Faith (1953a); The mystery of the church (1954a); Encyclicals (1956c); Evangelisation (1956d); Bishop (1956e); The dogmatic sources and a theological elaboration of faith (1956b).

In 1952 Liégé published his first book on 'the adventure of sanctity' (1952e), also to inspire young people to faith.

Twenty six academic articles belong to this period, including articles on the following representative subjects: the symbol of Apostles in the faith of the Church; the demands of a moral catechesis; incarnation and transcendence; theological reflections on miracles; theology of the church and current problems for pastoral mission; the moral of the Gospel; the sacrament of marriage in the light of Easter; the dignity of the human body; today's youth before Christ; sketch of a spirituality founded on the paschal mystery; the content and pedagogy of Christian preaching; towards a catechetical theology; Christians in the world but not of the world; flesh and spirit; liturgical life and Catholic action; the mass as centre of the life of the Church; youth in the face of Christianity; the priest as minister of the Word;

towards a catechesis for adolescents; the Church as the *milieu* of Christian faith; main themes of a pedagogy of the mystery of the Church; diagnosing the nature of an adult faith; psychology and catechesis (the church and adolescents); Dominican preaching; Scouting and politics; the Christian sense of God

The other bibliographical entries are made up of assorted edited-book contributions, write-ups of conferences and articles.

1957 – 1962

There are one hundred and twenty seven entries for these six years including four books (1958b, 1958f, 1959a, 1960a). *Adultes dans le Christ* was translated into Catalan, German, Italian and English. *Jeune Homme, lève-toi!* was translated into Portuguese, Italian, Catalan, Spanish and German. *Vivre en Chrétien* was translated into English, Catalan, Italian, Dutch and (*sic*) Yugoslavian, Pecs (1973) (what can this language be?) In 1962 the fifth volume of the Encyclopaedia *Catholicisme* came out (1962) in which Liégé contributed the entries on the history of dogma (1962bb), religious ignorance (1962e), implicit-explicit (1962d), the indefectibility of the Church (1962g) and indifference, indifferentism (1962h).

After five further articles for *La Route des Scouts de France* Liégé's writing for the Scouts comes to an abrupt halt. The final subjects for these articles are of interest: being young in a time of mistrust; intolerance; 'job' or vocation; believing but not practising; mission for the world (1957m, 1957i, 1957j, 1957k, 1957l).

1957 is the year of Liégé's famous introduction to F.-X. Arnold's *Serviteurs de la foi* entitled 'What is pastoral theology?' (1957a). It is also the year of his contribution to the national catechetical event at Bagneux (1957f).

The general content of the rest of the output is broad and difficult to classify because subjects frequently overlap. Roughly analysed, there are some twenty-seven articles on catechetics. Often they relate catechetics to specific subjects: baptism (1959b); the up-building of the Church (1958g); doctrinal formation (1957n); Christian authenticity (1957d); the Word (1957e); renunciation (1957o); charity (1957q); young people (1958h); the maturation of faith (1958c); the life journey (1959c); children (1954d); creation (1959e); the transmission of faith (1961j); the tradition of the Church (1960b, 1960c); criteria for admission (1962i) and evangelisation (1961c).

The next obvious clustering are the fifteen or so articles concerning mission. Again they often link to specific subjects: the world's needs (1957r, 1957s, 1957l); the eucharist (1957g, 1958d); the Word (1956e); youth (1959f); a specific person (1959g); institutions (1961k); kerygma (1961l, 1962k); the catechumenate (1960d, 1962c); fundamentalism (1962f); dialogue (1962l).

The third clustering is of some seventeen or so articles concerned directly with the church: its intolerance (1959h); is there a place for revolution in it? (1959i); its laity (1959j); its people (1960e); its presence to the world (1960f, 1960g); its priests (1960h); vocation (1961m); its youth (1961n); its authority in the service of freedom (1962m, 1962n); its relation to

civilisations (19620); as the field of pastoral action (1962p); when the world questions it (1962a, 1962q); and the gospel (1962r); and the Christian university (1962s).

The remaining articles cover a broad range. They include the following: The Gospel and the world (1957r); serving human communities (1957s); conversion in the New Testament (1957t); miracle (1957u); adult faith and religious culture (1957h); the struggle for belief in the modern world (1957c); the maturing of faith (1958c); Christmas (1958i); Easter (1960i); holiness (1958j, 1960j); knowledge of God (1958k, 1959k, 1960k, 1961o); orthodox believers (1959l); salvation (1959m); grace (1959n, 1959o); the stages of life (1959p); resurrection (1960l); the duty of the State (1960m); human relationships (1960n); spirituality (1960j); ministry (1960o, 1961p); faith (1960p, 1961q, 1962t); evangelisation (1961r); Christian action (1961s); Incarnation (1961t); conversion (1960q, 1961u, 1961f); vocation (1957j, 1959b, 1959p); the eucharist (1961v, 1961g, 1961h); Vatican II (1961d, 1962u); politics (1962v); sexuality (1962w); dialogue (1962l); society (1962x); poverty (1962y, 1963d); interior freedom (1962z); forgiveness (1962aa); the cross (1961w).

Liégé's writings from 1963 – 1981

Another hundred and ninety-two bibliographical entries remain. Now there are eight articles specifically about the Council: it is for the world (1863e); it has a constant message (1963f); it has significance for catechetics (1963c); it is a pastoral council (1963g). Sometimes Liégé is a commentator on a whole Session (1964b) or on particular documents (1965c) or decisions (1965d). But the impact of the Council will influence everything Liégé writes from now on (1966e, 1978e).

The established themes continue.

There are further articles on catechesis: and social reality (1963h); and mission (1963i); and Vatican II (1963c); and 'pedagogy of God' (1964c); and the educational task (1964d, 1968g); and today's world (1970e); and evangelisation (1971l); and the transmission of faith (1971c); the theology that underpins catechetics (1975d).

There are further articles on the Church: on its responsibility to the world (1964e, 1964f, 1964g, 1966b, 1974c); on the Church and Easter (1964h); on the impact of the Council (1964i, 1965e); on the new religious liberty (1963a, 1965d, 1966d); on the church and culture (1967b, 1971b); on the Church's sin (1965f, 1965g, 1969c); on conflict in the church (1969d); on the church as institution (1969a, 1969e); on 'imagining' the Church (1969f); on 'a theory of the praxis of the Church' (1971a); on community creativity (1971e); on new Church communities (1969g, 1971f, 1971g, 1972a, 1974d, 1975e, 1976a, 1979d); on the loss of boundaries (1971h, 1972b, 1972c, 1972d); on the origin of its ministry (1972e); on its priests (1968d, 1973a, 1976b); on its expectation of the religious life (1965h, 1977b, 1978d); on the theology of authority (1978f); and on church unity (1967c, 1977c, 1978c, 1978g).

The theme of mission is still present: can there be a missionary parish? (1963j); religious liberty (1964j, 1964k, 1964l, 1968e); the priest's missionary role (1966f); 'on the threshold of a new mission' (1966c); the laity in mission (1966g); is mission evolving? (1971i); the theology of evangelisation (1975f); on the witness of a lived life (1978h).

There are further articles on the problems of faith in the modern world: on atheism (1963k, 1964m, 1968f, 1976c); socialism (1963l); infantilism (1963m); the sacraments (1964n); religion in the USSR (1964o); on 'religion which is not faith' (1965a, 1965b); human freedom (1965i, 1977d); salvation (1967a, 1969b), resurrection (1970b), believing but not practising (1970c), infant baptism (1971j).

Liégé writes Prefaces to the books of others: For Jean Cadet's book on laity and the Church (1963n); to Jossua's book on Salvation, incarnation and the paschal mystery (1968a); and to Coudreau's 1974 book on pedagogy of the faith (1974f). He also contributes his 'differed homage' to Chenu, written, like all the other contributions, in 1964 but not published till 1990 (1964p). He also wrote an Introduction to Vincent de Lérins' '*Tradition et progress: le Commonitorium*' (1978i).

In 1971 Liégé made presentations at the Synod of Bishops about the priestly ministry and about justice in the world (1963f). He also writes about the Synod (1972f).

In 1972 Liégé's Lent, Holy Week and Easter theme at Metz cathedral is 'Verify if you are really part of the Faith' (1972g).

There are some articles on prayer (1965j, 1966i), common prayer (1967d, 1967e), the liturgy, (1963o, 1963p) and the Eucharist (1970a, 1979b) on which there is also the posthumous book, *Pour mieux comprendre l' Eucharistie* (1981).

What are new, from 1971, are the articles on moral issues: on marriage and family (1971k, 1972h, 1972i, 1972j, 1973c, 1974f, 1974g); on abortion (1973d, 1974b, 1975b, 1976d); on euthanasia (1974a) and on feminism (1968h). Other subjects include poverty (1965k); Easter as the heart of the pastoral (1963q); peace in the world (1964a); pastoral action (a homage to Albert Schweitzer) (1965l); Christians and political action (1965m); corporate pastoral care (1965n); the future of theological faculties (1973b); Blondel's concept of the Trinity (1974h); practice as a theological place (1977a); Catholic theology and mystical vision (1977e).

Two particular publications stand out from 1975: the book *L'être-ensemble des chrétiens*, translated into Spanish and Italian (1975a) and the Constitution of the new U.E.R of theology and religious sciences at the Institut Catholique, where Liégé was now Dean (1975g). Two more books remain from 1978 and 1979 respectively: *Le Temps du défi : les chrétiens à l'épreuve* (1978a) and *Allez, Enseignez*, translated into Spanish and Italian (1979a).

It is very striking that this long summary of the content of Liégé's output reveals so little about the pastoral theology he pioneered and initiated. Although this is explicit in the key publications examined in Chapter 5, it is much more fully laid out in the thirteen Courses so painstakingly researched by Reynal. The great majority of his writings are a response to the wide diversity of themes and issues raised by his concerns as a pastoral theologian rather than focussed on the nature of his pastoral theology as such.

Appendix Two: Liégé's influence on Paul Rendu and other scouts

Rendu (1980: 41) recalls how from their first meeting he was struck by his luck in having a person like Liégé to work with. Their organisation involved several thousand Christians from 17 – 22 years old. They edited a review, *La Route*, designed programmes, visited communities, trained leaders, gathered for congress or for grand liturgies at Vézelay or Orcival. They met several times a week in Paris or daily during camps to review events. Rendu (1980:41) speaks of the privilege of such a friendship for him and the rest of the team. Nothing can efface this debt and memory.

Then thirty, Liégé still looked like a student. He was 'rather small, plump, with short, blond-tinted, curly hair' (Rendu 1980: 41) ⁴⁴⁰ Yet his 'powerful influence' on people 'was immediate' (Rendu 1980: 41). He had a 'large jaw, a firm chin and a penetrating look from behind his rimless glasses' (Rendu 1980: 41). 'The liveliness of his expression might have suggested quite an imperious character if it hadn't been reined in by his way of living out the goodness of the Gospel and softened by an inexhaustible kindness (Rendu 1980: 41-42). Rendu (1980: 42) describes Liégé's welcome to a friend after an absence as showing: 'the muted joy of his eyes, the smile which transfigured his entire physiognomy'.

He was a faithful friend. For ten years after the death in Algeria in 1956 of one of the team he went to Metz, at the anniversary, to join the family for mass and prayers at the cemetery. He had an attention to detail. At table he spotted who needed what. He was never absent-minded. He had a great gift for listening attentively and for remembering an incalculably large number of names. He remembered namedays and birthdays, responded to every postcard, visited friends when sick and was, as it seemed, limitlessly available to those in need of his spiritual counsel. His diaries showed that somehow he had to reconcile this apparently universal fraternal love with a jam-packed schedule of commitments. He achieved this by rigorous self-organisation. This in itself would have been insufficient if he had not also gone without sleep and leisure. Rendu (1980: 42) writes:

I saw him at camp, this man of uncertain health, work all night on a theological article and then manage the following night on just two or three hours' sleep. This did not stop him from carrying his own kit, going through the same hoops as everyone else, putting up his own tent which he never left to others and giving carefully prepared presentations throughout the day such as homilies at mass, biblical expositions at rest-stops in pretty countryside, short talks followed by discussion or a more intimate meditation after night worship.

Rendu says that his communication was so compelling and what he said responded so directly to the questions everyone was asking that no one dreamed of wondering why it was the religious programme tended to take up an increasing amount of the day, imperceptibly transforming the camp into a retreat. For Rendu, it would be a mistake to see a romantic attachment to the beauty of nature as what mattered about outdoor life to Liégé. It was part of a pilgrimage, like Abraham's or Paul's, which afforded evangelistic opportunities.

⁴⁴⁰ Leprieur calls his hair black (Leprieur 1989: 35)

Paul Rendu recalls the political background and emphasises that the *Routiers* were not cut off from it: The cold war, the execution of *Les Rosenberg*, the death of Stalin, the Slansky affair and the revelations of XX congress were all images on the backdrop even if they did not seriously impinge on life, though the invasion of Hungary did. But the most important factor in the emerging political consciousness of this new generation stemmed from the colonial wars: Dien-Bien-Phu and Indochina first; especially Algeria from the summer of 1955, and even more in spring 1956, when call up started. It was divisive and aroused strong emotions among the young.

Liégé was responsive to this context. He demonstrated this from the outset in the way he handled the journal *La route*. In December 1951 he used a quotation from Léon Bloy on the cover with considerable effect. Subsequent cover quotations were equally striking and tell us something about Liégé's self-confessed favourite authors: Bernanos, Mounier, Péguy, Camus, Kierkegaard and Aquinas. Or he would use such quotations alongside his own articles. Rendu remembers that 'the accord was often so sharp we learned fragments by heart; they circulated in our circles like a common language' (Rendu 1980: 47).

In 1954, following the condemnations of him, Liégé uses *La route* not to reply to his attackers or justify himself but simply to reaffirm his faith in the church with a quotation from Chrysostom. His response to the Algerian war, however, was radical. He stressed the necessity to put God, conscience, justice and the poor before everything. He quoted Mounier in prison in 1942 saying prison is a natural place for Christians in a troubled period. He advocated speaking out and always telling the truth. Finally, he started to quote Jean Muller's letters (especially after he's been killed), and this was too much for the publisher. It was deemed to be too political and there was a rupture.

When Liégé spoke to scouts it was not to influence their politics. He was totally transparent in expressing his convictions about the Algerian War. He writes as he thinks. In the November 1955 edition of *La route* he addresses the young people about it. It is worth noticing his main points (Rendu 1980: 52-55):

1. Young people cannot remain uninterested. This is not something they can leave to adults as if young people just had to get on with their studies. Rather, as members of a youth movement, especially a Christian one, they are obliged to become actively involved. Their purpose is not to maintain the French established order. Their motive is to respond to the immense human problem in Algeria. This concerns everyone. Where people starve and struggle with hunger, like eight million Muslims in Algeria no one can pass by on the other side. Liégé makes the connection with the Good Samaritan and rallies his young readers to do likewise.
2. He enjoins his readers to dismiss the obvious prejudices, that Algerians are lazy or that to be concerned for them is sentimental or idealist. Christ would have cried at such human distress. Alas, it has taken violence to arouse many Christians to take any interest in the Algerian situation at all. Meanwhile it is clear that political justice is not respected in Algeria, the recent elections were faked, Muslims are bullied about their cult and traditions, the land improvements serve the French more than the indigenous people and many people especially the young die of hunger and chronic unemployment is endemic. This suffering in the end gave rise to hate. Of course it is wrong for anyone to turn hate

to violence but the hate of the poor always accuses the rich even if the rich feel in good conscience for having given to charity from time to time. Christian charity is a more serious matter than that. It is not just band-aid or the odd spectacular gesture to anaesthetize suffering – the Algerian bishops have recently spoken out about the ‘emigration from hunger.’ people being forced to move and live unhuman lives in the metropole. This accuses us all.

3. Liégé then gives the radical criteria of the gospel and asks his readers how Christians are to judge the French colonial presence in this light? ‘And you’, he writes, ‘what do you think?’ (Rendu 1980: 55). Finally he suggests what young people can do: establish an appropriate, serious and intelligent attitude which is truly loving rather than paternalistic. Refuse the notion of young people being used for causes that are not a true service but just collective egoism. Work more hard where you are now to create unprejudiced fellowship with north Africans. Prepare to put right tomorrow the fatal slide into error and egoism that our elders have succumbed to. It will be difficult and long, he tells them, but their generation cannot duck it; Christ and the gospel demand it.

Rendu (1980: 56) describes him as ‘the man who built our faith stone by stone in bearing witness to his own’:

It is not enough to say he lived his faith. It occupied his entire being (*espace*) – it gave to his acts and feelings a coherence such that nothing ever escaped his vigilant presence. He had a boundless confidence in God. He used to say that the word *amen* evoked the image of an infant letting go completely in its mother’s arms abandoned to the force of love: when he was strongly challenged or exhausted by overwork he reminded me of that child (Rendu 1980: 56).

In *Jeune Homme Lève Toi Liégé* (1959) wrote:

Christ...has begun to inhabit my feebleness by his power: he has opened my heart, he has filled me with hope, he has lightened up my life, he has put in me the most profound joy and peace.

Rendu (1980: 57) quotes this and comments:

Yes, Father was first of all a sign of faith in the midst of us. Those who read him today without having known him need to understand that his personal witness was inseparable from his writing. His teaching was communicated above all by direct contact with his personality. We are all profoundly marked by our contact with him.

After the camp in 1956 Francois Bonnelle wrote in *La Route*:

Would *le Breuil* be a retreat? Yes, perhaps with a resurrection mass celebrated every morning, meditations on the gospel or St Paul, or the *journaliers* sessions when Père called us to this new conversion to Christ and our entry into the church; but a retreat with an openness, a living retreat, based in our engagement with our everyday world, our own milieu (Rendu 1980: 57).

Also Jean Muller in 1955 wrote of finding Liégé

that other evening, on the edge of a lake surrounded by mountains as the wind whistled in the *roseaux*, it was just a revelation to hear Père speak to us about our vocation either as a priest or lay person, each of us discovering a new aspect of our involvement with the world. He opened up the meaning of an adult faith, of the future of the church in the modern world, of the adult awareness of sin, of conventional Christian behaviour not in rapport with faith, of adult love (Rendu 1980: 57-58).

He was addressing a generation who had acquired the rudiments of faith before World War 2. To them he was striking by the newness of what he said, by the liberty of his tone and by his repeated call to take responsibility. He debunked false images of God. He distinguished between what was essential for mission and what was the product of social evolution and which must change if not to obscure the message of Christ. But it was concerning *'la morale'*, for those brought up in a suffocating Jansenist ambiance that he brought the greatest liberation.

Appendix Three: Conflict with Rome in 1952-4

In a letter of 13th November 1952, the Master of the Dominican Order, Father Suarez, wrote to Father Avril, provincial of the Dominican province of France, 'In strictest secrecy, dear father, please can you send me as soon as possible a note about the personal life and activities of A. Liégé, brother of your province?' Avril replied on the 19th November in glowing terms and enclosed an entirely favourable endorsement from Mgr Blanchet, rector of the catholic Faculty of Paris. Avril thought this would settle the matter. It did not. On 30th June 1953 Liégé was summoned to Rome. Avril again tried to defend him. Replying on July 15th, he refers to him as 'this father whose religious and apostolic quality is exceptional and yet he's been made to suffer such anxieties and be the object of denunciations' (Leprieur 1989: 35). He expresses his full confidence in Liégé and says his 'disposition' is always that of 'perfect docility'. The defence is to no avail. Fathers Avril and Liégé must go to Rome for a meeting on July 31st.

Later that year (29th October 1953) Congar's *Journal* entry reads:

When Fr. Liégé was called to Rome this last summer, it seems there were more than 100 denunciations against him, some from bishops and some, sometimes from the same group, were backed up by the copy of a personal letter from Fr. Liégé (Congar 2001: 226).

Three pages later, he specifies that Liégé 'recognised among them a personal letter he had sent to Mgr Rastouil, bishop of Limoges' (Congar 2001: 229). Leprieur comments: 'Black hair, very clear complexion, P. Liégé was still young, not yet thirty five years old' (Leprieur 1989: 35). In fact he was thirty-two. Happily the short stay passed without injury. Leprieur tells us that Liégé began the meeting with Suarez with the customary gestures of the *Venia*. He genuflected and cast down his scapula before him. Then he prostrated himself along the ground in front of the Master who said '*surge*', arise, and the interrogation followed (Leprieur 1989: 37).

Next day Liégé wrote a letter addressed to his principal attacker, Mgr Rastouil, Bishop of Limoges, with a copy to Suarez minuting, for confirmation, the main points of his interview and responding to the various attacks. Rastouil had reprimanded him for his practice of the sacrament of penance and other liturgical and doctrinal innovations liable to disturb unwarned hearers. Liégé had aroused the anxiety of a bishop who wanted above all to avoid ruffling the faith of the faithful. But Liégé was a theologian who knew that research was essential in these turbulent times which inevitably brought challenges to conventional habits. Liégé's letter spoke of the necessity to distinguish between the need of theology for scientific research and a theology for general pastoral usage. He adds that such a distinction is only acceptable if the vigour of someone's understanding of faith is ardently upheld. Liégé goes on:

The ministry I'm involved with brings me into contact with a number of intellectuals who are unbelievers or who are seeking after faith. They need a solid and critical message expressed in a suitable form for them. Priests often don't understand the needs of contemporary best minds. True, it's a delicate ministry from a doctrinal

point of view; but doesn't this get back to the first priority of our Order's mission? (Leprieur 1989: 37)

For the moment, for Liégé, this would have appeared to have been the end of the matter. Liégé and Avril asked for the customary blessing of the Master and departed for France. Leprieur points out that it was not really the end; 'Liégé was directly monitored, targeted with suspicion, henceforth always vulnerable' (Leprieur 1989: 36).

With hindsight we can see Liégé's summons to Rome as the dramatic preliminary to the much greater troubles to come the following year in which, among other measures, Avril himself, Father Belaud, provincial of the Lyon province, Father Nicolas, provincial of the Toulouse province and Father Boisselot, director of the Dominican Cerf publications, were all to be removed from office.

The climax came with Suarez' visit to Paris in February 1954 (Leprieur 1989: 75). Avril, even before his arrival, had, on February 4th obediently written the doom-laden letter to all Dominican worker-priests recalling them to their convents. Suarez arrived on the 6th. Next morning, at 9.15, he first interviewed the worker-priest Albert Bouche OP, and effectively told him the worker priest initiative was finished. The time had come 'to save the Dominican Order in France' (Leprieur 1989: 76). Leprieur's implication is that the Master of the Order believed that without such drastic measures the very survival of the Dominicans in France was at stake. By the time he left for dinner with the papal nuncio, Mgr Marella, he had secured the resignation of the French provincial. Next day, dubbed by Avril the day of the Grand Purge, the illustrious Fathers Chenu, Féret, Boisselot and Congar were relieved of their teaching responsibilities and banished from the Paris convent (Leprieur 1989: 77-82). In the afternoon a new provincial was summarily appointed and then Suarez met for over an hour with three of the Dominican worker-priests. Liégé was last to be received that day. He had little to fear as he had been defended by several bishops (Leprieur 1989: 509). (It was the French bishops who, above all, had demanded that Suarez bring his Order into line). Suarez told him to redouble his vigilance in these difficult times against anything that might get him summoned to Rome. Suarez himself, alone, would no longer be able to settle the matter next time. Congar wrote in his *Chronique*:

He didn't seem to be particularly touched. The father general told him he'd been defended by certain bishops. But he was being closely watched. The nuncio asked for information about him wherever he went. What's a nuncio doing in the sneaking business? (Leprieur 1989: 517 Note 50)

Even so, Suarez' reference to Liégé in a two-sided, hand-written follow-up letter of the 19th February to his new French provincial makes sinister reading:

You must pay special attention to the activity of P. Regamey and the review *Art Sacré* by gradually finding someone to take over from him. The same thing must also be said about Liégé and his activities... (Leprieur 1989: 103).

Leprieur does not seem surprised that Liégé is mentioned in this way. He comments that Liégé had for a long time been the favourite target of certain detractors, notably among the bishops. On the other hand it is among them that he also finds his defenders and to them he

owed his recent reprieve in 'the great purge'. Leprieur adds that it is worth also noting that Liégé was not directly involved in the worker-priest affair (Leprieur 1989: 103).

Yet he cannot be put into context without reference to it. Chenu called the worker-priest movement the most important religious event since the French revolution. But it was of national, not just religious significance. It was front page news. On February 17th it was the Dominican angle that covered the front page of *Le Canard enchaîné*. It had Academician Paul Claudel and Nobel Prize winner François Mauriac responding at considerable length in *Le Figaro*.⁴⁴¹ According to *Le Monde* 'all French people, Christian or not, are party to the debate' (Leprieur 1989: 135).

Meanwhile Liégé was nothing like as secure as he might have been led to think. Leprieur argues that Suarez was, in the months following his return from France (he was accidentally killed on 30th June 1954), very much under the authority of the congregation of Religious and the Holy Office himself. Having succeeded in protecting Liégé in February, thanks to episcopal support, Suarez in May finds himself obliged to deepen the enquiries about him. By the end of May Suarez has written to the new French provincial, Ducattillon a top secret letter with a double dismissal: that Liégé must 'leave Paris during the summer to be assigned somewhere outside the capital and teach no longer' (Leprieur 1989: 435).

This is astonishing. In February, wanting to be in solidarity with his battered theologian colleagues, he had tried to resign from the *Institut catholique*. Notwithstanding the fact that Liégé had, in the single month of January 1953, been the object of eighty denunciations written to Rome, the authorities had not allowed it, and explicitly confirmed his responsibilities (Leprieur 1989: 592). Congar's *Chronique* is revealing here:

P. Liégé reacted according to a law of absolute candour. He inscribed his *Avent de Saint-Séverin* to the Bishop of Limoges who had denounced him to the Holy Office: 'to Mgr Rastouil, who has done me so much harm'. He offered his resignation to the *Institut catholique* saying that he felt entirely in solidarity, from the point of view of ideas, with Chenu, Féret and me, and that he could only stay in place if he received written assurance from Mgr Blanchet approving not only his teaching but his sympathies (*tendances*), past and present (Leprieur 1989: 598).

Liégé had heard nothing to worry him up to this moment. He enjoyed the double support of the rector of the *Institut catholique* and of the archbishop of Paris. His teaching was not to be found fault with. Moreover the fear that his dismissal would stir up trouble was an important element in his favour. Ducattillon wrote to McDermott, vicar general of the Order on September 6th 1954:

It is sure that his removal from Paris – at least as far as it can't be explained by a special mission entrusted to him – would risk, not a renewal of last winter's agitation, but a revival of certain bitternesses. Father Liégé enjoys a great success in his ministry and he has a great hold on young people in particular. What happens to him would be immediately known and publicized (Leprieur 1989: 598).

⁴⁴¹ Mauriac on 15th February; Claudel in *le Figaro littéraire* 3rd April 1954.

Liégé did not have long to wait. Whereas Congar had to remain in Rome, Ducattillon, with the requisite support, managed to restore Liégé to Paris. On 27th October he wrote to Father Tascon at the general curia in Rome:

His Eminence Cardinal Feltin, archbishop of Paris, after consultation, has declared that he wishes to see Father Liégé continue his teaching at the *Institut catholique* and that he is willing, if need be, to intervene personally with the Holy See to make this request. Moreover, Father Forestier, chaplain general of the *Routiers*, has testified that for six months now Father Liégé has acknowledged the reproaches made to him, that he no longer aroused any grievance, and that his apostolate, very much appreciated everywhere, was fruitful (Leprieur 1989: 598)

Two points from Reynal are of interest here: Reynal's hypothesis is that Feltin had 'greatly appreciated the way in which P. -A. Liégé had helped the parish of Saint Séverin get over the split over J. Massin, and that he discovered, on this occasion, the great qualities of this young Dominican (Reynal 2004: 159). He believes this explains why Feltin protected Liégé but, even though approached directly to offer some support for Congar and Féret, replied with a 'courteous' but negative response (Reynal 2004: 159).

Appendix Four: Resistance to *Parole et Mission* and Liégé's themes in this Journal

There was resistance, first, from the missionary societies themselves, who thought the journal interfering. In those days canon 1350*2 prevailed, by which all territories on earth beyond the jurisdiction of local bishops were exclusively the missionary preserve of the Vatican. With little exception Africa and Asia had the Pope as their Bishop. The missionary societies were authorised by him. *Parole et Mission* was perceived by many to be intruding where it had no business. It was further criticized for not keeping its comments within geographical boundaries: it asked general questions from a sociological, psychological or moral viewpoint that transcended these. The missionary societies preferred their nineteenth century manuals. They had not kept pace with biblical scholarship or other renewals. Not only did *Parole et Mission* appear to threaten the autonomy of the missionary societies, worse, it raised questions about the aim and purpose of mission. The societies were content to 'plant the Church' (Henry 1980: 115). The Dominicans wanted to ask how such seeds would flower into personal faith.⁴⁴² Henry praises 'the intelligence' of Liégé as helping this conflict to move beyond 'such little futile wars' (Henry 1980: 116). By the time of the 1974 Synod on evangelization it was hard to remember the conflicts of the previous decade.

There was also resistance within the Dominicans. It was hard to arouse enthusiasm, even to get communities to subscribe to the review. They were too focussed on their own world to be concerned with the world of mission beyond it. Brothers began to discover in the 1970s that the review had dealt ten years before with issues they were just beginning to discover. There was a lot of indifference to the project. Not many brothers read the review. On the other hand the editorial team received great encouragement from all over the world. One student wrote a thesis on *Parole et Mission*. Priests would say that their ministerial understanding had been radically transformed and re-directed by it.

Until his death in 1964, Father Pierre Boisselot, Director of Cerf publications was at least one great Dominican champion of *Parole et Mission*. As the 1960s wore on, financial pressures increased and financial criteria began to rule. Liégé was very shocked by the 1971 decision to end the review. For him it was an 'injustice' which went beyond reasonable comprehension (Henry 1980: 118). He was thoroughly dismayed about it. He constantly returned to the same questions. There was a particularly stormy joint meeting with both the Dominicans and Cerf. He had had a great respect and affection for the review from the start. In the end Cerf decided to change the review into *Dossiers* that could be sold as books; expensively, in other words. This was an entirely commercial consideration. It was the beginning of the end. In 1973 it was decided to cease publishing even the *Dossiers*.

Liégé not only wrote significantly for *Parole et Mission*, he also became its censor, a responsibility he took seriously (Henry 1980: 119). He requested revisions on countless articles either because he thought they were unbalanced, unfair, not sufficiently to the point, or else because he failed to warm to the hasty, unripe contributions of debutants who were actually capable of better. Not that Liégé was concerned to promote a bookish review, literary for the sake of it. His concern was theological: to promote theology based on real experience from a wide range of perspectives. This is why the *colloques* were so important to

him, in which differing experiences of encounter with 'the other' were presented and lessons were communally drawn out from them (Henry 1980: 120).

The *colloques* were 'rich' (Henry 1980: 120). They cross-fertilised Biblical scholarship with patristics and the great teachers of the faith. Liégé contributed something in addition which brought this theology to human life: his own apostolic and spiritual experience from being with the young, from his being immersed in the world of catechesis and its teaching teams. The list of his involvements is long. He had innumerable friendships with Jewish and Christian believers and unbelievers. He had his contacts in Canada, Africa (where he went many times), and especially South America not to mention his relationship with the *Institut Catholique de Paris*.

The dominant preoccupations of around twenty-five articles Liégé wrote turn on half a dozen key points on which he insisted:

Youth. For him this was 'the heart of missionary care' (Henry 1980: 121)

Modernity. It was crucial to attend to the sharpest possible questions put to faith by secularism, laicism and atheism.

Fundamentalism (*intégrisme*). This was his *bête noire*, being so badly treated by its powerful representatives within ecclesiastical bureaucracy. He felt their approach amounted almost to an abnegation of faith: 'To take such a hard line on precise formulae of faith or behavioural details, straining over the rubrics of the past, forgot, even denied, faith's only treasure, the Holy Spirit (Henry 1980: 121).

Religious liberty. He had worked hard on the drafts of the Council documents about this. For him it was the 'missionary imperative' and a theme he often returned (Henry 1980: 121).

The relation between religion and faith. This was a frequent theme of *colloques* and meetings. For Liégé it was a crucial area. For Henry (1980: 121), 'his Barthian stance of despising religion when compared to faith seemed for a while, a caricature. But for him this was a lot more than a theoretical question. Neither was it just a fashionable issue being talked about by everyone'.

Appendix Five: Pope John XXIII's call of Vatican II

It is often supposed that John XXIII was elected Pope because, such an old man, he would not rock the boat. What the Cardinals must have forgotten is that he had been French Papal Nuncio in Paris from 1945 - 1953 where he had kept his ear to the ground. Five years later he was elected Pope. This appendix is included because it was the pastoral nature of the Council that made it an event both showing the influence of French theologians upon their former Nuncio, and the decisive event of Liégé's life. It responded to the issues Liégé had raised for more than a decade and, after it finished, implementing its decisions was Liégé's chief concern. A brief account of its calling, a pene-miraculous occurrence for Liégé, seems apt.

Pope John XXIII's call for *aggiornamento* (updating) presupposes a conviction that the Catholic Church needed to make a new relationship with the modern world. It was hardly a personal idiosyncrasy. But in the general culture of the Curia this represented a volte-face. We can only speculate how the drama between Rome and the reformers would have worked out if Pius XII had been followed by someone without John XXIII's astonishing vision and tenacity. The announcement of a Council came as a great shock to the old guard of the Curia. Of course they did all they could to control it and more: Congar wrote:

The hopes raised by the announcement of the Council were gradually covered over with a thin layer of ash....The impression was abroad...that in Rome a whole team was busy sabotaging the pope's plan...also that the pope was fully aware of this (Congar 2002: 5).

After three years and nine months of intensive preparation the Curia produced 'a plethora of texts, almost all mediocre, defensive in attitude and preoccupied to set in stone the condition of Roman Catholicism in the 1950s' (Alberigo 1995: 503). But the pope had his Council and the Curia's sabotage failed.

After his ordination to the priesthood on August 10th 1904, Roncalli was immediately appointed secretary to Giacomo Radini Tedeschi, the new bishop of Bergamo, a position he held for ten years. In Alberigo's words,

he experienced what is it to 'think big'; he saw at work a shepherd whose commitment was unbounded; he came in contact with liturgical and ecumenical issues uncommon in Italy; and he shared the initial experiences of Catholic Action (Alberigo 1995: 8).

From 1915 he served in the medical corps then as a military chaplain. After the war he was spiritual director of a seminary in Bergamo, then in Rome as president of the missionary Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Made a bishop in 1925 he served as a diplomat first in Istanbul then in Athens, giving him critical experiences of Islam and Orthodoxy. From 1945 to 1953 he was papal nuncio in Paris during quite exceptional and theologically momentous years in French church history. Then he was patriarch of Venice before becoming pope on 28th October 1958.

Revealingly, after learning of his appointment to Venice he wrote in *Journal of a Soul*:

It is interesting to note that Providence has brought me back to where I began to exercise my priestly vocation, that is to pastoral work. . . . To tell the truth, I have always believed that, for an ecclesiastic, diplomacy (so-called!) must be imbued with a pastoral spirit; otherwise it is of no use and makes a sacred mission look ridiculous (Pope John XXIII 1965: 304-5).

At his coronation a few days after his election, he emphasised his commitment to be a good shepherd and added that other qualities can give the finishing touches to a pope's reign 'but they can by no means be a substitute for his duty as pastor' (Alberigo 1995: 10). From the outset he stressed his pastoral responsibility as bishop of Rome. The many who thought of him as a genial and good-natured elderly man from whose papacy little could be expected had underestimated both the man and what his experience had taught him. Alberigo puts it well:

His temperament led him to 'chew the cud' of his experiences, that is, to sort out the data of experience according to unconventional standards and to store up the results at different levels. Everything that touched him was transformed within him into a lasting memory of his experiences and a sharpening of his perceptions and capacity for judgement, or, in short, into a possession that made him open-minded and ready to look for the signs of the times in everyone and everything he encountered (Alberigo 1995: 11).

In the context of describing Roncalli's attitude to Councils and his distinct interest in their pastoral potential Alberigo comments: 'This priority given to pastoral care was one of the clearest elements in and most intensely sought goals first of his service as bishop and then of his Petrine office' (Alberigo 1995: 12). He followed through his determination to take his pastoral role as Bishop of Rome seriously by announcing a Roman synod which would raise 'in their full seriousness the pastoral problems to be found in the centre of the Catholic world' (Alberigo 1995: 14). Not surprisingly, given all that had come before, John XXIII won considerable sympathy among many Catholics by his constant demonstration of pastoral attitudes.⁴⁴³ Indeed, his pastoral acts; he visited hospitals and prisons (Alberigo 1995: 22). And of course the Council would be a turning point in the journey toward Christian unity (Alberigo 1995: 27). Alberigo again, on press coverage of the announcement of a Council:

The people. . . . whether believers or nonbelievers, Catholics or noncatholics, saw in the elderly pope's undertaking an act of great significance; they read it as a sign of hope and of confidence in the future and in renewal. They saw in it a determination . . . to be involved. Almost without intermediaries, John's initiative came to the attention of millions of women and men and convinced them of its importance (Alberigo 1995: 32).

⁴⁴³ Not universal sympathy of course: Cardinal Spellman in the USA wrote to the pope that the Council seemed to him 'destined for certain failure'!

As early as February 1959 Congar wrote: 'Are not the events of the day the first snowdrops, as it were of an ecumenical springtime? Do they not foretell the coming of a time of mercy?' (Alberigo 1995: 35).

John explicitly held that 'his pastoral commitment and service should be kept distinct from politics' (Alberigo 1995: 52). Whilst avoiding cutting dismissals and polemics he constantly reiterated his own pastoral purposes. Some have thought this vocabulary not to have much weight (Alberigo 1995: 37). But did not this emphasis on the pastoral mean that the Council should follow an inductive theological method rather than deductive Scholasticism? An epochal change (Alberigo 1995: 51).

Alberigo comments in a footnote:

Even in the allocution of January 25 the council was said to have been motivated by 'a concern for the *bonum animarum*.' 'Pastoral' is a key word that expresses the central aspect of Roncalli's ecclesiology, and in fact he preferred to describe the council he had convoked as a 'pastoral council.' 'Pastoral' and words with the same root occupied a very important place in Roncalli's vocabulary. They run through all his many writings and occur about 2000 times, according to the verbal concordance which A. Melloni has prepared at the *Istituto per le scienze religiose* in Bologna. (Alberigo 1995: 37).

Famously John said, a few days after announcing the Council that 'the Church is on a journey'; that his job is 'not to preserve it as though it were a museum'; that it is a living Church committed to 'the journey of life' (Alberigo 1995: 39).

He began to describe the Council as 'a new Pentecost', suggesting radical renewal and leadership by the Spirit rather than by himself. Whereas the Curia prepared for the Council in isolation and secrecy by amassing texts, John focussed on repeatedly setting out his ideas simply and clearly, demonstrating trust 'in the creative abilities of the assembly of bishops' (Alberigo 1995: 49). In successive public gestures and interventions John XXIII reinforced his vision of the Council as a call to all Christians 'to come together in union and to embrace an "*aggiornamento*". It was chiefly this informal, diffuse, and spontaneous preparation that created the conditions that made the Council an effectively innovative event' (Alberigo 1995: 504). The conciliar assembly, once it had convened, showed itself to have understood John's appeal. The tension between it and the curia would feature strongly throughout the Council, but the curia, though it continued to win many battles, was about to embark on a war it would not win (Alberigo 1995: 508).

Appendix Six: Frank Lake and R. A. (Bob) Lambourne

This appendix is included because Frank Lake and R.A. Lambourne seem to me, in their different ways, to complement Liégé's approach and some of his concerns. Lake first drew especially on Melanie Klein and Guntrip, placing an emphasis on the earliest years of childhood. His later writings stressed the 'intrauterine experience' (Lyll 1990: 109). Lake (1966) himself defined clinical theology as 'substantively, putting faith, ultimately, not in human wisdom but in the love and power of God, yet meticulously observant of the sound practice of psychiatry and psychotherapy' (quoted in van de Kastele 2002:55). Like Liégé, Lambourne died young, again for reasons associated with over working. Campbell (1990) writes, 'Lambourne remains, despite his premature death, a major influence on pastoral studies in Britain'. Lyll writes:

An influential voice was that of R.A. Lambourne of Birmingham University. He opposed a too rapid move towards institutional structures with an over-professionalised understanding of ministry based on a problem-solving, counselling-orientated approach. His vision encompassed a pastoral care that was 'lay, corporate, adventurous, variegated and diffuse'. Whether Lambourne's views shaped, or merely reflected, a peculiarly British perspective, only history will judge (Lyll 1990: 110).

Burck and Hunter summarize Lambourne's position as one which

advocates an incarnational and sacramental understanding of the healing ministry, a thoroughly communal understanding of illness and health, and a strongly wholistic understanding of salvation. His conception of pastoral theology includes the task of working out biblical and theological bases for pastoral practice, critiquing current healing theory and practice in their light, and integrating them with the best contemporary medical and psychological wisdom (Burck and Hunter 1990: 870).

In my judgment, Lambourne is the most significant British pastoral theologian of the 1960s and is also a fascinating parallel to Liégé in certain ways. It seems apt to explore his thought in some detail. Like Liégé's pastoral theology, Lambourne's starts from the side of theology not the human sciences. His 'ideas may be theologically grouped under three main headings: creation; salvation and the church. But at no time is a statement unrelated to all three' (Bradbury 1984: 48). Of particular importance is Lambourne's account of human corporateness (Lambourne 1963). Lambourne moves from a wholistic anthropology which he sees as essentially biblical, to a corporate view of sin and of healing. This becomes his model of interpretation for the ministry of Jesus as portrayed in the gospels, especially for his public prophetic signs and gestures, with Christ as 'representative (Lambourne 1963). For Lambourne the gospel message is essentially corporate. 'It is the announcement of salvation from sin/sickness/death/judgement by the entering into new life with Christ, in a new age, as a new man' (Bradbury 1984: 64). Lambourne translates this theology into imperatives on the responsibility of the church to heal and offers a new definition of healing: it is 'a satisfactory response to a crisis made by a group of people both individually and corporately' (Lambourne 1983: 28). For Lambourne (1969:92), health has a purpose set in the broad context of 'God's purposes and man's ultimate destiny'. Thus, medical success may or may not be blasphemous. What matters for Christians is

right response to suffering in faith and obedience. In such a response we are raised to hope by the belief that God brings good out of evil and healing out of suffering. This is the religious insight which can transform *any* medical situation from bitterness to joy. After an accident a man may regain health but remain bitter, cursing God and society. He may thereby bring sorrow to his family and friends. Or he may remain crippled and yet become kinder and humbler. He may develop powers of lifting and helping others.

The Christian is willing to suffer because he knows it can atone. The faith may be summarized thus: Man (Christ) responds perfectly to the suffering (the cross). God joins in (He does not take the cross away) to work for man's salvation (atonement). So the suffering has not been in vain. Armed with this attitude of faith, sickness can be an opportunity to join in partnership with God in his great plan: to use sickness for one's own and all men's salvation, even overcoming the last enemy, death.¹ This faith does not exist in theoretical isolation. It is embodied in a community. It operates from a local fellowship (community). The quality of the community is the measure of the quality of the healing within it. . . Following Jesus, the intensity of the healing response offered by the group goes beyond the merely reasonable. It causes wonder, even persecution. Such faith is only possible because of the belief that God is for man unconditionally; though faith presupposes willingness to suffer, there is nothing masochistic in this. Faith also desires to remove all suffering and evil *completely*. The community's needful quality is *agape*, the empowering love which comes from God alone. Being thus a fellowship of believing and belonging, community life issues in loving behaving. It provides the security which reduces anxiety (the most common of diseases) and a fellowship for sharing which further reduces anxiety.

Where such a community exists and is actually engaged in healing, there is the church. Where it does not, there the church is not. As in the ministry of Christ so in the church, healing is not an optional extra, but an indispensable aspect of its definition. Such a community reaches out to the sufferer because they give him to understand that his suffering is theirs. The sufferer feels his disease, sin and shame is accepted and *shared* (Bradbury 1984: 68-70).

In Lambourne's view the tradition of faith is more than an optimistic view of the potential for good from suffering, coupled with a quality of communal love which helps bring healing about. Rather it stems from the proclamation of a gospel in which the revelatory disclosure of truth, the bringing of salvation, and the bringing of healing by the transformation of suffering, are one and the same event. Not just the one with symptoms but the whole community find salvation and healing in the breakthrough of a new transcendent experience of the living God who always reveals himself to a particular people at a particular time in a particular place. True knowledge of this God is always related to obedience to him (Lambourne 1969). For example, Christ's 'health' was related to his messianic purposes. Had he believed in 'individual-health-for itself', he would never have gone to the cross (Bradbury 1984: 71).

When the bibliography of Lambourne's major book, *Community, Church and Healing* (1963) is analysed, two points are striking: One hundred and twenty one of its one hundred and twenty eight references concern books written during this period; and the overlap between the subject matter of these books and the subject matter of Liégé's output is considerable. Of Lambourne's references, forty-nine strike this researcher as directly concerned with material that Liégé was himself writing about in this period. Lambourne's bibliography cites twenty-one works from the discipline of biblical studies, twenty-one about theology and doctrine, sixteen about the church, twenty-six related to psychology and psychiatry, sixteen related to sociology, and nine about medicine. It is in the fifty-eight references to works about the bible, doctrine and the church that the overlap is most obvious. Liégé was more linked to the disciplines concerned with catechesis, Lambourne more linked to medicine and psychiatry. But they both root their concern for church renewal in biblical and doctrinal studies. This is a pre-mid-1960s assumption they share during this period.

Space does not permit a full examination of Lambourne's ideas. The list of themes, were it possible, would include at least the following: the relation of sin, sickness and salvation in the light of modern views and discoveries; a presentation of Lambourne's 'concept map of the practice of medicine' and the consequences that arise from an analysis of what it reveals; the needed epistemological and anthropological basis for pastoral theology; a critique of the humanism of modern hospitals; a critique of contemporary counselling techniques, assumptions, goals and values; an analysis of judeo-christian deliverance models; various prophetic calls to contemporary institutions of religion and medicine; the gospel as a new *understanding* of health; corporate suffering and political change; psychosocial health and the group environment; healing and sacrament; individual and corporate vocation; individual formation versus we-formation; conceptual repentance; the relation of Christian pastoral care to secular models and to cultural setting and social need; and the role of a local Christian congregation (Bradbury 1984).

The point is that in R.A. Lambourne Britain in the 1960s possessed a potent pastoral theologian who brought a sharp critique to bear on both the fashionable tendencies of his own time and the wider culture shaped by the centuries. Like Liégé he was both a severe critic of, and a prophet railing against, the many distortions of the gospel and unworthy practices of the church as he saw them and a thoroughly positive proponent of practical, but theologically grounded ways forward. Like Liégé his output was in articles, journal contributions, lectures, reviews, conference proceedings, sermons and other papers rather than in a major work, despite his one book in 1963 (which was translated into French). Like Liégé he was prolific in his output of articles: Michael Wilson's collection refers to over a hundred papers between 1963 and 1972 and his list is not definitive (Wilson 1983). Like Liégé he exercised a particular influence on students both lay and ordained. Like Liégé he pioneered a pastoral course in a University. Like Liégé's course, Lambourne's was committed from the outset to an inter-disciplinary approach but based on a firm grasp of fundamental and biblical theology. Like Liégé he had a passion for the life-long formation of Christian individuals and communities into strongly adult, responsibility-taking, thoroughly converted and committed faith. Like Liégé he threw himself into his work, had an over-committed diary and died in his fifties.

A further point of comparison is that, as with Liégé's output, it would seem probable there is far more juice to be extracted from it than has yet been the case. Like Liégé, Lambourne was

very much a man of his times and context with the result that much of his writing appears to have dated quickly. But also like Liégé his writings are well worth revisiting since many of his insights have not been generally assimilated.

Appendix Seven: Jean-Pierre Jossua OP and *displacement*, and Hebblethwaite and the aftermath of the Council

Jossua (1979a) makes a categorical distinction between ‘displacement’ and other forms of recent change such as would be better described as deepening, discovery of research implications, common shifts of interest, new dominant themes and new fashions. Displacement, by contrast, ‘affects the very nature of theological activity, and involves questions about working methods, reference systems, a way of life, and the total human experience of theologians’ (Jossua 1979a: 103).

The changes characterised by displacement are ‘fundamental’. Their effect is to ‘shake the certainty and unity’ of theology and ‘give it the feel it was groping rather than asserting’ (Jossua 1979a: 104). This displacement ‘was much more than “renewal”’ (Jossua 1979a: 104). It ‘was not a simple phenomenon that could be neatly categorized; things were changing in all directions’ (Jossua 1979a: 104). Most of the former, less-than-displacement changes can be grouped under the heading ‘theology of renewal’: new Christologies and credal commentaries; or ‘new fashions such as radical theology, death-of-God theology, theologies of hope or liberation, charismatic or neo-Byzantine theologies’ (Jossua 1979a: 103). Even these examples offered by Jossua seem to breathe a post-Liégeois air, though he lived right through their appearing. Liégeois’s battle had been fought in an atmosphere that can hardly even be called pre-conciliar since no such Council existed in anyone’s wildest dreams. His fight was against exclusive use of scholastic categories, recourse to conservative use of ‘natural’ law or morality, dependence on an uncritical use of biblical or traditional church texts and all that is described above. Liégeois was part of the attack on the scholasticism of what Browning calls the now discredited ‘rational and deductive knowledge about God based upon indubitable first principles’ (Browning 1991: 4) He fought for the movement of biblical renewal, of liturgical renewal, patristic renewal, ecumenical and, finally, ‘missionary’ renewal (Jossua 1979a). He was part of what Jossua describes as ‘an opening-up to the collective and historical dimension of human existence’ and ‘the discovery of modern, especially existential philosophies’ (Jossua 1979a: 104). Strangely Jossua does not even mention catechetical and pastoral renewal which were above all Liégeois’s domain and which most other commentators see as most important. Jossua comments, ‘all this was a great step forward, and one full of promise which would seem enough to be going on with for many years to come. *Concilium* itself was founded on this hope’ (Jossua 1979a: 104). This expresses Liégeois’s position exactly. And of course in 1979 it was ‘still going on: it dominates seminaries all over the world; it is the theme of a flood of books and periodicals aimed at the Christian (Jossua 1979a: 204). But what had not been understood and now could be, to use Hebblethwaite’s words, was that

with hindsight one can see how naïve was the claim to ‘implement’ the Council by a series of subsequent instructions, and how naïve it was to imagine that the whole Church would march in step and with linked arms towards its fulfilment (Hebblethwaite 1975: 17-18).

The Church had showered down documents. Hebblethwaite (1975: 18) comments, ‘their very number muffles their effect and for the most part they are now received with an

indifference, sometimes stoical and sometimes scornful'. Like Jossua, Hebblethwaite (1975: 18) is pointing to the great contrast 'between the *consciously intended* goals of the Council and its *actual effects*'. It had laid down principles, for example about authority or ecumenism, which it could not implement in practice. 'Pope Paul made splendid ecumenical gestures but recoiled from their application' (Hebblethwaite 1975: 19). Hebblethwaite (1975: 19) concludes, the 'lament is not that the high hopes of the Council failed: it is rather that they were bound to fail, and yet they had set up a movement in the Church which is irreversible and to some extent uncontrollable'. Like Hebblethwaite, Jossua has by now spotted disturbances, which, if Liégé also had, there is little evidence from his written output or his contemporaries' personal reminiscences of him to suggest, which reveal what one might call the Pandora's Box quality of these ingredients of renewal. Combined together the impact of all this renewal led to displacement. Jossua puts it like this:

This move was a continuation of 'renewal', change after change, but this time following a logic that had not been foreseen. We could say that all the research that had been done, which up to that point has been essentially positive, accumulated results that overstepped a critical threshold. It would be truer to say that it had come back to the critical threshold that had been reached at the end of the last century, which had been systematically denied by the repression of 'Modernism'. The Protestants, at least in biblical matters, had reached this point at least a century and a half earlier. It was only too easy to mock at their absurdities and their schisms. What they had to pay for, Catholic theology took advantage of: without the results they had achieved, one might well wonder what sort of mess faith in the Church would be in today' (Jossua 1979a: 104-105).

Jossua goes on to point out what this led to. Biblical theology led to a period of intensive exegesis, historical criticism without doctrinal prejudices, new theologies of the New Testament and endless problems of hermeneutics and its criteria. The enthusiasm of liturgical renewal gave way to 'a period of fundamental reflection on the cult and the sacred, during which it was realised that it was easier to restore than create' producing a disappointment that had to be 'painfully analysed' (Jossua 1979a: 105). He continues:

Pleasure in the rediscovery of doctrinal tradition was succeeded by the painful awareness of its diversity, its anachronistic character, its variations in time, and the difficulty of setting up historical frontiers between 'orthodoxy' and 'heresy'. In the ecumenical movement polite official discussions gave way to common research by theologians or local groups on the basis of an agreed common (Jossua 1979a: 105).

Finally 'the burst of "missionary" activity within the old Christian countries – the discovery of unbelief, the efforts to organise to communicate the faith – has died down: it had to be admitted that the obstacles were insurmountable' (Jossua 1979a: 105). All that was left was to attempt to analyse what it was about the Christianity being preached or the cultural situation of those to whom it was being offered that was failing to connect.

So far all this displacement has been as it were in-house. But a second type Jossua (1979a: 105) describes as 'more original and more crucial', 'not a prolongation of anything, but completely new. Modernity is at last making its way into Christian thinking'. New disciplines are used as either tools or reference points. They are both practical and theoretical. They are

not only outside the traditional field or practice of the Church, 'but also difficult or impossible for Christianity to digest' (Jossua 1979a: 105). They are alien in the way Greek philosophy had been centuries before. Jossua (1979a: 105) describes them as 'still too hot for theologians to handle, even though they represent all the last century and a half's efforts to understand and make sense of mankind's most fundamental challenges. Jossua continues:

Of course there had previously been 'dialogues' with 'outsiders', a 'going out into the world' - which was at least something. But the meeting always took place too late between Christians and militant atheists defensively entrenched in their positions. This new style of relationship is completely different (Jossua 1979a: 105-106).

Faced with psychoanalysis and psychology, sociology, linguistics, semiotics, ethnology and the science of religions, theology's interests, methods and stumbling blocks are bound to be deeply affected.

Jossua's analysis continues: Social phenomena have strongly influenced things in ways that amount to a debunking of theologians. There is a new distance from clerical status, academic life, pleasure in systematic thought and dependence on church authorities. University academic theology has been reduced. Theologians are more exposed to a more critical laity. More theologians are doing secular jobs. There is a shift away from large systematic tomes to experience-based theology from common Christian life. Theology has found new forms, new ways of expression, new methods, even theological poetry. There are more essays. Theology is more personal. It is written in the first person. It reaches a wider audience. It implies a new pluralism which accepts new trends and different political positions.

There is a distance from official church texts. Theologians no longer defend them or even address them. Their work is no longer based on them. There has been a change in their sense of duty. Scripture and tradition are now used as reference points rather than authorities. Jossua is here pointing to a profound change in Roman Catholic theological mentality: this last point suggests a strong shift towards approaching theology in a Protestant spirit.

There is more. Theology is now done by people living as members of the church rather than in institutions, especially in the areas of moral and sexual theology. There has been an institutional loss of authority and a general loss of face as the gap increases between what is official and what people actually practise. The result is that theological thought is hesitant 'seeking rather to understand what is happening with some resort to the Gospel, than to pronounce universal rules claiming to be invariable' (Jossua 1979a: 107).

Internationally there is a state of theological instability. There is increased consciousness of differences resulting from different educational approaches, cultural situations and attitudes. Jossua finds the degree of regionalisation surprising:

Instead of becoming more universal, as we expected (international reviews like *Concilium* were created with this end in view), theology has become more and more particularized according to local cultures, which are finding it increasingly difficult to communicate with one another – Germans and Dutch, North Americans, Latin Europe (to which France has come closer) all speaking a different language from the

Latin Americans, Asians and Africans...will we soon have a theology for the rich and a theology for the poor? (Jossua 1979a: 107-108).

Jossua's analysis concludes by his asking, what will theology be like tomorrow? He offers four principal conjectures. First that there will be no 'innocent' use of theological language or complicated systems built on 'reason'. The psychological and social functions of language, the metaphysics implicit in naïve theological language and the crazy character of vast theological edifices will be clear. Secondly, no theology will be constructed that is not built on human experience. No one will pretend to write behind a barrier of objectivity. Theology will need to regain a personal approach and the theologian to speak from 'within himself'. Style will be recognised as important. No past text or present will be treated as absolute. Texts will rather be used for inspiration in trying to say something new. Theology must examine the source of its desire for God. Thirdly, modernity and faith will meet in dialogue rather than confrontation. And what will be the outcome? Jossua does not know. He speculates. Will it lead to a new religion 'derived from Christianity, having taken out from the New Testament and tradition what suits it?' (Jossua 1979a: 109). Or will we have a secular world, a-religious, for which Christian striving remains a provocation and an unavoidable question in its own search for self-transcendence? Or will there be, more classically, a reinterpretation of the essential message of the New Testament, without sacrificing even the 'unbelievable', continuing a tradition that has coped with many such readings? Jossua owns it is hard to decide what the 'essential' is. 'We are all conservatives or demolishers in others' eyes', he laments 'But from here on we will always see that all discourse belongs to a certain context' (Jossua 1979a: 109).

Appendix Eight: Hiltner, Browning and Nouwen

S. Hiltner (1909-84), the Presbyterian minister who became Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Divinity Schools of Chicago and Princeton. Hiltner combined Tillich's correlating of contemporary experience with the theological tradition with Boisen's emphasis on the value of the 'living human document' to create 'one of the first major books on the nature and methods of pastoral theology in the twentieth century' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 416). Like Liégé, and contemporaneously with his endeavours, Hiltner 'sought to clarify the relationship between pastoral theology and other branches of theology, and to offer a particular understanding of what it means to be a pastoral theologian' (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 416). He believed the sub-disciplines of theology 'should be inter-connected' and what you might call inter-influential (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 416). He believes there is no master perspective for theology, that rather all its branches are mutually derivative. Pastoral theology should have the same autonomy as any other branch of theology. He sees that culture and faith are interactive; they need each other; they both contribute questions and partial answers. But pastoral theology is systematic, organised round the nature of the shepherding perspective. And he offers a definition that enables a consistent critical method: Pastoral theology is

that branch or field of theological knowledge and inquiry that brings the shepherding perspective to bear upon all the operations and functions of the church and the minister, and then draws conclusions of a theological order from reflection on these observations (Hiltner 1958: 20 cited by Pattison and Lynch 2005: 416).

For Hiltner pastoral theology is important for a number of reasons: It is needed to help people find meaning. What shepherding involves needs to be aligned with contemporary knowledge (the flock need vitamins as well as being led out to pasture), for example the psychological intellectual climate of today needs to be related to faith. Without pastoral theology the pastor is left with unthought-out practical opportunism whereas acts of shepherding should illuminate faith as well as the other way round. Unfortunately 'at this point...there is no *structural* norm in our Protestant tradition' about how to organise our insights into basic principles. Yet there is an organising pivot for the systematisation of pastoral theology in the shepherding perspective with its three aspects of sustaining, healing and guiding (Pattison and Lynch 2005: 416). Hiltner sees that what is distinctly theological about pastoral theology is that it starts with theological questions and returns either with theological answers or new theological questions. This ongoing inquiry he sees as necessary to correct our distortions of revelation. Jesus is the Final Word but our understanding of what it means to proclaim that changes.

Don Browning's *A Fundamental Practical Theology* (1991) is a complex book.⁴⁴⁴ Browning liberates practical theology from any vestigial notions of 'applied theology'. All theology should integrate itself within practical theology as just a specific 'moment'. It is both public and theological. It articulates a Christian position that is philosophically and scientifically defensible, a position that was not easy to articulate prior to recent work in hermeneutics and the philosophy of science. As Pattison and Lynch (2005: 417) put it, 'Browning significantly locates the understanding of practical theology within wider trends in cognate disciplines'.

To this end he calls to the witness box of practical reason or *phronesis* a formidable line up: Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hume, Kant, the American Pragmatists William James and John Dewey, the neopragmatists Richard Rorty and Richard Bernstein. Additionally he dialogues with the hermeneutic theory of Hans-Georg Gadamer, the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas and the communitarianism of Alasdair MacIntyre. He cites Donald Schon's, *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983) to illustrate the renewal of interest in acting and reflecting which he considers important. He acknowledges the fragmentation of former 'shared assumptive worlds' that parallels the discussion of *displacement* in the previous section (Browning 1991: 4). He sees two extreme possibilities for humans: we can rely on theoretical and technical reason to solve our problems or on custom and tradition. He considers, 'we swing from one extreme to the other because we lack a clear idea of how practical reason and tradition relate to one another' (Browning 1991: 4). In his view we will either have to reconstruct tradition or use practical reasoning without it.

He does not have to fight Liégé's battles. He can start by claiming that the older scholastic theology, rational and deductive knowledge about God based upon indubitable first principles, is now widely rejected. He notes that more recent theologians such as Barth, Tillich, Metz, Bonino, Hauerwas, Tracy, Ricoeur, a very diverse range, see theology as 'systematic reflection on the historical self-understanding of a particular religious tradition' and give important roles to myth, story, legend, symbol and metaphor (Browning 1991: 5). He takes issue with Barth, for whom theology is 'systematic interpretation of God's self-disclosure to the Christian church' (Barth 1936). In this understanding, God's revelation is applied, from revelation to the human, from theory to practice, from revealed knowledge to application. But the theologian actually comes to the table with practical questions from the

⁴⁴⁴ A review by Richard R. Osmer (1998) judges it the most important book of practical theology by an American in the last twenty five years. He sees that it builds on the 'Revisionist' approach of Tracy, to develop a model of theology as a whole as practical and also of practical theology proper (strategic theology) within this comprehensive model. He describes the scope of book as 'encyclopedic': Like the encyclopedias of old 'it addresses all the tasks of theology in their distinction and unity, portraying them as integrated 'moments' in a complex hermeneutical whole'. Browning, writes Osmer, makes two moves to do this: First 'he develops a comprehensive model of practical reason that is common to all forms of human enquiry'. Then he brings this into theology and shows theological interpretation as including 'descriptive, historical, systematic and strategic moments'. Osmer sees Browning's model of practical reason as the fruit of 'a *recherché* conversation' between the philosophical hermeneutics of, especially, Gadamer and Ricoeur and pragmatism, especially that of James. It works as a hermeneutical circle. It starts in historically situated communities, shaped by traditions of moral meaning and practice. When a problem arises one goes back to the classic texts etc to see what light they show. This is compared with present responses to see what is best for the future. It is a neo-pragmatist idea of thought and action. This underpins theology as a whole. So descriptive, historical, systematic and theology are determined like this and strategic theology suffuses the whole: 'It is the starting point of inquiry and the culminating moment of new forms of interpretation'.

outset, shaped by secular world and religious practices. These are theory-laden, as all practice is.

Browning thinks it is only when a religious community encounters a problem that it starts to re-examine its theory-laden practices. This examination leads to new, reconstructed religious meanings and practices and a changed relationship with sacred texts until the next crisis comes along. There is a constant process of reconstruction and deconstruction.

Browning's method is to go from practice to theory and back to practice; from present theory-laden practice to a retrieval of normative theory-laden practice to the creation of a more critically held theory-laden practice.⁴⁴⁵ Browning does not see his as a subspecialty called practical theology: 'on the contrary it is my proposed model for theology as such. (Browning 1991: 7). His reason for this is that practical thinking is at the centre of human thinking and theoretical and technical thinking are abstractions from this. Whereas the Protestant *quadrivium* saw theology as including the Bible, church history, systematic theology and practical theology (Farley 1983a), Browning thinks of his as a fundamental practical theology with descriptive, historical, systematic and strategic practical theology as submovements of this.

Faith communities do not exercise practical wisdom despite but because of their symbols and convictions. Practical reason is always surrounded by images of the world rooted in faith assumptions. Theology since the 1940s, acknowledging this, has moved towards the category of the practical. Browning offers five dimensions or levels of practical reasoning: the visional; the obligatory, which includes making judgements about justice; tendency-need, which includes making judgements about human nature's basic needs and the premoral goods required to meet them; environmental-social, asking what constraints on our needs are imposed by our social system and environment; the rule-role level concerns what concrete patterns might be best for practice (Browning 1991 x, 71f). He is influenced by Gadamer's hermeneutic process. He assumes that all understanding proceeds as a conversation or dialogue: I bring my questions and commitments. The situation to be understood brings its questions and commitments. Our present concern shapes the way we interpret the past. So reconstructing or appropriating the past can solve present problems. This practical theology is a two-way street. It has an outer envelope, its tradition, narratives and inherited practices and an inner core, summarised as love your neighbour as yourself or do as you would be done by.

Browning defines fundamental practical theology as: 'critical reflection on the church's dialogue with Christian sources and other communities of experience and interpretation with the aim of guiding its action toward social, and individual transformation' (Browning 1991: 36).

Browning suggests his critical revised correlational approach because it connects two theological poles that tend to get separated: namely, the confessional approach which witnesses to the narrative structure of the faith, and apologetics which defends the rationality of faith. Modern Christians live out of the questions that emerge from the Christian and non-Christian aspects of their lives which they inherit from their christian/nonchristian past.

⁴⁴⁵ Not this way but the Barthian theory-to-practice model dominated western education in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

All this needs to be correlated. Browning is in general agreement with Tracy's approach; that of a critical mutual dialogue between interpretations of the Christian message and interpretations of contemporary culture and practice. In other words between the implicit questions and explicit answers of the Christian classic and the explicit questions and implicit answers of contemporary culture. Tracy's own definition of practical theology (1983) is 'the mutually critical correlation of the interpreted theory and praxis of the Christian faith with the interpreted theory and praxis of the contemporary situation' (Browning 1991: 47).

Descriptive theology may be seen as 'horizon analysis' of the cultural and religious meanings that surround our religious and secular practices (Browning 1991: 47). It raises such questions as: what are we doing? What reasons, symbols and ideals do we use to interpret what we are doing? What do we consider to be the sources of authority and legitimation for what we are doing? We then need historical theology to put the emergent questions to the Christian texts and ask what they imply for us. Such hermeneutics is a community process. Gadamer's understanding of systematic theology is 'the fusion of horizons between the vision implicit in contemporary practices and the vision implied in the practices of the normative Christian texts' (Browning 1991: 51). It involves an examination of the general gospel themes and the general contemporary themes such as modernity, liberal democracy or technical rationality. Specifically it involves two questions: what new horizon of meaning is fused when questions from present practices are brought to the central Christian witness? And what reasons can be advanced to support the validity claims of this new fusion of meaning? To respond to these questions is bound to involve philosophy. For what are the criteria for testing such truth claims? Browning considers these are established by theological ethics.

Browning (1991: 55-56) has these questions for his strategic practical theology to ask: How do we understand this concrete situation in which we must act? The task is to enquire into special histories, commitments, the needs of the agents, systems and religio-cultural narratives. The second question is: what should be our praxis in this concrete situation? This draws on all that descriptive theology has brought to light together with the fruits of historical and systematic theologies' efforts to discover the symbolic and actional norms operating in the situation. The third question is: how do we critically defend the norms of our praxis in this concrete situation? This is where Browning applies his five dimensions with all they entail. The fourth question is: What means, strategies and rhetorics should we use in this concrete situation?

Browning now examines the influence of the human sciences on practical theology. Psychology has influenced pastoral care. Sociology has influenced liberation and political theology and church planning. Anthropology has influenced liturgy and religious education. The psychology of moral development, especially the work of Kohlberg, Gilligan and Freud and Erikson's developmental psychology have impacted on our understanding of human and Christian maturity. But theology's drawing on these sciences has been methodologically primitive and without a proper critical understanding of the relation of hermeneutics to epistemology (Browning 1991: 82). This is why practical theology needs an approach like Browning's.

Finally, here is a summary of what Browning (1991: 278ff.) has to say about 'transformation' which is what is aimed for when practical theology is made full use of. It 'follows the

dynamics of dialogue in practice-theory-practice rhythm'. It is a mutual process. Sometimes transformation is a visional alteration which reframes or offers a new narrative, story, or myth. Sometimes it is at the obligational level. For example, a new experience might challenge an old obligation. Sometimes it occurs at the tendency-need level: needs might be able to be addressed more consciously or directly. It may happen at the environmental-social level as when, say, the environment is more taken into account because of new information. Finally it can occur at rule/role level where a role may change. Indeed by changing a role changed in other dimensions might also follow.

Browning believes that 'crisis is a necessary but insufficient condition for transformation' (Browning 1991: 281). A crisis can expose inadequacies of old ways of doing things. Transformation can either lead to a break up and a restructuring or to a deepening and consolidation. Love is essential but transformation may need other factors too such as a crisis or a separation; for 'under every crisis is the threat of separation from meaningful and life-sustaining relationships'. And if any of this gets denied love by itself can achieve little. Support is important. There is a need for Winnicott's 'holding environment' to contain and manage anxiety whilst transition takes place. Browning writes: 'Love overcomes sin because it lowers anxiety and the need to hold on desperately to our self-justifying manoeuvres' (Browning 1991: 283). So descriptive theology is restorative because people like to be understood; indeed this is a deep hunger of the human spirit that helps build self-esteem and self-cohesion. Descriptive theology is thus an act of empathy. And in this context 'leadership is a matter of energizing, contributing to, and orchestrating the various levels of practical reasoning that function in a group' (Browning 1991: 288)

Henri Nouwen's was not a globally interdisciplinary pastoral theological approach, more a bilateral one, a partnership between theology and psychology. He wanted to enrich his psychiatric practice with theology more than the other way round. Like Liégé, Nouwen wants to stay with the big theological questions such as what does Christianity mean today and what does that imply for a minister? Nouwen's, unlike Browning's or Viau's, was not a systematising epistemological approach trying to get Christianity into a philosophical framework but an existential approach trying to get Christianity into a framework that was meaningful now and liveable today.

For example, his starting point is fear, such as that of new learning. His insight derives from thoughts about the nature of anxiety and the defences. He starts pastorally, from the perspective of a suffering world, a suffering generation, a suffering man, and a suffering pastor. He proceeds from the questioning by pastors of their relevance and effectiveness. He wants to respond to these matters rather than develop 'a fully documented theoretical argument' (Nouwen 1972: xiii-xiv). He assumes theology is fragmented. But his basic assumption is that 'the minister is called to recognise the sufferings of his own time in his own heart and make that recognition the starting point of his service' because 'his service will not be perceived as authentic unless it comes from a heart wounded by the suffering about which he speaks' (Nouwen 1972: xiv). The minister must 'make his own wounds available as a source of healing' (Nouwen 1972: xiv).

His starting context is 'nuclear man' who has lost faith in technological progress and is aware of his potential for self-destruction; who is aware of a loss of ecological balance and of the threat of pollution; who is technologically alienated from the instruments he uses, such as his

car; who is affluent but looking for meaning and direction, and aware there might be no future. Nouwen (1972: 7-15) draws on the psycho-historian R.J.Lifton for his concepts of historical dislocation, for example that stable expectations about a job or marriage are less shared now than they were. There is a loss of continuity, a sense of being no longer meaningfully integrated into history as the traditional Christian message had suggested. He notes the current fragmented ideologies, with their fast-shifting value systems and contradictions: a man always went to mass but now he does not and it seems to make no difference. There is a rocket to take man to the moon but meanwhile the world is dogged with war and extreme poverty. In these circumstances the ideology of the former Christianity can reinforce scepticism. Similarly at a time when there is a pervasive loss of sense that there is meaning beyond this life, a religion whose symbols are about hell, heaven, resurrection and the Kingdom of God is going to struggle.

Nouwen (1972: 15), drawing on Lifton's idea of 'experiential transcendence', works out what nuclear man does in the face of this predicament and suggests a twofold response: the mystical way, exploring such activity as meditation; and the revolutionary way of radical activism. Nouwen (1972: 19-21) suggests a third, Christian, way which unites these. He points to Jesus as the exemplar of one who proclaims that changing the heart and changing society belong together. Next he focusses on the rootlessness of this generation (circa 1972) that tends to withdraw into self, making the personal an absolute priority, accepting that each person must make his own meaning, and quite unwilling to accept what 'the father' believes or what has simply been inherited. It is a convulsive generation that knows something is terribly wrong with the world. It is not far from suicidal. Having diagnosed his sense of the problem, Nouwen (1972: 36-47) suggests that it calls for three roles from tomorrow's leader. He needs to be the articulator of inner events: By his own self-knowledge he can offer a map of the inner world that enables others to state where they are. Secondly he will need compassion as 'the core and nature of authority' (Nouwen 1972: 40). He needs to understand the nature of inner conflict and the need for love. It is a compassion that goes as far as to say, 'when they kill we know that we could have done it' and that allows for the possibility of forgiveness and thus hope (Nouwen 1972: 41). Thirdly he must be a contemplative who can break through the vicious circle of immediate needs which demand immediate satisfaction (Nouwen 1972: 43-46). Nouwen offers a case study based on a hopeless man in hospital who is met with an inadequate response by a student. What this teaches is that the student needed more personal concern, more embodied sense of faith in the value and meaning of life and more hope. He has to learn really to enter the agony of others. Nouwen claims that the minister is lonely too. He writes:

Making one's own wounds a source of healing, therefore, does not call for a sharing of superficial personal pains but for a constant willingness to see one's own pain and suffering as rising from the depth of the human condition which all men share (Nouwen 1972: 90).

This does not deny but deepens and broadens the concept of self-realization. Why? Because it is a function of hospitality:

Hospitality is the virtue which allows us to break through the narrowness of our own fears and to open our houses to the stranger, with the intuition that salvation comes to us in the form of a tired traveller. Hospitality makes anxious disciples into

powerful witnesses, makes suspicious owners into generous givers, and makes closed-minded sectarians into interested recipients of new ideas and insights... Hospitality requires first of all that the host feel at home in his own house, and secondly that he create a free and fearless place for the unexpected visitor.... Hospitality is the ability to pay attention to the guest. This is very difficult, since we are preoccupied with our own needs, worries and tensions, which prevent us from taking distance from ourselves in order to pay attention to others' (Nouwen 1972:91).

To be at home in your own house you need to discover the centre of your own life in your own heart. Nouwen quotes James Hillman on counselling, 'withdrawal of myself aids the other to come into being' (Nouwen 1972: 93).

What does a host offer? A friendly space where the guest may feel free to come and go, to be close and distant, to talk and be silent, to eat and to fast. The paradox indeed is that 'hospitality asks for the creation of an empty space where the guest can find his own soul' (Nouwen 1972: 94). This is healing 'because it takes away the false illusion that wholeness can be given by one to another...it does not take away the loneliness and the pain of another, but invites him to recognise his loneliness on a level where it can be shared' (Nouwen 1972: 94). Hospitality, Nouwen is saying, allows you to connect your suffering to the human condition and to share it, which leads to hope and encourages community. This is a very Lambournesque idea (Lambourne 1963).

The Christian community is therefore a healing community not because wounds are cured and pains are alleviated, but because wounds and pains become openings or occasions for a new vision. Mutual confession then becomes a mutual deepening of hope, and sharing weakness becomes a reminder to one and all of the coming strength (Nouwen 1972: 96).

This book has been influential. Nouwen's biographer writes:

Over the course of twenty years, he was responsible for popularising the concept of the wounded healer which he traced back to its biblical foundations. His work transformed pastoral teaching in the Church by showing that priests and ministers need not be afraid to own their own wounds and use them to heal (Ford 1999: 64).

In later writings, 'Nouwen moved from an engagement with the human sciences to placing greater emphasis on the relevance of the Christian tradition and specifically religious experience for contemporary life'. It is a 'personal and fragmented attempt' to link this tradition 'to key themes and struggles of contemporary experience such as loneliness, sexuality, violence and social justice' (Ford 1999: 16). His is 'an inhabited wisdom based on spiritual discipline, a contemplative and creative insight into the process of living within a sense of religious vocation' (Ford 1999: 17).

Appendix Nine: Wesley Carr and others' approach to the pastoral ministry of the Church of England

Carr and his colleagues (1992) start by asserting that this church must pay attention to its institutional survival. It cannot allow itself to wither as if it might lose its life for the gospel (Carr 1992: 1). This approach notes that this church is assigned a range of functions by people who are not its members, 'some hardly discerned within the church itself' (Carr 1992: 1). The authors believe in a specific, God given vocation for the Church of England expressed in a distinctive ministry and through a theological rationale (Carr 1992: 2). They accept that others, more sectarian, stand for a more 'full commitment' and will not like their argument. They note that 'in local ecumenical projects the Anglicans are usually the least ecclesiological sophisticated, often to the dismay of their fellow Christians' (Carr 1992: 2). But they believe the Church of England 'achieves more transformation in the lives of individuals, groups and society than is often realised', though they do not say what this transformation consists of (Carr 1992: 4). They note too that the Church of England is full of divisions, Catholic, Reformed (Evangelical) and Liberal and that this was always so (Carr 1992: 7). The study distinguishes between high and low establishment; high, associated with the House of Lords; and earthed, as expressed through the parson who is given a parish first and a congregation second. It sees the nature of the church 'as a body with frayed edges, which encourages association as a means to ministry rather than membership as a means to belief' (Carr 1992: 8). It sees the idea of an established church as not merely an Erastian error, but as 'a specific ecclesiology...potentially of duty and ministry' and notes that the closure of a church or the introduction of a new prayer book (1980) creates an outcry, that even includes atheists (Carr 1992: 9).

It states that the Church of England 'is not particularly strong on the rationale for distinctive ecclesiologies, and especially one for itself. It has taken a more pragmatic approach, which pays off in terms of the practice of ministry but may encourage self-doubt in inter-church relations' (Carr 1992: 9). It sees that this Church's basic organisation has been to engage with people whatever the form of society. It has clung to the notion of a wider, catholic church, with episcopacy, and a parish system that enables pastoral availability. It judges that the twentieth century has seen increased bureaucratisation 'with a consequent diminishing of efforts to justify its activities theologically' (Carr 1992: 10). Since the context is now one of pluralism, the current debate concerns the place of 'religion' within society, especially the status of 'a specific form of that religion', the Church of England (Carr 1992: 11).

Though the *via media* associated with this church popularly means tolerance. It is in fact

a powerful concept of a theological method which is worthy of defence. From Jewel, Hooker and Andrewes to Maurice, Gore, Temple and Ramsey, a method has been created which gives priority to God and the unknowability of faith rather than to merely agreement to differ' (Carr 1992: 12).

As an example it cites Robert Runcie's description of Michael Ramsey as 'a man of "thoughtful holiness", which well describes the quintessence of Anglican theology and practice' (Carr 1992: 12). Thoughtfulness conveys 'a gently sceptical attitude towards the certainties which other Christians may display'; whereas holiness is 'a sense that in the end all

that matters is a sense of the presence of God, which is usually found in public worship and the spirituality of prayers learned and repeated by rote' (Carr 1992: 12).

The key principle is that the Anglican church organises itself around providing a parson with the care of souls for everyone 'having before God responsibility for their destiny, an ideal which is articulated in the ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer and which continues to inspire the finest parish priests' (Carr 1992: 12). 'One prominent dimension of this pastoring has been the pastor's willingness to engage with and respond to what is, now significantly with increasing disparagement called "folk religion"' (Carr 1992: 12).

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