Notes and Comments

"GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDY AND TEACHING OF THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL DOCTRINE IN THE FORMATION OF PRIESTS": A COMMENTARY

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INTRODUCTION

The Congregation for Catholic Education has recently issued a document which, though primarily intended for seminaries and schools of theology, is of interest to all those engaged in the study and propagation of the social teaching of the Church. Inasmuch as its dissemination has apparently been very limited, even among seminaries and schools of theology, it is not unlikely that it will remain unknown to all but the rather exiguous number who are regular readers of the English edition of L'Osservatore Romano. 1 Since much of its content deserves to be far more widely known, even apart from the education of future priests, these notes will present its main points, at least in summary form, and call attention to several clarifications given in the document on questions related to Church social doctrine.

Abbreviations used in the article:

AAS Acta Apostolicae Sedis
CCE Congregation for Catholic Education
CDF Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
EN Evangelii Nuntiandi
GS Gaudium et Spes
LC Libertatis Conscientia
LE Laborem Exercens
MM Mater et Magistra
OA Octogesima Adveniens
PP Populorum Progressio
PT Pacem in Terris
QA Quadragesimo Anno
RN Rerum Novarum
SRS Sollicitudo Rei Socialis

1. The English translation of the Guidelines appeared in L'Osservatore Romano (English edition), 7 August 1989, pp. 3-10 and 14 August 1989, pp. 3-10. The English edition in pamphlet form given to the bishops bears the date 1988. As of this writing, the document has not been published in the AAS.
"SOCIAL DOCTRINE" OF THE CHURCH

Before beginning, it might be good to clarify the term "social doctrine," a term which had all but disappeared from official vocabulary in the time of Paul VI, and whose revival by John Paul II led to numerous, often impassioned, articles attempting or demanding an explanation. In its foreword ("Premise") the Guidelines hasten to explain that the terms "social doctrine" and "social teaching" are used interchangeably here as in the documents of the magisterium, though acknowledging the different nuance implied by each of the terms: "'doctrine'... stresses more the theoretical aspect of the problem, and 'teaching' the historical and practical aspect, but both stand for the same reality (no. 1)." This reality is the "rich heritage" which the Church must on the one hand preserve, on the other hand, develop, "by responding gradually to the new emerging needs of human co-existence" (ibid.).

After disposing of this point of contention, the document is divided into six chapters and two appendixes. The first chapter discusses the nature of Church social doctrine; the second traces the "historical dimension," that is, its development in the history of the Church. The third to fifth chapters explain the threefold definition of the content of Church social teaching enunciated by Paul VI and often repeated by John Paul II: permanent principles, criteria for judgment, and directives for action. The sixth chapter is devoted to specific and practical indications on the formation of the candidate for the priesthood in the social teaching of the Church. The first appendix is an "Index of Topics Which May Be Useful in Teaching the Social Doctrine of the Church in Seminaries," — a suggested outline of a program for the use of professors, intended to be adapted to particular needs. The second appendix contains the English texts for the more important citations from papal documents referred to in the footnotes.

CONTINUITY AND DEVELOPMENT

What is most significant in the first chapter on the nature of

Church social doctrine is the insistence on its twofold character: *permanent*, inasmuch as based on the Gospel and the ethical principles flowing from it; and *changing*, inasmuch as "...it develops in relation to the changeable circumstances of history and is directed essentially toward 'Christian action or practice'" (no. 3). This distinction, which goes to the heart of the doctrine vs. teaching debate, recurs in various forms throughout the document.

In accord with this historical character, "the social doctrine of the Church needs to be continuously updated and made responsive to the new situations of the world and history" (no. 11). At the same time, "it preserves a substantial identity as a doctrinal 'corpus' with great coherency" (ibid.). Nonetheless, it is the historical dynamism of social doctrine and its changing response to a changing world which receive the emphasis.

**HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The effort to show the social dimension of Christianity in the Scriptures, the mission of Jesus, and the mission of the Church in a little over two pages, is justified, but of necessity only superficial. It is recognized that it was the Industrial Revolution which brought in a new type of response, for the earlier thought of Aquinas, Suárez, and Vitoria only "prepared the presuppositions and necessary instruments for the working out of a true and proper social doctrine such as was introduced under the Supreme Pontiff Leo XIII and continued by his successors" (no. 17). Though this is undoubtedly true, the document does not make clear just what the difference was between the two periods. It would have been more enlightening to say that the Church, in fidelity to the Scriptures, has always shown concern for the *social needs* of the poor, rather than to attempt to trace her *social doctrine* back to salvation history.

Be that as it may, the rest of the chapter is devoted to the "formation of the historical heritage" from Leo XIII onward. The Guidelines preface this historical sketch with the observation that the function of social doctrine is always to cast the light of faith on the real situation of society, especially when human dignity is offended in it. Hence, it may be said that:
the real character of social doctrine comes from the conformity of its directives regarding problems of a given historical situation, with the ethical requirements of the evangelical message, that calls for an in-depth transformation of the person and groups in order to achieve an authentic and integral liberation (no. 18).

I take this to mean that one may judge the authenticity of the Church's social doctrine for a particular time and place by the extent to which it conveys those moral demands of the Gospel message on persons and groups, whose fulfillment will lead to authentic and integral liberation.

To the achievement of this criterion, however, the Guidelines add a caution:

In order to understand the historical development of social doctrine, the socio-cultural context of each document must be penetrated, and the economic, social, political, and cultural conditions in which it was issued, must be understood. Then, in the various pronouncements the pastoral intentions of the Church can be better understood in relation to the situation of the society being examined and the scope of the social problem (ibid.).

Though to the historian it is a basic principle that every document must be understood, as the Guidelines say, in its total historical context, the history of doctrine and of theology, and the history of social doctrine in particular, have all too often ignored this principle. Here the CCE sets the foundation for the practical principles it will lay down for the teaching of Church social doctrine. Most important of these is the fact that Church social teaching cannot be understood simply by gathering texts under particular headings, nor even simply be a systematic treatment based on a historically-aware reading of the documents. At least in its first steps, the teaching of social doctrine must be itself historical in character if it is to respond to the demands outlined in the quotation above. More concretely, the teaching of social doctrine ought to be preceded and accompanied by the history of the period in which the particular pope, whose document is being dealt with, lived and spoke.

It is evidently with that purpose that the rest of the chapter discusses the background of each of the popes who have written on
the social problem, from Leo XIII to John Paul II, including Vatican II with "Gaudium et Spes." For each document it gives the historical situation in answer to which the document was written, and briefly summarizes the main points of its teaching.

Satisfactory as this may be to the historian and the historically-aware theologian as a first step, the CCE unfortunately fails to implement fully, and thus satisfactorily, its own cautions on how to read these historically situated documents.

For if its summary of the positive contributions of the documents is valid enough, one can hardly be said to measure the documents against the historical situation they address themselves to if nothing is said of the limitations of the documents. Such is the case, for example, concerning the inadequacy of the treatment of private property in Rerum Novarum, where the failure to speak clearly of the universal destination of the goods of the earth, emphasized by Aquinas, left the Catholic community with a onesided and basically false emphasis on the rights of private property for the forty years before Quadragesimo Anno. Nor do the proposals on corporatism made by Pius XI receive here a treatment which would give the reader an idea of the problems caused at the time by his incautious commendation of the corporative system.

Though the intention behind his proposal of supporting intermediate bodies between the state and the individual remains a valid part of Church social doctrine (e.g., MM 65; PP 33; OA 46), the perhaps unforeseen support it gave to antidemocratic regimes like those of Salazar in Portugal and Franco in Spain discredited Catholic social doctrine in the eyes of many in the years before World War II.

Valuable as the line of positive assertion is in this historical sketch, it cannot escape the accusation of a certain triumphalistic tone quite in discord with the principles laid down in the introduction to this section. It would be too much, one supposes, to expect mention of the retrograde attitude of Pius X, but without an understanding of his attitude and the unfortunate measures it inspired, the student can scarcely be expected to account for the failures of the promising Catholic Social Movement of the early twentieth century. Nonetheless, it is something to have a recogni-

3. See the discussion ibid. 92-94.
4. Ibid. 89-90.
tion at least in principle of the need for a historical contextualization of the documents of Church social teaching.

One final remark deserves to be made in this historical survey with regard to the shift in methodology which is generally acknowledged to have taken place with John XXIII and to have continued to the present. The Guidelines remark in this connection:

The style and language of Pope John XXIII’s Encyclicals confer on social doctrine a new capacity with regard to its approach and influence on the new situations without neglecting the law of continuity with the preceding tradition. Therefore, one cannot speak of an “epistemological shift.” It is certain that the tendency surfaces of giving value to the empirical and the sociological aspects but, at the same time, the theological motivation in social doctrine is accentuated. This is all the more obvious if a comparison is made with the preceding documents in which philosophical reflection predominates and argumentation is based on the principles of natural law (no. 23).

It is difficult to understand the argumentation here. The “epistemological shift” which has been remarked has nothing to do with the notably more theological character of John’s encyclicals. Rather what has been adverted to by many commentators is the shift from a predominantly deductive method in John’s predecessors to one which is predominantly inductive and historically conscious, that is, to what the Guidelines refer to as “the tendency . . . of giving value to the empirical and the sociological aspects.” This is, of course, a discontinuity in method, and an important one, but does not affect the permanent aspect of Church social doctrine, i.e., the principles and criteria, at least directly. The shift to the inductive method, which is at the heart of the “signs of the times” methodology first suggested by John, and consecrated in Gaudium et Spes, does in fact involve an epistemological shift, but does not neglect the “law” of continuity with the preceding tradition. Indeed, theologians have remarked how many of John’s statements in Mater et Magistra, though approached from a different vantage point, are in fact already to be found in the writings of Pius XII.5 The latter can, in one real sense, be called “the im-

mediate precursor of Vatican Council II and of the social teaching of the Popes who followed him," as the Guidelines say (no. 22), and as the list of topics presented there as principal points of his social doctrine demonstrates (ibid.).

PERMANENT PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

In the third chapter the Guidelines treat of the "permanent principles" and "fundamental values" "which must not be omitted in teaching the social doctrine of the Church" (no. 29). "Principles of reflection" have been repeatedly mentioned by Paul VI and John Paul II (OA 4; LC 72; SRS 8, 41) as being one of the constitutive parts of the Church's social doctrine; "fundamental values" is a phrase which has not been so technically used till now. Nonetheless, the connection is easily seen. The Guidelines, which treat the two elements separately in this chapter, remark at the beginning of the section dealing with values:

The principles for reflection of the Church's social doctrine, as laws governing social life, are not independent from real recognition of the fundamental values inherent in the dignity of the human person (no. 43).

The permanent principles of reflection, the Guidelines warn, have been drawn from the whole series of documents emerging from the magisterium, but their presentation here should not be considered to be some sort of new synthesis or manual of principles. The point, I think, is well-made — one is not to take this compilation of principles as a substitute for studying the Church documents themselves, in their total historical context. It is precisely in seeing in the concrete the differing practical judgments that these principles have produced on the part of the magisterium that their full import will be understood. Nor is this compilation to be considered complete or exhaustive; it is "simply an indication of those [principles] which are to be considered the more important ones and therefore worthy of special attention in the formation of future priests" (no. 30).

The Guidelines further note:

Among these, the principles regarding persons, the common good, solidar-
ity and participation are to be considered fundamental. The others are intimately connected and are derived from them (ibid.).

The document does not however, list the principles as such, but rather presents a series of topics (even with some digressions) from whose explanation one must disengage the principles themselves. These may be presented, I think, as follows:

1. The human person has a dignity based on its natural and supernatural origin, is intelligent and free; is the subject of rights and duties, and is the primary principle of the social teaching of the Church (no. 31).

2. The human person is possessed of certain rights derived from its human dignity, whose defense is part of the Church’s saving mission (no. 32).

3. These rights are to be understood within the context of solidarity and in relation to the human community (no. 33).

4. Not only individual persons but nations and peoples are the subject of rights to their own development (ibid).

5. The human person is a social being by its very nature (no. 34).

6. Within society the common good is the principle which governs the interests of the individual (no. 37).

7. The principles of solidarity and subsidiarity (no. 38).

8. An organic concept of social life: society is founded not only on individual free persons but comprises other intermediate societies beginning with the family, which are integrated into higher units (no. 39).

9. The principle of participation (no. 40).

10. Social structures must be balanced with the creation of human communities which allow the development of a true humanism (no. 41).

11. The primary principle ordering the use of goods is their destination for the good of all (no. 42).

The “fundamental values” derived from the dignity of the person, which the Church has proposed as the true foundations of a society worthy of the human person, are enumerated by the Guidelines as follows: truth, freedom, justice, solidarity, peace, and charity or Christian love (no. 43). While recognizing the autonomy of earthly realities, without the exercise of these virtues which “demonstrate the priority of ethics over techniques, the primacy of the person over things, the superiority of spirit over matter,” the good of the human person in social life cannot be attained (no. 44).
CRITERIA FOR JUDGMENT

The introduction of a new phrase, "fundamental values," together with the "permanent principles" used by Paul VI, John Paul II, and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in its second instruction on liberation theology, Libertatis Conscientia, can be a source of confusion. Though, as I have remarked above, the connection of these values with the permanent principles is easily seen, the rationale for another category is not immediately evident. A partial answer is to be found in the next chapter, entitled: "Criteria for Judgment." It is only on a careful reading of this fourth chapter, however, that it becomes clear that the "fundamental values" are identical with the "criteria for judgment" used in the title of the chapter and in the previous documents of the magisterium. In fact, the whole previous section on values would seem more logically to belong to this fourth chapter than to the third.6

The fourth chapter, in fact, deals with two principal matters: (1) how the universal Church magisterium uses these fundamental values or criteria, together with the data provided by the [social] sciences, to pass judgment on concrete social situations; and (2) how the local churches and/or individual Christians are themselves to act in judging concrete situations according to these values or criteria.

Since the function of Church social teaching is not merely theoretical but directed to pastoral action, it must necessarily offer criteria or norms "for judging situations, structures and institutions, organizing economic, social, political, cultural and technological life, as well as the social systems themselves" (no. 47, citing LC 74). It is these norms which the magisterium uses in conjunction with empirical data to make the practical judgments which her evangelizing mission demands. The relevant text reads as follows:

In order to make a correct judgment in this regard, the Church must have knowledge about local, national and international historical situations, and about the cultural dignity of every community and people. Even if she

6. This is not the only place in the document where the subheadings would seem to have been put in subsequently to, and to some extent, independently of, the text. Though the validity of the document is not in question, it therefore demands a more painstaking reading than should otherwise be necessary.
makes use of all the means supplied by the sciences, the fact remains that her principal reference for approach to social reality is always the above-mentioned fundamental values which provide very precise "norms of judgment" for Christian discernment. These norms, according to official declarations, which are included in social doctrine, are irreplaceable and must therefore be made known and appreciated in the teaching imparted in Seminaries and Theology Departments (no. 47).  

7 The Guidelines cite various examples of such concrete practical judgments in the different magisterial documents. Two of the clearest of these will suffice: the denunciation by Paul VI of the unjust trade relations between developed and undeveloped countries (PP 48-49); and the criticism made by John Paul II of the division of the world into the two blocks of East and West which he judges to be a principal cause of the sad situation of the developing nations (SRS 21). Since both doctrinal principles and values on the one hand and empirical data on the other enter into such judgments, it is clear that they will not have the same degree of doctrinal authority as the pronouncements on the principles and values themselves.

However, the Guidelines go on to note, judgments "concerning abuses against human dignity have great authority because they are linked to principles and values founded on divine law itself" (no. 49).

I would take this to mean that when it comes to concrete situations or "directives for action," the Church's condemnation of unjust situations or systems is authoritative, even if she may not be able to prescribe the positive course of action to be taken. If the Church could not judge in the concrete what is unworthy of the human person, then her function as a moral teacher would remain purely theoretical and ineffective. On the other hand, there frequently exist a variety of possible positive remedies to such a situation, which would involve concrete political choices. It is not the Church alone which is called on to propose these, but she can pass judgment on their incompatibility with the dignity of the hu-
man person. It is in this sense, I believe, that one can conclude with the Guidelines

that one cannot do without the ethical judgment of the Church regarding the foundations of the social system to be built and the concrete plans and programs of coexistence in which the image of man and of society offered by the Gospel must also come together (no. 51).

It is likewise the responsibility of the local Churches to reflect and take pastoral action within their own territories, drawing the principles and criteria for judgment from the teaching of the Church universal, but applying them to their own situation (no. 52). This reference to the role of the local church in teaching the demands of the social doctrine of the Church universal as applied to the local situation is rather new and important. Though commentators have noted, for example, the role that the Medellin and Puebla documents have played in the development of papal teaching, it is rare that Roman documents have cited those of episcopal conferences. The Guidelines, however, in more than one place speak of the "Magisterium of the Church — Papal, Conciliar, and Episcopal" or of "the Magisterium of the universal Church and of the particular Churches" (nos. 65, 76).

Finally, the Guidelines take up the occurrence of different (i.e., at variance with one another) judgments expressed in the social doctrine of the Church in different eras. The document acknowledges this as a fact, though "they are in continuity with a line imposed by principles" (no. 53). The social doctrine of the Church will not provide definitive answers to changing situations, but a line of thinking in accord with its basic principles. For

it is obvious that a mature judgment about new situations, new models of society and new programs does not depend only on social doctrine but also on philosophical-theological formation, political sense and discernment about the changes in the world. All of this requires remote and proximate preparation, study and reflection, as these Guidelines recommend (no. 53).

DIRECTIVES FOR SOCIAL ACTION

The precise sense in which directives for action can be part of
the social doctrine of the Church has been questioned. The answer has already been adumbrated in the previous chapter, namely, that the Church does pronounce on concrete situations, and therefore gives directives for action, even though with greater contingency than is true of principles and norms of judgment. These concrete judgments or directives themselves become part of the corpus of Church social teaching, not that they are permanent precepts for all times and situations, but in the sense that they provide precedents on which the Christian may draw in order to form his own judgments in the new but analogous situation in which he finds himself. The earlier directive, therefore, is a factor in forming the conscience of Christians for action in accord with the social teaching of the Church in the later, different situation. The Guidelines deserve to be quoted at length here:

The social doctrine of the Church . . . necessarily includes an invitation to social action by offering, for the different situations, adequate directives inspired by the fundamental principles and criteria for judgment illustrated above. The action that is suggested is not deduced a priori once and for all from philosophical and ethical considerations. Instead, it is specified case by case through Christian discernment of reality interpreted in the light of the Gospel and the social teaching of the Church . . . It would therefore be a grave doctrinal and methodological error if, in the interpretation of the problems of each historical era, the rich experience acquired by the Church and expressed in her social teaching were not taken into consideration. For this reason, all Christians will have to place themselves before the new situations with a conscience well-formed according to the ethical demands of the Gospel and with a truly Christian social sensitivity that has matured through careful study of the various magisterial pronouncements (no. 54).

This seems to me an important principle, most particularly for the formation of seminarians in the social teaching of the Church. The proper formation of a social conscience is not to be had simply by memorizing Christian social principles and values, but by seeing how the Church has used them to form concrete judgments. From the study of such concrete judgments, while looking for the principles and values underlying them, the intelligent Christian should gain a sense of the Catholic approach to social problems, in short, a Catholic social conscience, just as in any other
branch of moral theology.  

In the succeeding paragraphs of the fifth chapter, the Guidelines discuss the "criteria for action." Each of them is developed in one or more paragraphs; it must suffice here simply to list them as enunciated in the Guidelines.

1. "the dignity of the human person, which implies respect [for] and fostering of all the personal and social rights inherent in his nature" (no. 55).
2. "engaging in respectful dialogue as a suitable method for finding a solution to the problems through programmatic and operative agreements" (no. 56).
3. "‘a noble and reasoned struggle for justice and social solidarity’ " (no. 57, quoting LC 77).
4. Formation in "the required expertise in the [social] scientific and political field which renders them capable of carrying out an effective action according to lawful moral criteria " (no. 58).
5. "a dual experience: one based on knowledge about the natural, historical and cultural realities of the world, and the other which comes from their interpretation in the light of the Gospel " (no. 59).
6. "openness to the charisms and gifts of the Holy Spirit in Christian commitment and choices in social life" (no. 60).
7. "a final criterion which must be present in all the other criteria mentioned above: the practice of the commandment of love and mercy in everything which, in the spirit of the Gospel, gives priority to the poor (no. 61).

An analysis of the above "criteria for action" reveals that these are in fact conditions or necessary dispositions for fruitful Christian social action. Are these "criteria" to be identified with the usual term "directives"? If so, what is the relation between this understanding of the term and that which we have indicated above — namely, concrete solutions to specific cases, which though only valid for the particular instance in which they were laid down, nonetheless provide precedents which help to form concrete judgments for new situations? It would at first sight seem to be

8. As John Paul II has insisted, the social doctrine of the Church is not in the field of ideology, but of theology, and specifically, moral theology (SRS 41). However, perhaps even more than other branches of moral theology, social teaching concerns itself with the changing and contingent. Hence a greater effort is needed to form a correct Catholic social conscience to deal with such contingent facts and situations.
stretching the meaning of the term "directives" to understand it as "criteria," but the text, at least the English text, does appear to identify the two terms.9

CLARIFICATION OF EARLIER DOCUMENTS

Though it is not possible to speak apodictically, an analysis of the sources of the passage would seem to show that this is an interpretation of the CCE, intended to clarify earlier usage of the term "directives." The principal source for this entire section of the CCE document is the 1986 CDF "Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation," Libertatis Conscientia.10 The latter document was likewise the immediate source given for the paragraph on the three constitutive elements of Church social teaching in SRS 3. But both LC and SRS in turn refer to Paul VI’s use of the terminology in OA 4. In OA, however, it is the local Christian communities which are said to "draw" ("hauriant") principles of reflection, norms of judgment and directives for action ("regulas operandi") from the social teaching of the Church. In LC, on the other hand, the Church is said to offer "a set" ("summam") of doctrinal principles, criteria for judgment "and also directives for action" ("et etiam regulas et impulsiones ad agendum"). The footnote reference for the "principles" and "criteria" is to OA 4, but for the "directives for action" the reference is to MM 235.

Certain remarks seem in order. First of all, there appears to have been a shift from Paul VI to John Paul II, at least in emphasis if not also in substance. Paul VI in the paragraph that has been cited from OA 4 is insisting that "it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution which has universal validity. Such is not our ambition nor is it our mission." Hence he places the responsibility on the local Christian communities to analyze the situation in their own countries "to shed on it the light of the Gospel’s unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church." It is the local Church which has the active role

9. I have been reliably informed that the English text is the original and official text, though there are a number of awkward sentences which seem to indicate the opposite, or at least that the drafter of the English text was not a native English speaker.
10. CCE Guidelines 55-62 are based, at times verbally, on LC 72-80.
of drawing the principles, norms and directives from the social teaching of the Church universal, thus indicating that these are likely to be different in different local churches.

In LC, on the other hand, it is the universal Church magisterium which "offers a set" of principles, etc., implying that there is a fixed doctrinal corpus which serves as the basis for decisions.\(^\text{11}\) The same impression is given by John Paul II in SRS, where he affirms that the social doctrine of the Church "remains identical ("semper eadem sit") in its 'principles of reflection', in its 'criteria of judgment', 'in its basic directives for action'" ("in 'legibus principibus quae actionem moderantur'"; SRS 3). Though the two popes, while verbally repeating the same phrases in the English texts at least, have done so with a different emphasis, the contingent aspect is not absent from the more recent formulation. In LC 72 (which is the proximate source of the passage in SRS), the immediately preceding paragraph noted how Church social teaching "develops" ("progreditur") and therefore "together with principles that are always valid, it also involves contingent judgments. . . ." SRS, however, though referring to LC as well as OA in a footnote, does not explicitly say quite as much of the contingent nature of judgments. It does, however, speak of the "necessary and opportune adaptations suggested by the changes in historical conditions."\(^\text{12}\)

The second point deserving attention is that though LC refers to OA 4 as the source of its "principles for reflection and criteria for judgment," the source for "directives for action" is noted as MM 235. Upon examining that text, however, one is compelled to agree with a critic that "the sense and usefulness of this reference remain a mystery."\(^\text{13}\) The key to that mystery, however, appears in the Guidelines, where the erroneous reference is silently correct-

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\(^{11}\) The doctrinal aspect is also emphasized in the Latin text of LC by the phrase "principiorum doctrinalium," though the English text merely speaks of "principles."

\(^{12}\) Mathew Killoor, " 'Social Doctrine' in Solicitude [sic] Rei Socialis," The Month (June 1988) 711-14 has called attention to some of the differences noted here, and asks whether they signify a return to a static and centralized view of Christian social values. He emphasizes the difference between "develops" in LC and "adaptations" in SRS. In the total context of the encyclical, however, it does not seem that the latter term necessarily connotes a more static view of Church social teaching.

\(^{13}\) Killoor, "Social Doctrine," 713.
ed; it should be MM 230 ff. The passage in MM in fact does deal with the role of practical action in educating a Christian social conscience:

It is not enough that men be taught, in the light of the Church’s doctrine, what their obligations as Christians are in the economic and social fields. They must also be given, through practical instruction, the means ["viae"] that will enable them properly to fulfill these duties (MM 230).

... one learns how to act as a Christian in social and economic matters only by practical Christian action in those fields (MM 232).

The reference to this passage in MM confirms the interpretation of "directives for action" that we have given above. The judgments of the Church on concrete cases will serve as a basis for achieving a Christian social conscience which will orient the Christian in his action in other concrete situations. The CCE Guidelines would therefore appear, here as elsewhere, to be a commentary on and clarification of problems raised by commentators with regard to SRS. 15

This is also true with regard to the apparent divergence between OA and LC/SRS on the active or passive role of the local churches, and of the laity in particular, with regard to the principles, norms, and directives for action. The Guidelines clearly place the initiative in the Christian people who

will have to place themselves before the new situations with a conscience well-formed according to the ethical demands of the Gospel, and with a truly Christian social sensitivity that has matured through careful study of the various magisterial pronouncements (no. 54).

It is for them, therefore, that the Guidelines draw up the list of "criteria for action" as an aid "to draw ... directives for action

14. The reference in SRS is actually MM 235, AAS 53 (1961) 461. The Latin text in AAS, however, does not have paragraph numbers. The correct reference in Guidelines, no. 118, is AAS 53 (1961) 455 f., which corresponds to nos. 230 ff. in the English translation.

15. Further confirmation of such a purpose may be gathered from the fact that the Guidelines were prepared by CCE in collaboration with the Pontifical Commission "Justitia et Pax," which would undoubtedly be aware of reactions among experts to the encyclical. See Giovanni Caprile, "L'insegnamento della dottrina sociale della Chiesa, Civiltà Cattolica no. 3339-3340 (5-19 Agosto 1989) 15-16."
from the social teaching of the Church’’ (OA 4). Moreover, the chapter concludes with a passage which clearly links up with the direction taken by Paul VI in OA in placing the initiative with the local Christian communities united with their bishops.

On the basis of these presuppositions, the Magisterium of the Church — Papal, Conciliar, Episcopal — with the contribution of the study and experience of the whole Christian community, works out, articulates and expounds this doctrine as an-ensemble of teachings offered not only to believers, but also to all men of good will, in order to enlighten with the Gospel the common path to development and the integral liberation of man (no. 65).

This passage likewise answers negatively and convincingly the question whether the formulation of SRS was “inspired by an ecclesiological conviction of centralization’’ rather than the “ecclesiology of communio’’ which inspired the original passage in OA 4.16

A confirmation of the corrective purposes of the Guidelines may be found in the fact that while waiting for them to give this authoritative interpretation of SRS, a semi-official indication had been given in an unsigned article appearing in Civiltà Cattolica.17 The article emphasizes and illustrates the changing character of Church social teaching beginning with Pacem in Terris, and explains the relationship between continuity and development in this teaching. In its more recent methodology,

the social doctrine of the Church becomes less rigidly doctrinal and more historicized, less propositional and more prophetic, less systematic and more problematic, less static and more dynamic.’’18

More specifically:

In proposing directives for action it becomes more cautious; rather than

17. “Sviluppi metodologici e dottrinali nel magistero sociale della Chiesa,” Civiltà Cattolica 3331 (1 Aprile 1989) 3-15. It is generally understood that such unsigned articles in the Civiltà Cattolica are commissioned or inspired by the Holy See. The article in large part seems to be precisely directed to answering negatively the questions raised by Kiliroor (though without naming him) and assuring the continuity between Paul VI and John Paul II by interpreting the ambiguous statements questioned by Kiliroor in terms of the teaching of Paul VI. Other points are also taken up in the article which perhaps answer other critiques.
18. Ibid. 6.
precise directives, it is a question of orientations. 19

This description best characterizes the "criteria of action" proposed by the Guidelines. In other words, though there have been precise directives for action in Church social teaching, which retain their value in forming Christian social thinking, as has been indicated above, recent Church documents are more tentative and general. This one can see in the latter part of SRS where the pope proposes "to re-examine and further clarify" in the light of the more international character of contemporary social problems, "the characteristic themes and guidelines ["argumenta et normas directoriae peculiares"] dealt with by the magisterium in recent years." 20

After naming various international structures and organizations which he considers in need of reform, he adds, "In the opinion of many, the international organizations . . . need careful review and possible correction (no. 43; italics mine).

To sum up, the "directives for action" are first of all concrete judgments of the magisterium on particular situations of the past, reflection on which by the local churches and by individual Christians serves to form a Christian social conscience. Secondly, they are contemporary orientations given by the magisterium for concrete cases of the present. Thirdly, the "criteria for action" mentioned by the Guidelines may in a wider sense be seen as directives for action; that is, they indicate the way in which the local churches or the individual Christian may form contemporary concrete judgments or directives for action, "drawing" them thus from the social teaching of the Church.

PRACTICAL DISPOSITIONS

The sixth and final chapter is entitled "Formation." It deals with two main topics: the preparation needed by the professors, and the program of studies to be given to candidates for the priesthood and students of theological institutes.

The proper preparation of professors, the Guidelines insist, "cannot be ensured only by some courses on social doctrine taken within the framework of philosophical and theological studies."

19. Ibid.
20. SRS 42; AAS 80 (1988) 572.
Professors should receive special training, and simple knowledge of the documents of the magisterium does not suffice. In addition they must possess "a broad and deep theological formation, competency in social morality and knowledge at least of the basic elements of the modern social sciences" (no. 67). They are called on to keep up not only with developments in the social teaching of the Church, but with contemporary world problems (no. 69). Inasmuch as they are teaching not merely theory but a discipline directed toward action, direct pastoral experience will be useful to them (no. 70).

In addition to these prescriptions, which need no comment, the Guidelines emphasize the importance of the social sciences. Professors, inasmuch as they are expected not only to teach general principles but to "develop them through reflection applied to the changing situations of this world under the driving force of the Gospel as the source of renewal" [OA 42], should initiate their students in the use of the social sciences. In using the latter, two traps should be avoided — the ideological manipulation of the interpretation of data on the one hand, or on the other, "the positivism which over-evaluates empirical data to the detriment of an overall understanding of man and the world" (no. 68). No one who has seriously studied social problems will be unaware of the two extremes, whether in professors or in students.

The second section of the chapter, on "the formation of students" recalls various principles laid down elsewhere for priestly formation which have a particular importance here: integration of the various elements of formation (no. 71); education to dialogue with others (no. 72); "sensitization to the different problems of society and the habit of evaluating situations, structures and economic, social and political systems with the criteria of the doctrine of the Church"; awareness of the need for personal witness to Christ in the world (no. 75).

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Though the Guidelines leave to the centers for ecclesiastical formation the point(s) in the program of studies at which specifically academic preparation is to be placed, it makes clear that
it is not enough to deal with [Church social doctrine] in some optional lessons within philosophy or theology courses. Required and elective courses on this discipline must be included in the program (no. 73).

It recommends that the courses be spread out, if possible, through the whole period of formation. Thus better integration would be possible with the various concepts of social philosophy and theology. The one specific requirement for a special course is one on the encyclicals (as well as the pastoral constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*). 21 It is important to quote the entire passage for content and method.

In any case, it is absolutely necessary for knowledge about the major social encyclicals to be ensured during formation.

These encyclicals must be the subject of special courses and represent required reading material for the students. Their contact with them will have to keep in mind the socio-cultural context in which they were written, the theological and philosophical premises on which they are based, their relationship to the social sciences, and their meaning for the present situation. Furthermore, in connection with the documents of the universal Church, the social problems of the particular and local Churches will have to be studied (no. 73). 22

In addition to the above, "students must be offered a solid philosophical-theological foundation on the principles of the social doctrine and their interdisciplinary relations" (no. 74). Finally, the Guidelines recommend pastoral experiences and dialogue with the different sectors of society and with social action organizations "which place them in direct contact with the problems studied" (no. 76). Though evidently structures which would relate such immersion experiences with academic learning are highly desirable, there is here no question of added courses.

21. Though the immediate paragraph mentions only "encyclicals," GS is everywhere in the document included with the encyclicals.
22. In the suggested program in appendix I, the following documents are enumerated for study as a whole: RN, QA, MM, PT, GS, PP, OA, EN, LE, SRS. In addition *Redemptor hominis* (the social part), *Dives in misericordia* (the social content), and *Familiaris consortio* (the social part) are included, together with "major discourses and social messages" of John Paul II.
A PROPOSED PROGRAM

What concrete steps ought to be taken in academic programs? In appendix I the Guidelines present an "Index of Topics Which May Be Useful in Teaching the Social Doctrine of the Church in Seminaries." The introduction notes that this is "only a proposal that leaves the professors all the necessary space for organizing their lessons and pastoral exercises according to the concrete needs of the dioceses and the indications of the Episcopal Conferences and the diocesan Bishops." In accordance with these indications, one should approach the intimidating five pages of topics with selectivity and flexibility. I believe that anyone concerned will find the list of topics useful, if not for creating new courses, at least for checking existing moral theology and social ethics courses for their completeness of coverage and selection of contemporaneously important topics to be included.

Though it would be inappropriate to prescribe a fixed curriculum where the Guidelines have left flexibility, I think it might be helpful to suggest a program which personal experience has found helpful to fulfill the purposes outlined by the Guidelines.

HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE MAGISTERIAL DOCUMENTS

The essential course would be one in which the papal, conciliar and episcopal documents are studied. According to the description given in the text cited above from nos. 73-74, such a course should begin with an historical survey of the rise of the modern social question in the nineteenth century and the solutions offered by the varied socialist movements as well as the Catholic social activists and thinkers who laid the foundations for Rerum Novarum. The documents of the magisterium would be the essential text for the course, to be accompanied by notes or outlines which enable the student to read intelligently what are often difficult documents.23

23. I have made my own outlines for my course, but there is a valuable resource which might well be used to accompany the magisterial documents: Peter J.Henriot, Edward P. DeBerri, Michael J. Schultheis, Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1989), published originally in the United States by Orbis Books and the Center for Concern. Besides fairly detailed outlines of all
PROBLEMS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Though conceivably it is possible to relate the documents of the universal Church to local problems and situations within such a course, my own experience is that this can only be done superficially if all of the magisterial documents are to be read and commented upon within a historical context, in a one-semester 3-unit course. More practically, an historical treatment of the origins and development of Philippine social problems, the rise of Philippine protest movements leading to the Communist Party of the Philippines, together with a historical survey of the response of the Philippine church would firmly root the doctrinal study within the Philippine context. 24

SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF SOCIAL DOCTRINE

Given these two courses, the systematic treatment of the general and specific philosophical and theological topics which are listed in sections III, IV, and VII of appendix I could be dealt with in the social ethics and moral theology courses of the regular curriculum. According to the resources of the particular institution, no doubt some of these areas would provide matter for elective courses in themselves, but in any case, the detailed outline provides a useful checklist for the content of the regular philosophical and theological courses.

CONCLUSION

The importance of the Guidelines may be summed up on three levels. First, the document has provided a clarification of the nature of Church social teaching as well as settling other questions which have been raised with regard to certain points in the teach-

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ing of John Paul II. Second, it has explained the constitutive elements of Catholic social doctrine and their role in forming the conscience of the Christian. Third, it has laid down flexible, yet sufficiently specific orientations for seminary programs to ensure that future priests be instructed academically and practically in this important area of their theological and pastoral formation.

It is also worth observing that, at least in the area of Church social doctrine, the present pope has shown himself attentive to the reaction to his own extensive contribution to the Church’s social teaching. It is evidently an area which deeply concerns him, and in which he is anxious to be effective. He is ready to defend and reiterate that teaching when it is criticized, but also to clarify misunderstandings and to respond to difficulties on particular points raised from within the Church. It seems clear that he has utilized these Guidelines of the CCE to make such authorized interpretations and clarifications of the authoritative documents of his pontificate, both his encyclicals and the related documents of the Roman congregations.

On both these counts it is to be hoped that these Guidelines may be made more readily available. As I trust has become clear in the course of this note, they are more than directives for seminary education. Though it is surely important that their prescriptions for the formation of priests receive the attention they deserve, their contribution to the dialogue within the Church on her role as teacher and guide in the struggle for justice and the option for the poor likewise deserves to be understood and put into practice.