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**The Pastoral Priorities of the Philippine Bishops:
A Report on a Survey**

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BACKGROUND

The Philippine Bishops during their semiannual meeting in January of 1984 asked that a survey be made of the pastoral priorities of the various dioceses of the country, with a view to a national pastoral plan or—if the diversity among the regions of the country should be seen to be too great for a single plan—three regional plans. The work was entrusted to the authors of this report who then prepared a questionnaire which was distributed to the bishops by mail. Usable replies were eventually received from fifty-three or 79 percent of the sixty-seven dioceses.

In the subsequent analysis, Fr. Carroll has been primarily responsible for the quantitative work, while Bishop Claver has concentrated mainly on the qualitative and on integrating this with the quantitative results. Included in the quantitative analysis are twenty-three of the thirty-three dioceses of Luzon, thirteen of the fourteen Visayan dioceses, and sixteen of the twenty Mindanao dioceses. Masbate was erroneously included among the Visayan dioceses in the quantitative analysis; and the questionnaire from Pagadian, which was delayed in the mail, was included in the qualitative analysis only.

THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Which are the ministries accorded high and low priorities by the bishops? What are the levels of agreement or consensus among the bishops with regard to the ranking of various ministries? Are

there different patterns in the three regions of the country? What changes in ranking seem to be taking place over time? In order to deal with these questions it was necessary first to consolidate the data by calculating the *average* or *mean rank* given to each ministry by the bishops who rated it, for the country as a whole and for the three regions separately, and for three points in time (five years ago, now, and five years hence as the bishops foresee developments). At the same time, the *standard deviation* (SD) was calculated for each mean rank, as a measure of the manner in which the individual ratings are concentrated around the mean or scattered at a distance from it; as a rule of thumb one may assume that about two-thirds of all the ratings fall within one SD above or below the mean, so that a low SD indicates a high level of consensus among the bishops on the ranking of a particular ministry. Finally, the average or mean ranks were themselves *ranked*, and the ministries arranged in the order of their national ranking.

The data thus arranged offer evidence of both unity and diversity among the bishops, with the unity increasing and the diversity diminishing over time. For example, "the ministry of the word" holds first place nationally in all three tables; no other ministry has a lower mean rank. Yet for the period five years ago its average rank was 3.5 and the SD was 2.0, suggesting a fairly wide distribution of individual rankings from about 1 to about 6; all three regions put this ministry in first place, but with similar indications of internal diversity. Present priorities indicate a movement toward consensus: the "ministry of the word" is more solidly established in first place nationally with a lower average rank (2.8) and SD (1.7), mainly as a result of the consolidation of opinion in the Visayas and Mindanao where its average rank and SD have dropped. Yet in Mindanao this ministry is now marginally behind "pastoral programs" which has risen dramatically in importance. Finally, the bishops expect the "ministry of the word" to hold roughly the same position, or a slightly stronger one, five years from now.

A similar analysis could be done for the other ministries. "Mandated organizations," to take just one more example, has dropped from fifth place nationally five years ago to sixth at present; and it is foreseen that it will be in tenth place five years from now. At the same time, the differences between Mindanao and the rest of

the country in the ratings given this ministry, which were initially very wide, have become insignificant.

The above presentation hopefully will serve as an introduction to the tables in which normally only the ranked averages will be presented. In this way the data are further consolidated with the result that only the differences *among* regions appear; the differences *within* regions have been "smoothed over" by the averaging and ranking procedures, in order to bring out more clearly the underlying patterns.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PATTERNS

Tables 1-3 present only the ranked averages. Kendall's W^1 for Table 1, representing the situation five years ago, is 0.75. Statistical computations for the table indicate that a pattern as consistent as that found among the regions would occur by chance less than once in 100 attempts. The rankings themselves have the "ministry of the word" and "worship and the sacramental ministry" in first and second places respectively, both nationally and in each of the regions. The next two national priorities are "vocations promotion" and "pastoral programs," and each of the regions includes *one* of these but not both among its first four regional priorities. Mindanao stands out somewhat from the other regions by the relatively high priorities assigned there to "pastoral programs," "social action," the "prophetic ministry," and "mass communications"; and conversely by the low rankings assigned to "mandated organizations" and the "cursillo and/or charismatic movement."

Table 2 ranks the same ministries according to their importance *at present*. The level of agreement among the regions has increased slightly and the same four ministries as appeared there in Table 1 are found at the top of the national list, although "pastoral programs" has moved into third place ahead of "vocations promotion." Moreover, these same four ministries are found also, although not always in the same order, at the top of the three regional listings. This would seem to indicate a growing consensus on the high priority to be assigned to what may be called the pastoral ministries. Meanwhile the difference noted above between

1. The Kendall coefficient of concordance (W) measures the "percentage of agreement" among different sets of ratings. A value of 1.00 would indicate perfect agreement.

Table 1 (Q#2): Ministries Ranked According to Relative Importance Five Years Ago

Ministries	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Ministry of the word (preaching, catechesis Bible study, etc.)	1	1	1	1
Worship and the sacramental ministry.	2	2	2	2
Vocations promotion	3	4	3	5
Pastoral programs for communities (e.g. BCC) or groups (e.g. youth, tribal Filipinos).	4	6	5	3
Mandated organizations.	5	3	4	12
Social action programs (livelihood, health, housing, etc.).	6	8	6	4
Cursillo and/or charismatic movement.	7	5	7	13
Formal education.	8	7	8	9
Emergency relief and assistance programs.	9	9	11	8
Prophetic ministry (denunciation of abuses, etc.).	10	10	12	6
Mass communication.	11	12	13	7
Community organization (promoting pressure groups among farmers, fishermen, the urban poor, etc.).	12	13	10	10
Ministry of reconciliation (among groups, classes, etc.).	13	11	9	14
Ecumenical work and establishing communication with the Muslims.	14	14	14	11

$W = 0.75$

$\chi^2 = 29.25$

$p. > .01$

Table 2. (Q#1): Ministries Ranked According to Present Relative Importance

Ministries	Whole Nation	Ranked Averages		
		Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Ministry of the word (preaching, catechesis, Bible study, etc.).	1	2	1	2
Worship and the sacramental ministry	2	1	2	3
Pastoral programs for communities (e.g., BCC) or groups, (e.g. youth, tribal Filipinos).	3	4	4	1
Vocations promotion.	4	3	3	4
Social action programs (livelihood, health, housing, etc.).	5	5	8	5
Mandated organizations.	6	6	5	14
Formal education.	7	7	7	11
Cursillo and/or charismatic movement.	8	8	6	13
Ministry of reconciliation (among groups, classes, etc.).	9	9	9	9
Prophetic ministry (denunciation of abuses, etc.)	10	11	12	6
Mass Communication.	11	10	10	10
Emergency relief and assistance programs.	12	12	11	8
Community organization (promoting pressure groups among farmers, fishermen, the urban poor etc.).	13	13	13	7
Ecumenical work and establishing communication with the Muslims.	14	14	14	12

W = 0.77
 $\chi^2 = 29.74$
 p. > .01

Mindanao and the other regions persists in the second group of ministries, ranked from no. 4 to no. 8 in the various regions; here Mindanao seems to favor a more activist social stance.

Table 3 presents the priorities as foreseen by the bishops for a period five years in the future. The level of agreement has risen to 0.88, indicating once again a convergence over time in priori-

Table 3. (Q#3): Ministries According to Relative Importance
Five Years from Now

Ministries	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Ministry of the word (preaching, catechesis, Bible study, etc.).	1	1	1	2
Worship and the sacra- mental ministry.	2	2	4	3
Pastoral programs for com- munities (e.g. BCC) or groups, (e.g. youth, tribal Filipinos).	3	3	3	1
Vocations promotion	4	4	2	4
Ministry of reconciliation (among groups, classes, etc.).	5	6	7	5
Formal education.	6	7	6	7
Social action programs (livelihood, health, housing, etc.).	7	5	13	6
Mass communication.	8	8	5	9
Prophetic ministry (denun- ciation of abuses, etc.).	9	10	12	8
Mandated organizations.	10	11	8	10
Community organization (promoting pressure groups among farmers, fishermen, urban poor, etc.).	11	9	10	11
Cursillo and/or charismatic movement.	12	12	11	13
Emergency relief and assistance programs.	13	13	9	12
Ecumenical work and establishing communi- cation with the Muslims.	14	14	14	14

ties. Statistical analysis indicates that a pattern as definite as this would occur by chance less than once in 1,000 tries. The now-familiar quartet of "ministry of the word," "worship and the sacramental ministry," "pastoral programs" and "vocations promotion" is again at the head of the lists nationally and regionally, although still not in the same order. Moreover, there is now fairly high agreement right down the list: Mindanao no longer stands out as distinctive, possibly because a "modified activist stance" has become fairly common in the middle range of priorities in the other regions also while the "pastoral approach" continues to predominate among the first four priorities.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Table 4 represents another approach to the matter of priorities. The bishops were asked to indicate the projects or activities to which they expect to commit additional resources (manpower or money) during the next five years. The ranked averages (Table 4) are quite consistent with the orientations revealed in the earlier tables. The highest priorities are given to pastoral activities, including training programs, pastoral programs with particular groups such as children and youth, families, and Basic Christian Communities, and liturgical programs. Next come the promotion of justice and community organization and consciousness-raising which may be seen as activist forms of social involvement, followed by development-type projects. Construction projects have a generally low priority. Again the level of agreement among the three regions is high.

A related question, and one which could provide quite explicit suggestions for national or regional programs, had to do with which of the programs and activities listed in Table 4 "could profit from linkages beyond the limits of the diocese, e.g., for technical assistance, training, or teaching materials." It may be of interest to note that the first two items on the list, i.e., those which were given the highest priority for the bishops' commitment of new resources, are also those for which the largest number of bishops feel that outside linkages would be helpful. These are "continuing formation of priests" and "training of catechists and lay Church workers," each checked by about 75 percent of the bishops.

Table 4. Priorities for Resources: Next Five Years

Ministries	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Continuing formation for priests.	1	1	1	1
Training of catechists and lay Church workers	2	2	2	3
Seminary program.	3	3	6	4
Catechetics for children and/or youth.	4	4	3	6
The family life apostolate.	5	5	4	5
Basic Christian or ecclesial community work.	6	6	7	2
Liturgical programs.	7	7	8	9
Promotion of justice and defense of human rights.	8	12	10	8
Community organization and consciousness-raising.	9	20	9	7
Formal education for laity (schools).	11	8	14	10
Construction of seminary.	12	11	11	20
Mass communications.	13	9	13	17
Other constructions.	14	13	15	13
Informal education (vocational training etc.).	15	14	12	18
Development projects (livelihood programs, cooperative, etc.).	16	17	17	11
Work with tribal Filipinos.	17	19	22	12
Community based health programs.	18	15	20	16
Relief and assistance programs (nutrition, housing, clinics, etc.).	19	21	16	14
Construction of new churches	20	18	18	19
Construction of new schools.	21	16	19	22
Ecumenical activities and contacts with the Muslims.	22	22	21	15
Others (please specify).	10	10	5	21

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Given the priorities assigned to the continuing formation of priests and to the training of catechists and lay Church workers, it is fortunate that we have questions on what *kind* of formation is most important for each. The priorities as ranked by the bishops for the continuing formation of priests are given in Table 5. As noted above, we present these only in the form of ranked averages by regions; but the level of agreement among the regions is quite high and the SD's for the average ranks (ranging from 1.1 nationally for "spiritual renewal" to 1.8 for "updating on the New Code of Canon Law") indicate a fairly high level of consensus. Thus the "message" is quite clear and consistent with the replies to earlier questions. All regions put spiritual renewal first, followed by pastoral programs such as Scripture, liturgy and counselling; in general they put intellectual updating (doctrine and Canon Law) next, followed by community leadership and social action programming. Mindanao stands out in preferring these last two to updating in Canon Law. Faith-and-ideology issues are last.

The bishops' replies on formation of catechists and lay Church workers tell a similar story. The agreement among regions is almost perfect and the same general pattern emerges as for priests: spiritual formation, intellectual formation, and then various skills (more or less in the order in which the related activities appear in Table 4). "Faith-and-ideology issues" are in most cases ranked after "justice and human rights training" but before "social action techniques."

SPIRITUALITY

The Basic Christian Community movement has consistently been mentioned among the high-priority areas of the bishops, but it is frequently stated that there are vast differences in orientation among groups calling themselves BCC. In order to clarify the bishops' own expectations of the movement, they were asked to rank various objectives in the order of importance. The ranked averages by regions present the unusual phenomenon of total agreement (once the "others" category has been removed, which in fact received only eight responses nationwide). The consensus within regions is high also; only in Mindanao are any of the SD's as high or higher than 1.0. For this please see Table 6.

Table 5 (Q#5): Type of Formation Most Important
for Continuing Formation of Priests

Types of Formation	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Spiritual renewal	1	1	1	1
Pastoral programs (scripture, liturgy, counselling, etc.).	2	2	2	2
Doctrinal updating (dogmatic and moral theology).	3	3	4	3
Updating on the New Code of Canon Law.	4	4	3	7
Community leadership (BCC etc.)	6	5	6	5
Social action programming (development, justice, human rights, etc.).	7	6	7	6
Faith-and-ideology issues.	8	8	8	8
Other (please specify).	5	7	5	4

W = 0.92

Table 6. (Q#8): Objectives of the Basic Christian
Community Movement

Objectives	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Deepening the faith-experience and prayer life of the members.	1	1	1	1
Mutual assistance among the members as living witness to the Gospel.	2	2	2	2
Answering the need for liturgical worship in the absence of a priest.	3	3	3	3
Community and national concerns, as testimony to the Christian's concern for all men.	4	5	4	5
Others	5	4	5	4

W = 1.00

The pattern which appears in the table may be interpreted as a movement from the inner life and faith-experience of the members to mutual assistance among these same members, thence to liturgical activities and finally to community and national concerns. No support is found for the idea that the BCC is only or primarily a structure for providing liturgical worship in the absence of a priest.

Table 7 presents the priorities of emphasis which the bishops assign to various aspects of the Christian life in their dioceses at present: and again it seems useful to present the data in some detail. There is a high level of inter-regional agreement among the ranked averages which appear in the upper right hand corners of the X columns; For the nation as a whole there seems to be a pattern of spirituality which moves from the interior religious life of the individual to its impact on his daily activities, to doctrinal matters, and thence to community, liturgical, and moral concerns. But here the inter-regional differences, although seemingly minor, may be significant. Mindanao puts "integration of faith with daily concerns" in first place with a very low average rank and SD, indicating a high level of consensus on this point; "prayer life and faith-experience" is in second place with considerably higher average rank and SD. The same Mindanao bishops also give more than average emphasis to "involvement with the Church as community" and to "social morality." One is tempted to speculate on whether a spirituality is developing in Mindanao which distrusts religious experience which is not related to daily life or to community concerns. Or it may be that the Mindanao bishops feel that the faith-life of their people is now solidly established, and hence the emphasis should be on integration.

PROBLEM AREAS

The bishops were asked to what extent ideological divisions and consequent mistrust are obstacles to effective pastoral planning. More than half of the bishops replied that the problem is real, although the great majority of these feel that dialogue is still possible. There is a certain concentration of the affirmative replies among the Mindanao bishops, but almost half of those from Luzon and more than a third of the Visayan bishops also find that the problem is real. This is interesting in view of the low priority given to faith-and-ideology issues in response to earlier

Table 7. (Q#9): Elements of the Christian Life Deserving of Greatest Emphasis in the Diocese at Present

Christian life elements	Whole Nation			Luzon			Visayas			Mindanao		
	n*	X**	SD***	n*	X**	SD***	n*	X**	SD***	n*	X**	SD***
Prayer life and faith-experience	51	2.1 ¹	1.3	22	2.1 ¹	1.3	13	2.2 ¹	0.9	16	2.5 ²	1.5
Integration of faith with daily concerns	47	2.4 ²	1.8	19	2.7 ²	2.1	13	3.0 ²	1.8	15	1.5 ¹	0.6
Correct understanding of doctrine	48	4.0 ³	2.4	19	3.6 ³	2.2	13	3.8 ³	2.7	16	4.7 ⁴	2.4
Involvement with the Church as community	43	4.2 ⁴	2.0	16	4.3 ⁴	2.0	12	4.3 ⁴	2.4	15	4.0 ³	1.5
Sacramental and liturgical life	37	4.9 ⁵	1.9	16	4.8 ⁵	1.9	12	4.8 ⁵	1.9	9	5.3 ⁷	2.0
Family morality	39	5.2 ⁶	2.0	18	5.1 ⁶	2.1	10	5.1 ⁶	2.1	11	5.3 ⁶	1.6
Individual morality	38	5.5 ⁷	2.1	15	5.2 ⁷	2.5	11	5.5 ⁷	1.6	12	5.9 ⁸	2.1
Social morality	30	5.8 ⁸	2.1	13	5.7 ⁹	2.0	8	6.4 ⁹	1.8	9	5.2 ⁵	2.2
Respect for the teaching authority of the Church	35	6.0 ⁹	2.2	14	5.5 ⁸	2.2	11	6.0 ⁸	2.5	10	6.6 ⁹	1.7
Others												

*n indicates the number of dioceses ranking this element.

**X indicates the mean or average rank. The number to the right indicates the rank-order of these averages.

***SD indicates the standard deviation of the rankings.

questions. (See Table 5.)

Finally, the bishops were asked to rank various "problem areas" according to their seriousness as experienced by the "ordinary people" in the urban and rural areas of their dioceses. Nation-wide and regionally, with regard to the urban areas, the economic situation is ranked as most serious (Table 8), and a relatively low SD of 0.9 for the nation indicates considerable consensus on this point. Nationally this is followed by the social situation, the political situation, the religious situation, and finally by peace and order problems. But the Mindanao bishops put the peace and order situation in second place, which reduces considerably the inter-regional agreement.

The tragic nature of the peace and order situation in rural Mindanao is brought out in Table 9, where it is rated *first* among the problems of ordinary people; it is also given more importance in the rural areas of Luzon and the Visayas than in the urban areas, and thus nationally it appears in second place. Again the regional differences are reflected in a relatively low Kendall's

Table 8. (Q#14): Problem Areas Ranked According to Seriousness as Experienced by "Ordinary People" in the Urban Areas

Problem areas	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Economic situation (unemployment, prices, land scarcity, etc.).	1	1	1	1
Social situation (health, education, family problems, gambling, drunkenness, etc.).	2	2	2	3
Political situation (corruption and inefficiency in government, loss of credibility, etc.).	3	3	4	4
Religious situation (shortage of priests and religious, of catechists and other church workers, poor quality and training of church personnel, etc.).	4	4	3	5
Peace and order (NPA, Army, MNLF, bandits, crime, etc.).	5	5	5	2

W = 0.69

Table 9. (Q#15): As Experienced by "Ordinary People"
in the Rural Areas

Problem areas	Ranked Averages			
	Whole Nation	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Economic situation (unemployment, prices, land scarcity, etc.).	1	1	1	2
Peace and order (NPA, Army, MNLF, bandits, crime, etc.).	2	4	4	1
Social situation (health, education, family problems, gambling, drunkenness, etc.).	3	3	2	3
Religious situation (shortage of priests and religious, of catechists and other church workers, poor quality and training of church personnel, etc.).	4	2	5	5
Political situation (corruption and inefficiency in government, loss of credibility, etc.).	5	5	3	4

W = 0.49

W (0.49). It would be interesting perhaps to consider the extent to which they are also reflected in the bishops' own priorities in the three regions.

QUALITATIVE DATA

NATURE OF THE DATA. The data considered here center on the responses the Local Ordinaries give to two open-ended questions about the change in directions they perceive in the dioceses they head. Most of the bishops, forty-four out of fifty-three, gave extended replies to the questions; the rest left the numbers blank. But in either instance, comparison was made with the quantitative data of the survey to get a clearer sense of the change or nonchange in shifts claimed or not claimed. Judgement had to be made whether there was indeed a qualitative change or only

one of degree (i.e., more of the same kind of change) in every case.

RANKING CRITERIA. The general focus taken for assessment purposes was the degree of integration of faith *and* life, and thus of integration of spirituality and action. It was a focus that literally leaped up from the responses of the bishops themselves and hence a choice that could not be ignored even if one wanted to. For the sharpening of this focus, three criteria suggested themselves, again from the responses made by the bishops:

1. Lay participation and involvement in the integration of faith and life, with "lay" meaning not elite groups alone, but especially the rank-and-file of the faithful.
2. The understanding of that integration in terms of personal *and* social morality and spirituality, with "social" including all areas of secular life—economic, political, familial, educational, etc.
3. Hierarchical and clerical support for such an integration and for the participation and involvement of lay people in its attainment.

RANKING CATEGORIES. The responses of the bishops amounted to a description of how they saw their *starting point* now and the *direction* they foresaw for the future. Starting points and future directions were then analyzed in the light of the focus and the three criteria noted above. From the observable differences in emphases, these five categories were drawn:

1. Traditional parish organizations still important; so too traditional apostolates; and all geared primarily towards private spirituality (personal sanctification).
2. The BCC seen principally as a liturgical community; lay ministers and their service to the community; the formation of a spirituality of communal prayer.
3. The BCC as above in 2, but with an opening to the broader development concerns of the secular community; the formation of a spirituality of service to people.
4. The BCC as in 3, but with an acceptance of its prophetic role in society in regard not only to personal morality and spirituality but also to social.
5. The BCC as in 4, but organized as well for prophetic action and involvement in its apostolates and formation programs.

A fact alluded to above should be stressed again here: The concern is with *perceptions* of starting points and directions for

the future as enunciated by the bishops—or by the dioceses—depending on how each bishop or diocese formulates such perceptions or decides on starting points and directions. It is hence not a question of whether their perceptions are correct or not, their directions orthodox or heretical, their visions of the Church pre- or post-Vatican II. Neither is it a question of right or wrong choices, of negative or positive tendencies. Rather, it is a question of actually operative emphases. And even then it is not the emphases that matter so much as the direction that they point to when seen globally.

The five categories are in essence, then, steps taken toward the integration of life and faith according to the criteria worked out above, each step presupposing the one that went before. Whether one agrees with the gradation observable in the five categories or not, the fact is the realities that the categories try to encapsulate are there in the perceptions of the bishops. And however one ranks them on an ascending or descending scale, the results will be the same.

RANKING RESULTS. Each diocese was ranked according to the five classifications. For determining the average position of each region and for the country as a whole, the categories were weighted on a scale from 1 to 5—exactly as they are listed in the order above (1 for *A*, 2 for *B*, etc.). Two ranks were given for each diocese: one for its present tendency, the other for what was foreseen for the future.

The distribution of the fifty-three responding dioceses ranked according to the five categories is shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Present (P) and Future (F) Tendencies by
Regions and the Country as a Whole.

	National		Luzon		Visayas		Mindanao	
	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F
A	10	2	7	1	3	1	0	0
B	11	13	6	8	4	4	1	1
C	14	10	5	5	4	3	5	2
D	2	10	1	3	0	3	1	4
E	16	18	3	5	3	3	10	10

The average positions of each region and the entire nation are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11. Average Ranking of Regions and Nation as a Whole.

	National	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Present	3.05	2.36	2.78	4.18
Future	3.55	3.14	3.21	4.35

PRELIMINARY INTERPRETATION. From the data presented above, these tentative—but nonetheless clear—conclusions can be summarized, first, about the three regions separately, and secondly, about the national Church as a whole:

1. *Luzon*: The dioceses of Luzon, on an average, are starting out with a strong acceptance of the BCC's as liturgical communities and with a corresponding concern for the formation of lay ministers to serve these communities. For the future, they look towards the development of BCCs that are socially involved.
2. *Visayas*: The dioceses of the Visayas, like those of Luzon, have opted firmly for BCC's as liturgical and, as well, as socially-concerned communities. For the future, they look towards forming BCC's with an even more pronounced social consciousness and action.
3. *Mindanao*: As a whole, the Mindanao dioceses define BCC's as prophetic communities and are moving slightly in the direction of BCC's of prophetic action.
4. *The National Church*: There is a more or less broad consensus that it is the Church's present task to form BCC's of the socially-involved kind. The direction it sees for the future is toward making them prophetic communities, too.

The above conclusions may seem at first blush to be a subjective reading of subjective assessments by the bishops of their own dioceses. They may be so, but the general trends as described above have nonetheless a very high degree of correlation with the quantitative data.

The most dramatic change in present outlooks and future plans is among the dioceses of Luzon with a .78 index of variation between present and future tendencies, followed by those of the Visayas with .43, and lastly by those of Mindanao with a low .17. The figures were obtained by subtracting the rank index of the present from that of the future. Thus, if a 1.00 index of change means a complete move from one category to another, Luzon is closest to making such a jump, the Visayas moving only mid-

way, and Mindanao remaining practically unchanged.

To explain the variant results in the three regions, the suggestion was advanced earlier in the quantitative analysis that differing regional politico-economic conditions have very much to do with how the bishops perceive things in general and choose work priorities for their dioceses. Thus the rather sharp disagreements between Luzon and the Visayas on the one hand, and Mindanao on the other, on the problem areas of the people and the attention given to the promotion of BCC's of prophetic word and action cannot be explained satisfactorily outside of this hypothesis. It is an hypothesis that, incidentally, finds strong confirmation in a recently concluded survey, sponsored by the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (BBC), on the sociopolitical outlook of the nation. In this study Mindanao, and to a lesser extent, the Visayas, tend to take a more negative and critical view of things than Luzon.

AGREEMENTS AND DISAGREEMENTS. If it is true that the differences among the dioceses of the three regions are influenced by the actual social conditions of the people and by the problems they face in day-to-day living, one clear conclusion we could draw is that *the Church is, by and large, responding positively to the needs of the people*. The differences in diocesan priorities as seen by the bishops are thus simply reflections of the dominant interests and outlooks of the people—although it could also be that in matters ecclesiastical, the flock may only be following the lead of their pastors. In any case, the survey does show that nationwide the pastoral approach of the Church is remarkably *people-centered*.

This evident fact is the sole reason that the integration of faith and life was made the focus of analysis and the criteria of lay participation, individual and social morality and spirituality, and the support of the clergy for such an integration and for lay participation in it, were chosen for the purpose of sharpening the focus. A cursory look at the general data of the quantitative analysis could give the impression that the centering is not really people but the institutional Church itself, on the clergy rather than on the laity. But a closer scrutiny of the apparent emphasis on the clergy will show that the stress is made precisely for the part the clergy plays in moving the Church towards greater lay participation and it is this participation by the laity—or rather the priority made of it—that is the significantly new emphasis in the

church of the Philippines as a whole. (The data from Q. 4—cf. Table 4—are most instructive in this regard: Practically every item dealing with the clergy is followed by one concerned with the laity.)

Even as we note the general people-centeredness of the Church, however, we also see variations in interpreting (1) who the people are, and (2) what their concerns should be as believers. It is these variations that led to the selection of the five categories used for classifying the dioceses: Church A is distinguished from all the others in its stress on special groups within the church (mandated organizations, cursillistas, charismatics) and its preoccupation with personal sanctification. Churches B, C, D and E, on the other hand, have a pronounced—if varying—stress on wider lay (rank-and-file) activity, and consequently on wider concerns ranging from participation in liturgical matters to involvement in social problems to the exercise of the prophetic role of the church both in word and act.

In a very real sense, the agreements and disagreements noticeable among the three regions and their bishops come down to these two questions: (1) how they understand the BCC's; and (2) what their approach is to realizing them. For it is in the BCC's that the integration of faith and life is worked out most fully by the people themselves. That the BCC is in effect the bone of contention among the bishops is quite ironic in that of all the questions considered in the quantitative analysis, the one dealing with the objectives of the BCC (see Table 6) has the highest rate of consensus ($W=1.00$) among the three regions. There seems to be universal agreement on the basic understanding of what BCC's are and on their high priority as a "ministry." But this agreement notwithstanding, there are clear disagreements—and substantial enough to compel the forming of the five classifications according to the particular emphases already noted. Are these disagreements only in approaches and specific programs or do they mean fundamental differences about the concept and vision of the BCC itself?

In the listing of priorities, the first four are the ministry of the word, worship and sacramental ministry, pastoral programs for communities, and vocations promotion. The three regions consistently, though with some slight differences, place these four at the top of their lists of ministries as present and future goals—as past even. But an analysis of the placement of the ten

other items on the list shows some rather glaring variations and it may not be far-fetched to suggest that these same variations are the key to explaining the significance of the ranking of all the other priorities and ultimately the differential stressing of some aspects of the BCC over others.

The greatest discrepancies in ranking are with regard to two pairs of ministries: mandated organizations and cursillo and/or charismatic movements on the one hand, prophetic ministry and community organization on the other. Luzon and the Visayas put the former two relatively high in their present list of priorities (nos. 6 and 8 and nos. 5 and 6 respectively—cf. Table 2) whereas Mindanao has them down quite low (nos. 14 and 13). The positions of the latter two ministries, however, are the exact opposite: low for Luzon (nos. 11 and 13) and the Visayas (nos. 12 and 13), high for Mindanao (nos. 6 and 7). That they are good indicators of lay participation as well as of the direction of that participation, and hence of differentiation too among the dioceses in their *actual* definition of the BCC, seems to be a valid enough conclusion to make. But an equally valid conclusion seems to be that there is an openness to the BCC's evolving towards the full attaining of the objectives the bishops unanimously (at least regionally) agree on as proper to the BCC's.

It is this openness that will make it possible for the five classes of dioceses not to harden into stilted and conflicting caricatures of the Church but to move towards the realization of a more holistic vision of the same.