The Leaven in the Council:
Joseph Cardijn and the Jocist Network at Vatican II

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Divinity

2018
Abstract

This thesis investigates the role and impact of Joseph Cardijn, founder of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (Young Christian Workers) movement, and the jocist network of bishops and periti at the Second Vatican Council.

It adopts a *longue durée* approach, locating Cardijn within a tradition of Catholic social thought and action that developed in the wake of Europe’s nineteenth century industrial and democratic revolutions. It highlights the influence of the Lamennais School, and Marc Sangnier’s Sillon movement as sources for his work.

Secondly, it traces the influence of Cardijn, his theology and methods over the half century prior to the Council, particularly the well-known see-judge-act method, which formed part of his “Three Truths” Christian dialectic.

It also documents the emergence of a global network of JOC and/or Specialised Catholic Action chaplains experienced in these methods, many of whom would become key conciliar actors.

Thirdly, it examines the role at Vatican II played by Cardijn, the jocist-formed bishops and periti, as well as several lay leaders from the movement, who became lay auditors.


It also traces the role of the jocist network in the drafting of the Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, and more generally over the Council as a whole.

It concludes by identifying a “Cardijn hermeneutic” based on key Cardijn concepts, including the see-judge-act, the Three Truths dialectic, lay apostolate and Specialised Catholic Action, which collectively provide keys for understanding his contribution as well as for interpreting and implementing Vatican II.
**Declaration of originality**

I hereby certify that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution, and affirm that to the best of my knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Where I have quoted French or other foreign language texts in English, I am the translator, unless otherwise indicated.

[Signature]

Stefan Gigacz
Acknowledgments

Unsurprisingly, there are many people to acknowledge in a project like this. Top of the list is my thesis supervisor, Bruce Duncan, who recognized the potential of this research project from the outset and has unfailingly encouraged, advised, corrected and – to use a Cardijn term that Pope Francis has further popularized – “accompanied” me from beginning to end.

Also vital to the project were those veterans of Vatican II, former YCW and other movement leaders, who knew Cardijn and kindly shared their recollections and experiences, including the late conciliar expert, François Houtart, Chilean Council Father, Archbishop Bernardino Piñera, now the world’s oldest living bishop, Australian John Maguire, who was “ecclesiastical assistant” or chaplain to the lay auditors at the Council, Flo Triendl, Jo Weber and Rienzie Rupasinghe, who worked with Cardijn. Michael Costigan, John Molony, Archbishop Len Faulkner, Richard Buchhorn, Don O’Brien, Bill and Anne Byrne, Bob Wilkinson, Michael Coleman, Nancy Conrad, Osvaldo Rebolledo, Mario Molina, Osvaldo Donoso kindly gave interviews which assisted greatly in understanding the background.

Also deserving of specific thanks are the archivists at the various institutions where I have worked. I would particularly like to mention Serge Sollogoub at the Institut catholique de Paris, Frédéric Vienne at the Lille Diocesan Archives, and the ever-helpful staff at the Belgian Archives du Royaume in Brussels.

Many others assisted by reading and/or commenting on drafts of various chapters and/or in various conversations. A few of those are Kevin Ahern, Dries Bosschaert, Oscar Cole-Amal, Leo Declerck, Jean-Marie Dumortier, Guido Goossens, Joe Holland, Mathijs Lamberigts, Eric Mahieu, David Moloney, Val Noone, Bob Pennington, Oscar Saldarriaga, Antoine Sondag, Helen Ting, Stefaan Van Calster, Special mention also to Jean-Paul Durand, who first encouraged me to study the sources and origins of the JOC some twenty-five years ago.

The Australian Research Theology Foundation provided a grant that enabled me to kickstart my research. Yarra Theological Union and the University of Divinity in Melbourne enabled me to obtain an Australian government-funded PhD research scholarship. Special thanks also Michael Kelly and Suman Kashyap, who took care of many thankless administrative matters. Many others too numerous to mention also provided logistical and other assistance in large or small measure.

Naturally, I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous support and patience of Helen, my wife, whom I have already mentioned for her academic advice, my daughter Kiara, who assisted with checking various references, as well as Jade and Robbie, who also “accompanied” me throughout this project.

The last and perhaps ultimate acknowledgment goes to the late Marguerite Fiévez, the de facto first secretary general of the JOC Internationale, later Cardijn’s personal secretary, archivist for Cardijn, the JOCI and the Belgian JOC as well as a historian and Catholic lay leader in her own right. Moreover, it was Marguerite who compiled Cardijn’s first and only full-length book, Laïcs en premières lignes, which played a key role in transmitting the jocist influence to the Council, and whose networking and advocacy skills no doubt were also vital.

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Abbreviations

AC       Archives Cardijn
ACJB     Association belge de la jeunesse belge
(French Catholic Youth Association)
ACJF     Association catholique de la jeunesse française
(French Catholic Youth Association)
ACLI     Italian Workers Catholic Action
ACI      Action catholique indépendante (Independent Catholic Action) (France)
ACO      Action catholique ouvrière (Worker Catholic Action) (France)
AJ       Archives JOCI
CAJ      German JOC movement
CC       Vatican II Coordination Commission
CELAM    Latin American Episcopal Conference
CFM      Christian Family Movement
CPC      Vatican II Central Preparatory Commission
CSC      Central Sub-Commission of the Mixed Commission (MC)
DC       Vatican II Doctrinal Commission
COPEQUAL Preparatory Committee for International Lay Apostolate Congresses
FIMARC   International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Rural Movements
FIMOC    International Federation of Christian Worker Movements
ICO      International Catholic Organisations
JAC      Jeunesse agricole chrétienne (Young Christian Farmers)
JEC/YCS  Jeunesse étudiante catholique / Young Christian Students
JIC      Jeunesse indépendente catholique (Independent Catholic Youth)
JOC/YCW  Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne/Young Christian Workers
JOCF     Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne féminine
JOCI     Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne International
JUC      Jeunesse universitaire catholique / University Catholic Youth
KAJ/VKAJ Flemish JOC
LAC      Commission for the Apostolate of the Faithful; for the Editing of Printed Material and the Mass Media, generally known as the “Lay Apostolate Commission”
LOC  Ligue des ouvriers chrétiens (League of Christian Workers)
MC   Mixed Commission of DC & PCLA drafting Schema XIII (*Gaudium et Spes*)
MIAMSI International Movement for the Apostolate of Independent Milieux
MIJARC International Movement of Catholic Agricultural Youth
PCLA  Pontifical Commission on Lay Apostolate (Preparatory)
SCA  Specialised Catholic Action
STSC  Signs of the Times Sub-Commission of the MC
TSC  Theological Sub-Commission of the MC
Cardijn’s episcopal coat of arms
Introduction

Introducing Cardijn

“Vatican II canonised Cardijn,” Melbourne Archbishop Frank Little told several leaders of the Young Christian Workers (YCW or Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne – JOC), including myself, in 1979. I was impressed but not surprised. Many veteran JOC leaders and chaplains, who were familiar with Cardijn’s “incarnational” theology of lay apostolate, or who had experimented with dialogue masses long before the Council, shared Little’s views. Even then, it was recognised – or perhaps assumed – that the Vatican II Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes had borrowed its “inductive” approach from Cardijn’s see-judge-act formation method.

At that time, Cardijn’s role in the development of the lay apostolate and Specialised Catholic Action was still widely recognised. Indeed, his intercontinental travels, his key role at the World Congress on Lay Apostolate in 1951, and the 1957 JOC Pilgrimage to Rome by 32,000 young workers, had made him perhaps the first truly global Catholic personality.

Moreover, Cardijn played three formal roles at Vatican II, initially as a member of the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate (PCLA) (1960-62), then as a peritus in the conciliar Lay Apostolate Commission (LAC) (1963-65) and finally as a Council Father at the Fourth Session in 1965. In parallel, alongside other JOC Internationale (JOCI) leaders, he continued to assiduously advocate for the movement’s vision and methods.

Thus, in a historic 1960 meeting with John XXIII, Cardijn proposed an encyclical to mark the seventieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum, resulting in the publication in 1961 – amid preparation for the Council – of Mater et Magistra incorporating the JOC see-judge-act method. Two years later, between the First and Second Sessions, he published his book on lay apostolate, Laïcs en premières lignes, which was translated into several languages including English as Laymen into action. When Paul VI was elected pope in July 1963, Cardijn worked to revive the partnership he had enjoyed with Montini at the Vatican Secretariat of State.
In their 1969 biography, Marguerite Fiévez and Jacques Meert document Cardijn’s role at the Council, highlighting his struggle in the PCLA, against a “particularly marked” tendency since World War II “to try and identify and limit the lay apostolate to exclusively religious witness,” a “disincarnate conception” Cardijn rejected. Instead, he promoted the notion of “the layman’s specific lay apostolate,” understood as an “essential and primordial apostolate, distinct from the Priestly Ministry and capable of transforming the daily life of the world.” Moreover, Cardijn’s views eventually prevailed, the authors write, resulting in his “joy” at “finding, in two major Council documents, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, the declarations on the role of the laity which he had so long wanted.”

In achieving this, Cardijn enjoyed a “real share both in the preparatory work as well as in the debates of Vatican II,” Fiévez and Meert observed. Moreover, “it was by his life and his work, with all the many lines of inspiration to which he gave birth, that he has his place as one of its great precursors.” In a similar vein, English YCW chaplain, Edward Mitchinson noted that Cardijn’s “own contribution to the Council had begun fifty years previously, when he first gathered young workers round the altar and round the Bible for an authentic mission in the temporal order.” While the Decree on the Lay Apostolate bore “the stamp of his thought directly,” Mitchinson wrote, “he anticipated so much else besides.”

Similarly, Cardinal Achille Liénart, a pioneer JOC chaplain and pivotal Vatican II figure, recalled in 1966 that the Church in France “owed the launch of (specialised) Catholic Action at every level” to the JOC “model.” “Wasn’t it under the same impetus that two ideas developed in the Church that the Vatican Council has just proclaimed, namely the active role of the laity in the Church and the missionary character of the Church itself?” he asked. “I don’t say that the liturgical, scriptural or familial renewals that we have and are witnessing were born from the JOC,” he added. “However, they found among the leaders of the JOC and the similar movements formed in that favourable soil, the need, the eagerness, the

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understanding that ensured their expansion and their success. Even the priestly ministry was affected,” Liénart concluded.3

Significantly, he also situated Cardijn’s contribution within a larger historical context. “He had reviewed all the previous movements, their insights and their weaknesses,” Liénart emphasised, listing Lamennais and Montalembert and their ill-fated 1830 journal, *L’Avenir* (The Future), as well as study circles pioneer, Albert de Mun, and Marc Sangnier’s Sillon movement.

In Belgium, Bishop Charles-Marie Himmer, a long-standing Cardijn ally and co-founder of the *Group of the Poor* at Vatican II, also highlighted the “striking similitude between the doctrines of the Council and the ideas of the JOC chaplain.”4 British Cardinal Basil Hume went even further, stating in 1982 that Cardijn’s ideas helped “to shape the way the whole Church today thinks of its mission and of the role of the laity.” “If today you wish to seek his monument, look no further than the Second Vatican Council,” Hume advised.5

**Cardijn in conciliar historiography**

In stark contrast with the above, Cardijn has barely rated a mention in the historiography of Vatican II. Particularly glaring in Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak’s five-volume *History of Vatican II* is the absence of any reference to Cardijn in the chapter, “The Council Discovers the Laity,” by Hanjo Sauer.6 Alberigo himself also downplays Cardijn’s role, noting that while he was one of very few new cardinals named by Paul VI in 1965 who could attribute their appointment “to their activity at the Council,” he was not among the “foremost representatives of the majority.”7

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4“Une foule chaleureuse et enthousiaste dit son merci et son admiration à Son Eminence le cardinal Cardijn,” 30/03/1966, Source unknown, AC1835.
Perhaps even more surprising are the few references to Cardijn’s role in the accounts of the drafting of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* by Ferdinand Klostermann and Achille Glorieux, both of whom took part in the PCLA and the LAC. Another LAC peritus, English Monsignor (later Archbishop) Derek Worlock, also portrays Cardijn in a minor role. More recently, Maria Teresa Fattori’s specialised study of the Decree on Lay Apostolate offers only passing reference to Cardijn. Philippe Goyret’s keynote presentation at a 2015 conference marking the fiftieth anniversary of the decree does not mention him at all.

Nor does Roberto Tucci’s account of the drafting of *Gaudium et Spes* contain any mention of Cardijn, while Giovanni Turbanti’s 800-page thesis on the subject simply notes the JOC founder’s criticism of the draft schema for failing “to start from reality” as well as brief citations of his conciliar speeches. Similarly, American theologian Maureen Sullivan, in her *The Road to Vatican II: Key Changes in Theology*, notes the shift from deductive to inductive methodology in, *Gaudium et Spes*. Yet she credits Romano Guardini as “one of the earliest proponents of the kind of thinking that would emerge at the Council,” Congar as “a forerunner” and Chenu as a major proponent of the new methodology while ignoring Cardijn.

Nor has Cardijn’s role emerged in the historiography of the Belgian role at the Council. Peritus Albert Prignon simply notes that as a cardinal, Cardijn “returned with increased authority in the Commission on Lay Apostolate,” adding that while he brought his “prestige” to the podium during his Council speeches, the effect was robbed by his poor delivery.

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12 Giovanni Turbanti, Un concilio per il mondo moderno, La redazione della costituzione pastorale “Gaudium et Spes” del Vaticano II (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000).
15 Ibid, 179 and 207.
“Belgian theologians who influenced Vatican II”\textsuperscript{16} while Jan Grootaer’s \textit{Actes et acteurs à Vatican II} acknowledged his intervention on religious liberty as merely one of a series of “weighty” interventions on the subject.\textsuperscript{17}

It is this gulf in perception of Cardijn’s role at Vatican II between those who knew and worked with him and Council historians that provides the subject matter of this thesis. Was he simply one of a range of precursors of Vatican II? Was his role at the Council as limited as the historiography implies? If so, how were his ideas and methods transmitted into the documents of Vatican II, as many suggest they were? How to identify his impact among that of 3000 other Council Fathers and periti? These are the questions that this thesis seeks to address.

**Discerning Cardijn’s role**

As the foregoing implies, a narrow analysis of Cardijn’s own work during the Council – important as it was – will not suffice. Only a broad approach, gleaning information from multiple sources offers any hope of identifying and unravelling the threads of that influence over the course of Cardijn’s life, at the Council itself and more generally over the development of Catholic social thought and action.

Part I of this thesis therefore aims to situate Cardijn’s thought and methods within the framework of what John W. O’Malley has called the “long nineteenth century” embracing the 150-year period from the French Revolution until the eve of the Council. Drawing on Cardijn’s own autobiographical notes (Chapter 1), we divide this period into three generations – Lamennais, Le Sillon and La JOC – corresponding to the key personalities or movements that defined each period, illustrating key sources for Cardijn. (Chapter 2). In particular, we outline the development of Cardijn’s theology of lay apostolate and his methodology, including his iconic see-judge-act and his Proudhon-inspired Three Truths dialectic (Chapter 3). We also identify the emergence of a global jocist network of priests, bishops and lay leaders, particularly in the two decades prior leading up to the Council (Chapter 4).


\textsuperscript{17}Jan Grootaers, \textit{Actes et acteurs à Vatican II} (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 75.
In Part II, drawing on Cardijn’s archives, we endeavour to evaluate his role during the preparatory period for the Council. In a sense, for Cardijn, who often insisted that the success of any event lay in its preparation, this was the crucial period. We therefore begin with an overview of Cardijn’s initial response to the calling of the Council by John XXIII and the proposal for a new social encyclical (Chapter 5). Secondly, we move to a detailed analysis of Cardijn’s relatively lonely struggle to defend his vision of lay apostolate in the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate (Chapter 6).

In Part III, we consider the events of the Council proper from October 1962 until December 1965, drawing particularly on the archives of Cardijn, the JOCI and key conciliar actors with links to Cardijn and the movement as well as contemporary accounts and reports.

Here again, Cardijn provided important pointers to the course of events. “The JOC contributed a great deal to the Council,” he told JOCI leaders several days before his death in 1967, “not me, but all the bishops, cardinals, the Dom Helders and many others, who embraced the missionary vision developed and incarnated by the JOC.”

We illustrate (Chapter 7) the extraordinary role played by the jocist bishops during the First Session when Cardijn was effectively excluded after he was not initially appointed as a peritus. Next, we examine Cardijn’s longstanding conflict with his own archbishop, Cardinal Léon-Joseph Suenens, over their respective conceptions of lay apostolate, Catholic Action and methodology, which resurfaced as Cardijn prepared Laïcs en premières lignes for publication (Chapter 8).

Thirdly, we analyse the way in which Cardijn’s influence gradually impacted on the drafting of the Vatican II documents. We study the evolution of the future Gaudium et Spes as it shifted from a traditional top-down “doctrinal” approach towards a bottom-up “reality-based” approach based on Cardijn’s own methodology (Chapter 9). We follow this with a study of Cardijn’s role in the conciliar Lay Apostolate Commission, once he was appointed as a

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peritus, and the impact of his conception of the “specific” lay apostolate “proper” to lay people adopted in *Lumen Gentium and Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Chapter 10). Next, we show how Cardijn’s conception of lay apostolate, Specialised Catholic Action, the Three Truths dialectic, including his see-judge-act method, exercised a significant if not determining influence on most Vatican II documents, particularly those adopted at the Fourth Session in 1965 (Chapter 11).

Finally, we conclude (Chapter 12) that these elements offer a series of interpretive keys that collectively reveal the impact on the Council of both Cardijn and the jocist network.
Part 1

Cardijn’s Long Nineteenth Century
Chapter 1: Young Cardijn

Léon Joseph Cardijn was born on 13 November 1882 in the booming Brussels suburb of Schaerbeek. However, he grew up at Halle, a Flemish town fifteen kilometres away, helping his father deliver sacks of coal that he “pulled over the cobbles” of local streets. In daily contact with the working families who supplied labour to the surrounding industrial estates, he rapidly developed a keen social conscience.

“We often spoke of the factories in neighbouring communes,” he later recalled, “particularly the artificial silk factory at Tubize which attracted many young girls and women, who, intoxicated by ether fumes, prostituted themselves in the field next to the factory.” My father was terribly affected,” Cardijn remembered. “It was then that it came to my mind to do something for these poor boys and girls. It was the time of Rerum Novarum. I was nine years old.”

Although many concerned with these issues were doctrinaire socialists, activist priest, Fr Adolf Daens, was not. “The worker must be neither a slave nor a beggar,” Daens proclaimed, “he must be a free and prosperous man.” But his progressive politics and his candidature for parliament earned him the enmity of the conservative Catholic Party leader, Charles Woeste, who lobbied successfully in 1899 to have him stripped of his priestly duties.

Meanwhile, Daens had helped inspire a priestly vocation in the mind of the teenage Joseph Cardijn, who entered the Malines minor seminary in 1896. Returning home for holidays nine months later, he made his first shattering “discovery of the problem of working youth” among his former communion classmates, who had gone to work in the factories near Halle. “I found them already corrupted, opposed to the Church and no longer wanting to associate with me,” he later explained. “It was a dagger blow to my heart, and I began to seek the causes of this loss and corruption, and I promised to devote myself to saving them.”

1. Fiévez-Meert, Cardijn, 9.
5. Quoted in Marc Walckiers, “Quarante années qui façonnèrent les conceptions et la personnalité de Joseph Cardijn,” in Cardijn, een mens, een mens/un homme, un mouvement, KADOC jaerboek 1982, ed. KADOC,
Intriguingly, it was during this period that he first began to read the writings of “L’Ecole Mennaisienne,” named for the French priest, Félicité de Lamennais, whose “Dieu et liberté” (God and freedom) motto had helped inspire Belgium’s independence movement in 1830. Indeed, Cardijn’s own letters from the seminary echo many Mennaisian themes. “The greatest goal of your life: God, the Church, the People,” Cardijn wrote to a friend in 1903.6

Meanwhile, a further shock awaited Cardijn. On 24 May 1903, he was called home to the bedside of his father, Henri, dying prematurely of overwork. Overcome with emotion, the 20-year-old seminarian vowed to consecrate his life to the working class, a moment that decided the whole “apostolic orientation of my priesthood,” as he wrote.7

A brilliant student, Cardijn topped his class regularly. Although he retained a thick Flemish accent, he delighted in French literature, avidly reading the works of the mostly French “social Catholics.” Moreover, he displayed a genuinely philosophical bent, absorbing the writings of authors including Lamennais, Alphonse Gratry and Léon Ollé-Laprune as well as British writers John Henry Newman, William James and Herbert Spencer.8

The Malines major seminary was then “in full effervescence,” Cardijn noted:

> It was the time of Loisy and modernism. The new methods of biblical theology, history of the Church and even of dogmatics; as well as journalistic activities including contact with the leaders of the social movement, the Flemish movement, with the Sillon, the ACJF and the Social Weeks in France, all this orientation, this theological, apostolic and social renovation, led to study circles, inspired meetings and provoked reading and enthusiastic discussion. It was an apprenticeship in word and action.9

But it was not all plain sailing. Pope Leo XIII’s long, relatively liberal pontificate ended in 1903. Thus, Cardijn began his theology studies under Pius X, who immediately made clear his intention to crack down. Yet instead of discouraging him, the change of environment

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7 Cardijn, “Antécédents.”
9 Cardijn, “Antécédents.”
seems to have spurred Cardijn. “I need to know my theology in depth so that I can defend it in front of anyone,” he wrote to his friend Emile Possoz, while other letters revealed a growing consciousness of his “social vocation.”

Around this time, Cardijn first encountered the Sillon, the lay democratic magazine and movement founded by Marc Sangnier, then taking the French Catholic world by storm. “You would need to appreciate the loving capacity of a virginal heart aged twenty to understand the explosion of enthusiasm that such reading could inspire in the soul of a young seminarian!” Cardijn later told Sangnier.

He completed his studies and was ordained by the new archbishop of Malines, the future Cardinal Désiré Mercier, on 22 September 1906. Mercier was clearly impressed by Cardijn’s talents, sending him to the University of Louvain to study social sciences at the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie. Yet Cardijn was disappointed with many professors, finding their courses too theoretical – and perhaps their Thomism too narrow – in the face of the serious social problems.

The exception was the Louvain economist and sociologist, Victor Brants, an enthusiastic but critical disciple of the French sociologist, Frédéric Le Play, whose method of social observation or enquiry method foreshadowed Cardijn’s see-judge-act. Taking Cardijn under his wing, Brants sponsored study trips to Germany and France in 1907 for his promising pupil.

In France, Cardijn finally made direct contact with Sangnier and his increasingly controversial movement. Upon his return to Louvain, however, an unpleasant surprise awaited him. Undoubtedly in an effort to teach discernment and patience to the fiery young priest, Mercier had cut short his studies and was sending him to teach Latin at a rural minor

10 Quoted in Walckiers, “Quarante années,” 22.
12 Cardijn, “Antécédents.”
13 Walckiers, “Joseph Cardyn jusqu’avant la fondation de la JOC,” 103-104.
seminary in Basse Wavre. Although devastated, Cardijn obeyed unhesitatingly, later regarding his banishment as “providential” and the best possible preparation for his future apostolate.\textsuperscript{14}

Not until 1912, when he was finally appointed as a curate in the parish of Notre Dame at Laeken, would the opportunity arise to implement the lessons he slowly absorbed. Meanwhile, the enforced five-year retreat shielded him from the conflicts that engulfed his beloved Sillon and ended in its tragic closure in 1910.

\textsuperscript{14} Cardijn, “Antécedents.”
Chapter 2: Lamennais, Le Sillon and La JOC

Introduction

As historian John W. O’Malley has written, the changes heralded by Vatican II were prepared over a 160-year period from the French Revolution until the eve of the Council, which he characterised as “the long nineteenth century.” Drawing on a series of biographical notes compiled by Cardijn at the end of his life, particularly a note entitled “Mes lectures” (My reading), we can divide this period into three roughly equal “generations,” each of which can be named for the leading personality or movement that identified each period for Cardijn: Lamennais, Le Sillon and JOC.

As this chapter will endeavour to show, each generation played a decisive role in the process of moving the Church away from the “integralist” mindset that once prevailed towards the “adoption of a principle of deliberate reconciliation between the church and certain changes” that would eventually pave the way for Vatican II.

A. The Lamennais School

Lamennais: God, freedom, the people and the poor

Cardijn first began to read Lamennais shortly after beginning his minor seminary studies at fifteen, a moment that corresponded with his rejection by his former schoolmates, who had metamorphosed into anti-clerical young workers alienated from what they perceived as a conservative Church allied with the rich.

Born in 1782 within earshot of the well-known Le Sillon beach at Saint Malo, Lamennais proclaimed the need to return to the Church of the Gospel based on freedom, priority for the people and a new alliance with the poor. This was the vision embodied in the “Dieu et
The “liberté” or “God and freedom” slogan that Lamennais adopted for the newspaper, *L’Avenir*, he founded in 1830 with Henri Lacordaire, Charles de Montalembert and others.

Disillusioned with France’s Restoration monarchy, shocked by the poverty and oppression of the emerging working class, and inspired by people’s struggles in his mother’s ancestral Ireland and Adam Mickiewicz’s Poland, Lamennais in effect called for a revolution in the Church.

“The Church is languishing and tending to extinction in Europe,” Lamennais wrote in 1833, warning there were only two possible solutions. One was to rebuild “the ancient alliance with absolute powers, to come to their aid against the people and against liberty to obtain from them a level of tolerance, to weld altar and throne, relying on force,” a solution he evidently rejected.

“The second was to cut the ties that enslaved the Church to the state, to free it from the dependency that limits its action, to link up with the social movement that is preparing new destinies for the world, for freedom to unite it with order to redress its disparities, for science to reconcile it, through unhindered discussion, with eternal dogma, to the people so as to pour onto its immense miseries the inexhaustible flows of divine charity,” Lamennais proposed.4

This new Gospel-inspired alliance to replace the outmoded Constantinian alliance was to be founded on liberty. “We first seek freedom of conscience or full, universal freedom of religion, without distinction and without privilege, and consequently, concerning ourselves, as Catholics, we seek the total separation of church and state,” as the editors of *L’Avenir* wrote on 7 December 1830.5

This proved too much for conservative French Catholics and for Pope Gregory XVI, who in 1832 issued his encyclical *Mirari Vos*, which directly condemned many ideas championed by

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the Lamennais team, notably freedom of conscience and freedom of the press. Dismayed, the three men submitted. But the Roman experience had broken Lamennais’s faith in the papacy and indeed the Church. Another encyclical in 1834, *Singulari Nos*, further targeted Lamennais’s writings, consummating his rupture with the institutional Church.

Nevertheless, he continued to write not only on social and political themes and even produced a highly regarded new translation of the Gospel illustrating his radical commitment to its message. Others who had worked with or come under his influence – the Lamennais School, as they were known to Cardijn – perhaps better appreciated his personal flaws. Although they distanced themselves from him, they sought to maintain and promote his ideas within the framework of the Church.

**Ozanam and the lay apostolate**

One of these men, Frédéric Ozanam, foundational figure of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, first met Lamennais while still a nineteen-year-old law student. His father, Jacques-Antoine Ozanam, had subscribed to *L’Avenir* and young Frédéric shared similar views.

Like the Dominican pioneer, Henri Lacordaire, Frédéric believed that if only Lamennais had been more patient, many of his ideas could have been “reconciled” with Catholicism. Indeed, in 1847, he expressed the hope that the newly elected Pope Pius IX would play the role of “God’s envoy to conclude the great affair of the nineteenth century, namely the alliance of religion and freedom.”

Even more significant was Ozanam’s early, pioneering commitment to “the apostolate of lay people in the world,” an expression he used as early as 1835. Although he did not mention it, Ozanam who had studied ancient Greek, certainly understood the Greek root *laikos* for the French term for lay people, namely *laïc*. He also evidently understood that the Greek root for the word “democracy” was another word for people: *demos*.

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But where Lamennais spoke of the “People,” Ozanam chose to identify more specifically with “lay people,” as the exclusively lay structure of the Society of St Vincent de Paul reflected. Later, the Society would characterise this role as “the laity participating in the priesthood of the priests.” This was a controversial notion, as was the term “lay apostolate” itself, which implied that lay people shared in the apostolate of the hierarchy as successors of Jesus’ apostles. Although Ozanam denied it, the term “lay apostolate” thus also hinted at the introduction of democracy within a monarchical church.

Even more importantly, Ozanam’s understanding of lay apostolate was not linked primarily to the notion of charitable works. On the contrary, he always regarded his roles as a family man and academic as the prime location of his lay apostolic commitment. Thus, although he taught at the Catholic Stanislas (University) College in Paris at the invitation of Alphonse Graty, he preferred to teach at the secularised Sorbonne, where his courses sought to illustrate the Christian contribution to European civilisation.

**The 1848 Revolution and L’Ere nouvelle**

When the Revolution of February 1848 again ended the French monarchy, both Lacordaire and Ozanam welcomed the birth of the provisional Second Republic government led by Alphonse de Lamartine, yet another Lamennais ally and disciple.

“I have devoted my life,” Lacordaire stated, explaining his position, “to sealing that reconciliation between the new generation (i.e. the 1848 generation) and the antique generation that is called the Church.” Ozanam too viewed the Revolution as a unique opportunity for the Church to bridge the gap that had opened and “to evangelise the working class.”

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“Better to rely on the people who are the true ally of the Church, as poor as she is, devoted, blessed as she is with all the blessings of the Saviour,” Ozanam argued. The Church therefore needed to “move to the side of the barbarians, that is to say democracy,” which would lead to “the deliverance of the Church by the secularisation of the state,” he wrote. Ultimately, their (i.e. the revolutionaries’) slogan, liberty, equality, fraternity, “is the very Gospel,” he concluded.

Thus, in April 1848, together with Fr Henry Maret and Lacordaire, Ozanam launched a daily newspaper, L’Ere Nouvelle (The New Era), which adopted much of the program announced by L’Avenir eighteen years earlier.

By the summer of that year, however, the Revolution had founder in bloodshed as the Catholic middle and ruling classes rose in fear of its potential consequences. Montalembert, who had moved to the conservative side, warned striking workers to “resign yourselves to poverty and you will rewarded and compensated eternally,” adding that the Church counselled (not compelled) the rich to give alms.

By the end of the year, a new French constitution had been adopted, ushering in the election of Louis Napoleon, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, as president. Three years later, still unsatisfied, he staged a coup d’état, installing the Second Empire, over which he reigned as Emperor Napoleon III until 1870.

The democratic hopes of Lamennais, Lacordaire and Ozanam were dashed. The working class was lost in what Pius XI would later call the greatest tragedy of the nineteenth century.

Young but already ailing, Ozanam died on 8 September 1853. Less than six months later, on 27 February 1854, Lamennais followed him, choosing to be buried in a pauper’s grave, symbolically still unreconciled with the Church.

12“A l’abbé Alphonse Ozanam.”
13A Théophile Foisset,” 22/02/1848, in Lettres de Frédéric Ozanam, III, 378.
B. Le Sillon: Prototype of the Specialised Catholic Action movements

From Lamennais to Le Sillon

Forty years later, the seeds planted by Lamennais, Lacordaire and Ozanam finally germinated in the form of Marc Sangnier’s *Le Sillon* (The Furrow) movement, later described by Cardijn as “the greatest surge of faith and apostolate” since the (French) Revolution.¹⁵

During the intervening period, the legacy of 1848 was nurtured by a series of remarkable personalities, particularly the philosophers Alphonse Gratry (1805-1872) and Léon Ollé-Lapruné (1839-1898), both of whom knew Le Play and helped develop his “social observation” method.

Alphonse Gratry

A brilliant student at the elite *Ecole Polytechnique*, Gratry suffered a crisis of faith before undergoing a conversion experience that he later described as a mystical vision of a world based on truth and justice.¹⁶ After further studies with the philosopher Louis Bautain at Strasbourg,¹⁷ he began teaching at a minor seminary before becoming director of Stanislas College in Paris in 1840.

Moved by the events of 1848, Gratry published his first book in the form of a *Catéchisme Social*. In 1852, he and another priest, Pierre Pététot, re-launched the Congregation of the Oratory in Paris in a bid to raise clergy intellectual standards. Beginning in the 1850s, he published a series of influential books on philosophy that led to his election to the *Académie Française* in 1868 just four years before his death in 1872.

Rejecting a narrowly scholastic approach to philosophy, Gratry made a motto of the Platonic phrase “*il faut aller au vrai avec toute son âme,*” meaning that the search for the truth

involves an effort by all the faculties of the human soul. For this reason, l’abbé Pichot, who published a selection of Gratry’s writings in 1899, characterised his work as an “integral philosophy.”18 In this sense and contrary to a traditional, dualistic scholastic division of life into spiritual and temporal spheres, Gratry emphasised the continuity of terrestrial or temporal and heavenly or eternal life, as St Augustine had done.

“Why insist on separating the double idea of my dual goal, the idea of my earthly goal and the idea of my heavenly goal, the idea of my temporal goal from my eternal goal?” Gratry asked, anticipating Cardijn. Why not grasp the link between the two to “beautify” one’s terrestrial goal with the holy perspective of heaven?19

**Reading the signs of the times**

Gratry’s most famous and widely distributed work, however, was *Les Sources*, a spiritual manual – later read by Cardijn – published in two volumes in 1862, bearing the innocuous subtitiles *Counsels for conduct of the spirit* and *First and last book of the science of duty*.20 Combined into a single volume, *Les Sources* was reprinted in dozens of editions until World War II, contributing greatly to the intellectual climate of the time.

Part I comprised a wide-ranging guide to organising one’s life the purpose of which was to discover what God desires from “the human spirit.” Gratry’s teleological answer was that God orients man towards “a task”, namely “the salvation of the century in which he lives.”21 But how to determine this task? The answer, Gratry argued, was to heed Christ’s challenge recorded in Luke 12: 56: “Why do you not understand the signs of the times?” Those who desired to become “workers among men,” Gratry suggested, needed to become “attentive to the signs of the times that are visible.”22 It was by reading these signs that they would be able to identify the path for renewing the world in line with God’s vision of truth and justice.

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19 Ibid., 29-30.
22 Ibid., 78.
An inductive approach: Reality, reflection, resolution

Going further, in another contribution that would have great impact at Vatican II, Gratry insisted on the distinction between the syllogistic or deductive process of achieving knowledge or understanding, and the inductive (Aristotle’s term) or dialectical (Plato’s) process. With respect to the former, by definition, it was impossible to go beyond the initial postulates. Only the inductive or dialectical process allowed for new discoveries, Gratry held, because it necessarily implied “a principle of transcendence” since it involved the creation of something new.

As Ollé-Laprune later emphasised, Gratry also applied this method to the search for solutions to social problems. “He signals the hideous wounds (of society),” Ollé-Laprune wrote, “he enters into the precise, living detail; he names things by their names...; he shows what they do, and, before these poignant realities in us, around us, he provokes reflections, examinations of conscience, resolutions; and this goes a long way, a very long way, it kindles and prepares many changes.

In Gratry’s method, as interpreted by Ollé-Laprune, one therefore began with reality, before moving to reflection and finally to resolution, in a clear anticipation of Cardijn’s own see, judge, act and the inductive method of Vatican II. This “begins to be realised when each one starts to reform oneself, then one has a profound social action, and one determines changes in the world,” Ollé-Laprune insisted. Indeed, this was precisely how the Sillon movement and later the JOC would apply Gratry’s method.

Frédéric Le Play’s ‘Social Observation Method’

One of Gratry’s companions at the Ecole Polytechnique was Frédéric Le Play (1806-1882), whose “social observation model” had far-reaching impact. Convinced that the study of “social facts” was necessary to understand and improve social conditions, Le Play, a mining

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24 Gratry, Logique, I, 115.
26 Ibid.
engineer, determined to make systematic enquiries concerning the situation of families and communities during all his field trips. Despite turning to the political right after the events of 1848, he maintained this social concern.

In 1855, Le Play completed his path-breaking work *Les Ouvriers Européens* beginning with an exposé of his method and of his own conception of “social science.” Essentially, this amounted to applying the scientific observation method to the field of social phenomena. In 1864, he published his second major work, *La Réforme Sociale en France*, a three-volume epic focusing on the actual reforms required. Here we find perhaps the clearest synthesis of Le Play’s method:

> The facts thus gathered enabled me to work back by deduction to the fundamental principles of social life and to the applications that it is appropriate to make of them today. Moreover, I only accepted facts and principles as proven after having checked them by many observations and by the judgement of various local authorities.

Facts, principles and applications: the parallels with Gratry’s reality-reflection-resolution approach and with Cardijn’s future see-judge-act-method are striking. For Le Play, however, these principles were derived empirically from observation of social practice rather than from principles of moral philosophy or theology. In fact, this empirical approach to the identification of principles quickly became one of several critiques levelled at Le Play.

Although the method deeply influenced social Catholicism as well as the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action movements, Le Play’s “paternalistic” approach and his narrow family-oriented focus deterred many. What was needed was a practically oriented social philosophy, which would complete and complement his social science. This was precisely where Léon Ollé-Laprune, building on Gratry, would make his contribution.

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Léon Ollé-Laprune: Philosophical father of the see-judge-act

Inspired by Gratry’s *Les Sources* and influenced by Ozanam, Léon Ollé-Laprune came to be regarded as the “greatest French Catholic layman” since the latter and even as a “new Ozanam.”32 Like his role model, Ollé-Laprune chose for apostolic reasons to teach in secular state institutions, which brought him to his alma mater, the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*. Perhaps the greatest of his many brilliant students was Maurice Blondel, later described by Yves Congar as the “philosopher of Vatican II,” who also taught for a time at Stanislas College.33

Like Gratry but unusually for a Catholic philosopher of that time, Ollé-Laprune was not a thomist. Understood as a closed system, even the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas had outlived its usefulness, Ollé-Laprune believed. What was needed was a completely “new philosophy,” albeit inspired by Aquinas, in line with Gratry’s project.34 Moreover, in what we would today call a pluralist society, “intellectual unity” needed to be forged by fostering “the art of discussion,” Ollé-Laprune proposed.35 Expressed another way, what was required was:

1° Respect for the facts.
2° Respect for self-evident principles.
3° Love of the truth.
4° Recognition of the excellence of morality, of moral honesty.36

Facts, principles, truth, morality: these established the basis of discussion or dialogue.

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36Ibid., 323.
Virtue ethics as the basis of social life

Ollé-Laprune drew here on his 1881 study of Aristotle’s ethics, *Essai sur la Morale d’Aristote*. It was “in the midst of social life,” Ollé-Laprune argued, “that the moral beauty of Aristotle’s virtuous man bursts forth.” This was particularly so in the political sphere where “the free citizen jealous of his rights... intends to participate in government as well as in obedience (Aristotle, *Politics*: III, II, 7).”

But how to live this virtuous life of social and political participation? Ollé-Laprune summarised Aristotle’s approach:

> Practical reason discerns that which is to be done in any circumstance; it takes account of times and places and persons; it appreciates the circumstances; it determines the conduct to take… Such is the nature, such is the role of the applied intelligence to the discernment of moral matters, and enlightening and directing practical life. It is thought itself supporting action, *phronesis*.

Moreover, prudential, practical reason implied and was based on freedom. “It indeed seems that free determination is a thing that depends on us,” Ollé-Laprune wrote, citing the *Nicomachean Ethics* (III, II, 9), “this emerges from the analysis of the facts; it is natural to judge thus; there is a reasonable conclusion.”

Facts, judgement, conclusion: Ollé-Laprune’s first published formulation of the Aristotelian triptych summed up his solution to the problems both of building consensus in a pluralistic society and promoting a moral, participative, democratic republic.

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38 Ibid., 54-55.
41 Ibid., 23.
In 1894, Ollé-Laprune developed these ideas in his masterpiece, *Le Prix de la Vie (The Price/Prize of Life)*, which reached its fifty-second edition in 1944. Here, he sought to answer the question “what to think and make of life?” Where Gratry had perhaps emphasised the challenges facing the world, Ollé-Laprune shifted the focus to the human person – life – as the centre of his philosophical concern. And the life of this person, he continued, was “action.” This was Aristotle’s – and Gratry’s – teleological concept of man, who had a “task (oeuvre) to achieve.”

In turn, this required the development of “consciousness” (*conscience*) and “reflection” as man aimed “to determine the idea, to represent the form of life required,” which further implied that “I am responsible for my conduct.” For Ollé-Laprune, this “moral responsibility” flowed from man’s “duty to be the best man possible” and “to live in conformity with the ideal of human nature.”

Moreover, this understanding had social and civic consequences. “History appears to be democratising,” he wrote in the Preface to the Third Edition. Not in the sense of “levelling” but in the sense of “a personal effort to raise up minds and hearts” (“esprits et âmes”) and what he called “a universal diffusion of intellectual and moral energy” that the Sillon would later interpret as a means of developing its “âme commune” (communal soul), or more broadly “communion.”

It followed that, whereas Aristotle viewed prudence (*phronesis*) as the fundamental virtue for political leaders, in an emerging democratic society everyone needed to develop this quality, Ollé-Laprune concluded:

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43 Ibid., 65.
44 Ibid., 92.
47 Ibid., xiv.
Each person must apply themselves more than ever, better than ever to consulting courageously and faithfully the principles and the facts in order to make themselves more than ever, better than ever, capable of seeing clearly, judging and concluding, precisely because it is no longer the fashion to do so.\textsuperscript{48}

Building on the heritage of Gratry, Le Play and the Lamennais tradition, Ollé-Laprune thus articulated a method for the construction of a virtue-based, democratic society.

**Marc Sangnier**

Born into a bourgeois family in 1873, Marc Sangnier began at Stanislas College as a primary school student continuing until he completed his undergraduate studies in mathematics aged twenty-one. There he absorbed the spirit of Gratry, Ozanam and Lacordaire, whose memory was actively fostered by the Marianist fathers and brothers, while his family was close to Ollé-Laprune.

However, the latter’s direct relationship with the future Sillon leaders likely began with his valedictory address to Stanislas students on 1 August 1893. Delivering a speech entitled *La recherche des questions pressantes* (*Addressing urgent issues*) that reads almost like a program for the movement, citing Gratry’s concern for justice, truth and religion, Ollé-Laprune challenged the students to address the issues of “social evil” and “social peace.”\textsuperscript{49}

“Will you be able to avoid all clashes between various interests and ways of thinking, and place cushions and buffers everywhere?” Ollé-Laprune asked. “You will look directly at the things that divide men and the men that these things divide. Peace will come through light and frankness,” he advised. “In your judgement, you will maintain that clarity which comes from the courage of the spirit… Keen to welcome that which is incomplete, you will maintain that the true solution is found only in the complete truth.” (NB: Italics added.)\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{48}Ollé-Laprune, *Le prix*, viii.
\textsuperscript{50}Ollé-Laprune, “La recherche,” 203.
Soon after, Sangnier launched a series of weekly meetings in the college basement – hence the group’s early name, *La Crypte* – that would seek precisely to follow Ollé-Laprune’s exhortation to look at, judge and seek solutions to the issues of their time.

From the start, Crypt members had an outward focus, seeking to recruit new members, beginning with other Stanislas students. Soon, they also began to reach out to the working-class parish youth clubs (*patronages*) then spreading through the industrial suburbs of Paris. As the Stanislas students completed their studies, they began to promote new conferences or “study circles” in other faculties and institutions. In 1896, Sangnier launched an “Initiative Committee” with the objective of further promoting these developments.\(^\text{51}\)

Meanwhile, these study circles began to undertake more systematic Leplaysian-style enquiries on issues of concern. Already the groups were adopting a form that would be easily recognisable to future leaders of the JOC.

**Towards a lay-clerical partnership**

The summer of 1897 marked a new turning point when Sangnier and several key leaders joined a week-long study session organised by Léon Harmel, the Catholic industrialist who had made his factory at Val-des-Bois near Reims a model of social justice. Two major objectives appear to have emerged from this session.

The first was to develop a model of “lay-clerical” cooperation that would unite “the lay element, the ecclesiastical element and the union of the two, without confusion or division” between the two elements.\(^\text{52}\) This was new because hitherto the Crypt study circles had emerged as lay initiatives, although at least some circles were assisted by “counsellors,” who were not necessarily priests. Crucially, the role of priests was not to control but to advise, a challenge for many clerics accustomed to a directive role, and also a point of tension that would result in serious misunderstandings.


\(^{52}\)Caron, *Le Sillon*, 68.
The second objective was to launch a nationwide campaign to promote study circles along the model pioneered by the Crypt. The outcome was the spread of a wave of new study circles in Paris and across France.

**Le Sillon**

Among the earliest projects emerging from the Crypt was the launch in January 1894 by Paul Renaudin of a literary and social issues magazine, *Le Sillon* (The Furrow), the name of which appears to refer to Lamennais’s birthplace. From the beginning the journal adopted a line that attempted to reconcile Christianity with “our century.” By 1896, it was affirming that “we have faith in the moral and social virtue of Christianity, in its infinite power of regeneration and progress for both societies and individuals.”

In 1899, Sangnier became editor, introducing a new orientation that transformed it into “an action magazine focused primarily on the life of the study circles.” Henceforth, *Le Sillon* magazine became a primary organising tool for the building of a democratic republic with a moral foundation.

The same year, Sangnier characterised the method of the Sillon study circles in the following terms: “Every citizen must: 1° Know the state of the country; when the situation is bad, he must 2° seek solutions; and lastly, having found the solutions, he must 3° act.”

Sillon counsellor, the Dominican philosopher, AD Sertillanges later added his own contribution here, recasting Ollé-Laprune’s Aristotelian see-judge-decide formulation in terms of seeking counsel, applying judgement and moving to action, or in effect, seek-judge-act.

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54 Ibid., 95.
55 Ibid., 111.
Radiating circles of influence

Meanwhile, on 31 May 1896, Sangnier called for “a vast movement of reconciliation” in favour of “social unity” and “genuine democracy,” outlining a strategy for achieving this. Citing Emile Zola, he proposed to work at three concentric levels, beginning with the “internal unity proper to each person,” before moving to the development of an “âme commune” among the people and groups they were in contact with, and finally reaching out to “the whole of humanity.”

This was the theory of radiating circles of social influence developed by the sociologist Hippolyte Taine, of whom Zola was a disciple. According to Taine, this influence operated at three levels or “moments,” i.e. the specific historical situation, “milieu,” or environment, and “race,” by which he meant national grouping.

Henceforth, the emerging Sillon leaders systematically developed a three-level plan to achieve this based on study circles for student and young worker leaders, “popular institutes” for reaching a broader group and publications targeting the masses. By 1902, Sillon-inspired study circles and initiatives were booming, leading to the holding of the first National Congress of Study Circles in February of that year. By 1903, these groups had begun to self-identify as perhaps the first lay “movement” in the Church.

Consciousness, responsibility and democracy

Around this time, the Sillon leaders first articulated their definition of democracy as the form of “social organisation that tends to maximise the conscience/consciousness and the responsibility of everyone.” Moreover, the Sillon method now had a name: “the method of democratic education,” explicitly adapted from Le Play’s social observation method,

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58Caron, Le Sillon, 57
60Marc Sangnier, L’Esprit démocratique (Paris: Perrin, 1905), 167. Note that in French the word ‘conscience’ means both conscience and consciousness in English.
transforming it into a method of raising “consciousness” and developing action on social issues.\textsuperscript{61}

As the Sillon counsellor, Marianist Brother Louis Cousin explained, the originality of the movement’s method was its transformation of the Leplaysian method into a means of raising consciousness and developing democratic virtue. “Doesn’t virtue presuppose conscience/consciousness and responsibility?” Cousin asked, citing Montesquieu.\textsuperscript{62} Indeed, this conception of democracy would become one of the Sillon’s most enduring contributions, finding its way into Catholic social teaching and several Vatican II documents.

**The Sillon and the ACJF**

Sillon study circle methods thus differed significantly from many earlier circles, including the workers’ circles launched by Albert de Mun later by the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française (ACJF), or French Catholic Youth Association, founded in 1886.

The ACJF summarised its own method in the triptych “Piété, étude, action” – “Prayer, study, action,” which began, not with facts or “the imperious demands of life,” as Sangnier expressed it, but with the study of Church doctrine. Indeed, early ACJF chaplains, particularly Charles Maignen, rebuffed efforts to introduce the empirical Le Play method, which was perceived as compromising Catholic doctrine.\textsuperscript{63}

Secondly, as Jeanne Caron explained, ACJF leaders regarded the existence of Christian society as a given, working to bring together existing Church organisations to enable them to deepen their faith and their formation. In contrast, the Crypt/Sillon, looked outwards to what they perceived as a dechristianised or non-Christian society that needed to be won back by an effort to “tame” or reconcile it by means of “preliminary action on souls.”\textsuperscript{64} Again, this prefigured the difference in perspective that the future JOC would experience with respect to pre-existing Catholic Action groups that sought to defend the Church and its traditional role.

\textsuperscript{61}Louis Cousin, Vie et doctrine du Sillon (Paris: Emmanuel Vitte, 1905), 98-99.
\textsuperscript{62}Ibid., 125.
\textsuperscript{63}Charles Molette, L’Association catholique de la jeunesse française 1886-1907 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1968), 75.
\textsuperscript{64}Caron, Le Sillon, 258.
A theological framework

In a pioneering book, Cousin endeavoured to provide a theological framework for this work, which he characterised as “laïque.” The Sillon was “lay by its action and its object” since it operated “on the side of civil society,” Cousin explained. It represented “an effort of the latter to realise its natural end, namely the reign of social peace in the (social) order through the maintenance of justice and law.”

“Civil society is a society as the Church is a society; each of them is a perfect society in the theological-juridical sense of the word,” Cousin continued, citing the traditional perfect societies theory of church and state, which would lose theological favour after Vatican II, “because both have their reason for being and their own end.” Moreover, in modern society, the division between the two fields was much more accentuated than in the past, Cousin continued, writing only a year after France’s 1905 law on the separation of Church and state.

It followed that the role of lay people was increasingly important. “Lay people will speak in a different manner than priests,” Cousin argued. “Lay people retain their lay role,” he added, “they wish to be promoters of social well-being, as they should be even if Christ had not founded the Church; they fulfil an indispensable role in the Church because this role is the accomplishment of a duty that natural morality imposes.” In plain terms, the work of a banker did not lose its lay character simply because the directors of the bank were inspired by Church teaching. Similarly, the Sillon’s work of building democracy was also a lay task, Cousin concluded.

25 August 1910

Unsurprisingly, none of this development occurred without conflict. On one hand, the Sillon openly combated the nationalist “idolatry” of Charles Maurras’s *Action Française*, who

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65 Cousin, *Vie et doctrine*, 51.
67 Cousin, *Vie et doctrine*, 51.
68 Ibid., 53-55.
despite his own professed atheism continued to gain considerable support from conservative Catholics, some of whom characterised their activities as *Action Catholique*.

On the other hand, the Sillon faced increasing criticism inside the Church for insisting on its “autonomy,” which was perceived by many bishops as an attempt to undermine their authority. These critiques found a growing audience at the Holy See among “integrist” bishops including Mgr Umberto Benigni at the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. “These are [the kind of] men who need to be crushed,” Benigni said of the sillonists in an ironically prophetic phrase. “Otherwise, they divide into two or three pieces, like certain kinds of mollusc that continue to reproduce even more harmfully.”

Ultimately, on 25 August 1910, the feast of the French king Saint Louis IX, Pius X wrote to the French bishops in a letter, *Notre Charge Apostolique*, demanding that Sillon leaders “turn their leadership over” to the bishops, and for the Sillon study circles to re-organise on a diocesan basis “independent of each other for the time being” under the name “*Sillon Catholique*” without any political involvement.

The Sillon’s aims were “a mere verbal and chimerical construction” based on a “jumble” of words including “Liberty, Justice, Fraternity, Love, Equality, and human exultation,” all of which rested “upon an ill-understood human dignity,” the pope wrote. Moreover, “the Sillon, its eyes fixed on a chimera, brings Socialism in its train,” he warned. But perhaps most dangerous of all was “the Sillon’s pretension to escape the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical authority.”

**Legacy**

To the surprise of their adversaries, the Sillon leaders resigned forthwith, although they did not place themselves at the disposition of their bishops as the pontiff had requested,

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69Caron, *Le Sillon*, 418-419.
preferring to allow the Sillon to disappear. Nevertheless, their “submission” made a great impact.

Meanwhile, other Sillon members and priests moved to the ACJF, bringing its ideas and methods with them. In Rome too, at least a few were stirred by the achievements of the Sillon and wished to preserve its heritage. Young Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pius XII, attempted to address the canonical problems raised by trans-diocesan movements in a paper entitled *The Personality and Territoriality of Laws, particularly in Canon Law*. Later, as Pope Pius XII, his 1944 Christmas Message on democracy would incorporate the Sillon conscience-responsibility binomial in a first step towards reversing Pius X’s condemnation of the Sillon’s definition.

C. The JOC: A model of Specialised Catholic Action

From the Sillon to the JOC

If building democracy was fundamental to the Sillon, Cardijn’s own priority was to apply the same principles and methods to the development of the worker movement. While teaching at the minor seminary, he continued his research into these issues. Emblematic was his 1911 trip to England where he sought out leading unionists, including the Christian socialist, Ben Tillett. What particularly impressed Cardijn was the “self-education” orientation of the British union movement. In this way, he concluded, workers could liberate themselves and escape the paternalist tutelage of the ruling classes.

Victor Brants

While the Leplaysian influence on Cardijn permeated his writings so too did that of Victor Brants. Whereas Le Play’s social enquiries focused on families and factories, proposing what

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73 Pius XII, *Benignitas et humanitas*, Christmas message 1944: http://www.papacyencyclicals.net/Pius12/P12XMAS.HTM (Accessed 17/05/2016)
some saw as welfare solutions, Brants sought to broaden the method to include all fields of
social life, aiming to better grasp the “causes of the problem” and the necessary “elements of
reform.”

“Ethics, and par excellence, Christian ethics, must impregnate the whole of social life,” he
also wrote in the Preface to the First Edition of his La Circulation des Hommes et des
Choses: Précis des Leçons d’Économie Politique echoing Ollé-Laprune. Moreover, it was
Brants who sent Cardijn on his study tour to northern France where he first met the Sillon
leaders.

**VICTOIRE CAPPE AND FERNAND TONNET**

When he was finally appointed as curate at Notre Dame parish in Laeken at Easter 1912,
Cardijn thus naturally quickly partnered with two young people, Victoire Cappe and Fernand
Tonnet, both of whom had already been formed in Leplaysian and Sillon methods.

As well as studying with Brants, Cappe learnt the “method of democratic education” from Fr
Jean Paisse, a counsellor to the Sillon circle in her home town of Liege. In 1906, aged only
twenty, she founded a Syndicat de l’Aiguille (Needleworkers Union) and Les Ligues
ouvrières féminines chrétiennes (Leagues of Christian Working-Class Women). In 1911,
before meeting Cardijn, she published an article “Le salaire féminin” dividing its analysis

Similarly, Fernand Tonnet, then an 18-year-old bank clerk, soon to become a lay founder of
the JOC, sought out Cardijn soon after the latter’s arrival in the parish. He had previously

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76 Victor Brants, La circulation des hommes et des choses: précis des leçons d’économie politique (Louvain: Peeters, 1892), x.
belonged to a study circle at Quiévrain, on the Belgian-French border, where he also learnt Sillon methods from local priest, Fr Abrassart.\textsuperscript{79}

**Laeken**

Upon arrival at Laeken, Cardijn was immediately made responsible for social work projects for women. Although the church adjoined the royal domain, the suburb also housed a large working-class population. “My first concern was (Jesus’ phrase): ‘I know my sheep and they know me’,” Cardijn later wrote, and he wasted no time in setting out to do so.

Within months, he launched his first worker study circles, initially for young teenage female workers. Already the Sillon- and Taine-inspired outline of future developments was starting to emerge: study circles for core group leaders, class-based organisation of the study circles, outreach to the masses via the patronages and social services, as well as spiritual activities, communion, vigils, etc.

Although Cardijn had clashed with Cardinal Mercier, the latter recognised his talents and in 1915 made him responsible for Church “social work” for the whole Brussels region. This included many innovative projects, ranging from savings programs, to worker cooperatives and social services.

World War I interrupted these efforts with Cardijn imprisoned twice by the German occupiers. He grasped the opportunity to read the Bible from cover to cover – and to study Karl Marx’s *Capital*. Later he would say of Marx that “if I was born thirty-two years earlier and he was born thirty-two later, he would have been my first jocist.”\textsuperscript{80} Jail also blessed him with the time to draft an outline of the future *Manuel de la JOC*.

\textsuperscript{79}Gigacz, *The Sillon*

\textsuperscript{80}Quoted by Basile Maes in Geert Delbeke, André Gailly and Jacques Briard, translators, *Basile Maes – Un homme de foi et un ami*, (Privately published by the author and translators, undated), 8.
Building on the Sillon heritage

Meanwhile, Cardijn did not hesitate to proclaim his indebtedness to the Sillon. When the Christian trade unions invited Sangnier to Brussels in 1921, he delivered a stirring welcome speech explicitly acknowledging this. “The winds of the air and the birds of the sky carry off this seed and deposit it sometimes far away, in a field where God makes it fruitful and multiplies it,” Cardijn claimed poetically. Sangnier himself was deeply moved that Cardijn had “attached his movement unhesitatingly and gratefully to our own.”

Although he cited the Sillon’s conscience/responsibility binomial, Cardijn concluded his speech with an important qualifier: “It is not our habit to pronounce the word Democracy by name, we pronounce it by our actions.” This was precisely the path he would later follow, adopting the Sillon definition of democracy in countless speeches without ever mentioning the word “democracy.”

Nor did Cardijn hesitate to build on the Sillon heritage. “Look at the Sillon,” he wrote to Tonnet in 1919. “And yet [our movement] is truer, it’s more worker, it’s poorer! “Yes, a lay priesthood,” he added with overtones of Ozanam, foreshadowing the baptismal theology of the embryonic JOC.

From “Prayer, study, action” to “See, judge, act”

With the war over, in 1919 Tonnet, Paul Garcet and Jacques Meert launched La Jeunesse Syndicaliste (Trade Union Youth) for young male workers, the embryo of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC). Among the first young priests to join them was the newly ordained Honoré Van Waeyenbergh, future rector of the University of Louvain, auxiliary bishop and Council Father. A similar effort for young female workers developed in parallel, adopting the name Joie et Travail (Joy and Work) in 1922.

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81Cardijn, “Welcome to Marc Sangnier.”
82Marc Sangnier in L’Ame Commune, 16/02/1921.
83Cardijn, “Welcome.”
84Cardijn to Tonnet, 12/01/1920, in Marc Walckiers, Sources inédites relatives aux débuts de la JOC (Brussels-Leuven: Nauwelaerts, 1970), 13.
As their experience grew, Cardijn and the other priests and (lay) counsellors of the groups, including Cappe, continued to develop their methods. A workshop in March 1922 sought to synthesise this experience in a series of “rules” for the emerging study circles:

First rule – Social initiation is based on the enquiry.
Second rule – The facts identified by the enquiry must be judged in the light of principles.
Third rule – From ideas it is necessary to pass over to action.85

Facts, principles, action: not necessarily a complete solution (remède) but an action based on facts and principles identified that would start a process of change, empowering both the person and addressing the problem.

Fr René Van Haudenard, who was responsible for Church social work in Charleroi, south of Brussels, wrote the workshop report, illustrating it with the following examples:

A. Bad method. We propose to study the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. The encyclical is divided into ten parts of which each part will take up one session; the explanation of the text will be made without commentary, or examples.
Result: By the third meeting the members drift away; it is rare that it will not be necessary to soon abandon the program if one wishes to maintain the circle.

B. Proposed method. Detailed and successive enquiries on property, salary, work, etc. as they appear in the living environment (milieu).

Each session will involve examining answers to a questionnaire. Quite naturally the doctrinal points raised in *Rerum Novarum* will be developed.
Result: The members will take an interest in the matter under observation, a social sense will develop, understanding will deepen because people will recall the facts that were the point of departure.

Haudenard’s report thus contrasted this reality-based enquiry method with the doctrinal approach of the old prayer-study-action formula. Perhaps, it was precisely to differentiate it from the ACJF method that Cardijn and the JOC began to express the JOC method in a new triptych: “see-judge-act.”86

85 René Van Haudenard, “La formation sociale aux cercles d’études,” in *La Femme belge*, 03/1922: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H2ID0e9_3SjG5rhM9bsPA1bhAI3YiY5mPvIe8WI/ (Accessed 17/05/2016)
Doctrinal versus inductive approaches

Once again, the newer method did not go unchallenged. In 1926, the Association catholique de la jeunesse belge (ACJB), modelled on its French counterpart, published a book by the Jesuit, V. Honnay SJ, entitled Les cercles sociaux de doctrine catholique, Méthode de formation sociale.

The book’s very title underlined its orientation, as did Chapter III, Doctrine d’abord! – Doctrine first! In support of this approach, it cited Charles Maurras, the reactionary Cardinal Louis Billot SJ, who refused to accept Pius XI’s condemnation of the Action Française, and Jacques Maritain.87

Here, Honnay specifically criticised “the false empiricism of the Sillon, an empiricism extremely suspicious of what it calls the sumptuous constructions of theoreticians and mixed with sentimental idealism,” in a pejorative reference to Gratry, whom he listed with several “left-wing Catholics” including Lamennais, Lacordaire, Ozanam and Ollé-Laprune.88

Nevertheless, he did not completely reject the Sillon approach.89 What was needed was to balance the reality-based approach with the doctrinal approach, a critique to which Cardijn paid close attention.

A holistic approach reconciling faith and life

Cardijn faced much more opposition in the early years of the development of the JOC. Among the most challenging critiques concerned the way in which the JOC’s holistic approach shattered the mould of existing Church programs:

The total novelty of the JOC explains it… The JOC aimed to be the response of working youth itself to the problems of their own life, of their own milieu

88Ibid., 66.
89Honnay, Les cercles sociaux, 75.
of life, to the needs of that life, its age, its conditions, its future. Material, professional, family, social, intellectual, moral and religious.\textsuperscript{90}

This broke down the silos into which spiritual, charitable, social and other Church activities were often divided. Moreover, as the French Bishop Alfred Ancel, a founding chaplain of the JOC at Lyons, later observed, the “novel” methods of the JOC overcame the traditional dualism that separated the spiritual and temporal spheres.\textsuperscript{91}

Nevertheless, this cross-cutting approach was not easily accepted.

\textbf{Specialisation}

Cardijn’s transversal method was a natural consequence of a discovery model of education or formation starting from the life-experience of young workers.\textsuperscript{92} In this Taine-inspired model, the process of discovery moved concentrically outward enabling each person to discover their mission to progressively transform the circumstances of their own life, the milieu in which they lived and worked, and ultimately the life of “the (working) masses.”

This implied an organisational model that moved from local (parish or diocese) to regional and global (international) level. As the Sillon had experienced, this became another stumbling block for the JOC in its relations with a Church hierarchy obsessed with the exercise of its own authority.

The JOC also encountered a further degree of difficulty deriving precisely from its specialisation by milieu approach. Whereas the Sillon formed study circles comprising both students, who were, by definition, middle class or bourgeois, and young workers, i.e. from the working class, Cardijn, never wavered in his commitment to a movement specifically for young workers, who belonged to a distinct social “milieu.”

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
Inevitably this sparked further conflict with the ACJB. To add fuel to a combustible mix, Pius XI had become pope, making Catholic Action the watchword of his pontificate. Since his predecessor Pius X had established Catholic Action in Italy in 1905 as a replacement for the more democratically inclined *Opera dei Congressi*, it was unsurprising that leaders of the ACJB, which identified itself with hierarchically-controlled “Catholic Action,” assumed that Pius XI would continue the same line.

This new emphasis on Catholic Action likely concerned Cardijn too. But, rather than fighting the ACJB’s claimed monopoly over the right to organise Catholic youth, Cardijn and the embryonic JOC accepted to join while insisting on their autonomy. In deference to the latter, the movement changed its name to *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne* in 1924.

**Tensions and threats**

Yet, the JOC’s specialised approach continued to be perceived as “a threat,” “divisive,” and even “a mortal danger for Catholic Action.” With the first national congress of the JOC planned for April 1925, the pressure was on Mercier to rule on the legitimacy of the new movement, as Cardijn recalled:

> The cardinal presided as if over a tribunal, with his vicar-general Mgr Van Roey as his counsel. Mgr Picard led the prosecution, insisting above all on the unity of the Mystical Body, shattered by the JOC. I replied. And the cardinal concluded with a sentence that seemed to be a condemnation of the JOC.

The problem was how could the cardinal formally approve a new movement based on the Sillon, which had been “condemned” only fifteen years before?

**Recognition and approval by Pope Pius XI**

Cardijn and the JOC were now trapped. The only option left was an unlikely appeal to the Holy See, to Pope Pius XI. Yet, in a legendary event, Cardijn succeeded in obtaining a
personal audience in March 1925 with the pope, who fully approved the JOC, guaranteeing its future, as Cardijn often repeated:

Pius XI said to me: “Without the working class, the Church is not the Church of Christ… Yes, kill yourself to bring them back to the Church. The greatest scandal of the nineteenth century is that the Church lost the working class… Your movement is not your movement, it’s mine, it belongs to the Church.”

How did this occur? Fiévez and Meert credited Cardijn’s spiritual adviser, the Jesuit sociologist and canonist at the Gregorian, Arthur Vermeersch, and Mgr Gaston Vanneufville, the Rome-based Lille-born French priest, who had previously attempted to intercede on behalf of the Sillon, with facilitating the audience. In 1908, Vanneufville was present at discussions of the “indispensable” need to find a replacement for Marc Sangnier. Moreover, Pius XI, like Benedict XV before him, wanted Sangnier to relaunch the Sillon, partly at least to combat the influence of the Action Française.

Cardijn, who had also worked to negate Maurras’s influence in Belgium, thus emerged as the sought-for successor. Moreover, the fact that he was a priest meant that, unlike the Sillon, the new movement no longer escaped hierarchical control.

As Cardijn expressed it, “it was Pope Pius XI who saved the JOC” and allowed the new movement “to develop its conception of Catholic Action applied to the re-christianisation of the working class.” Insofar as Pius XI’s endorsement meant that the JOC’s methods were now recognised as Catholic Action, by implication so too were the Sillon’s methods.

**The JOC booms**

Back in Belgium, Cardijn, a born propagandist, trumpeted the news of his meeting with Pius XI, meaning that the first JOC national congress took place in the glow of pontifical

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96 Caron, Le Sillon, 693.
97 Fiévez-Meert, Cardijn, 75.
98 Barthélemy-Madaule, Marc Sangnier, 284.
99 Cardijn, “Les difficultés.”

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approval. Over the next three years new JOC sections organised in four national level federations (male/female, French/Flemish) sprouted across the country while membership surged to 50,000.\textsuperscript{100}

By 1927, the JOC had crossed the border into France, where a generation of priests who had experienced the great times and the bitter times of the Sillon – many now in responsible positions – and a younger generation formed by Gratry’s \textit{Les sources} and Ollé-Laprun’s \textit{Le prix de la vie}, stood ready to welcome the new movement.

Four years later in 1931, the JOC was launched in French-speaking Canada. The next year it reached Colombia. In 1936, the first JOC groups began in the French protectorate of Annam, the future Vietnam. By the mid-1930s, news had also reached Australia where the first YCW teams began in 1939. Astonishingly, the movement reached fifty countries before World War II broke out.

Meanwhile, fulfilling Benigni’s fears concerning the multiplication of the splintered Sillon, other “Specialised Catholic Action” movements emerged for students (\textit{Jeunesse Etudiante Chrétienne}/JEC or Young Christian Students/YCS for high school pupils and \textit{Jeunesse Universitaire Chrétienne}/JUC for their university counterparts), for young farmers (\textit{Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne}/JAC). By 1930, the new movements controlled the ACJB, while a similar phenomenon occurred with the ACJF in France.

\textbf{A perfect form of Catholic Action}

Pius XI’s support was crucial here. Inviting the JOC leaders on pilgrimage to Rome in September 1929, he stated that the JOC “had perfectly interpreted” Catholic Action as evidenced by the movement’s publications that “we have been able to read.” In a phrase often cited by Cardijn right up to Vatican II, the pope characterised the jocist leaders as “missionaries of the interior,” placing them under the patronage of St Therese of Lisieux.\textsuperscript{101}

\textsuperscript{100}Cardijn, “\textit{La JOC},” 1928.
In 1935 to mark its tenth anniversary, the JOC organised its first international congress, opening with a mass before a crowd of 100,000 at Heysel Stadium in Brussels on 25 August 1935, twenty-five years to the day after Pius X had “condemned” the Sillon. Even more significantly, the pope sent an autograph letter to Malines-Brussels Cardinal Josef-Ernest Van Roey explicitly endorsing the movement as “an authentic form of Catholic Action.”102 Years later Cardinal Eugène Tisserant would tell Cardijn that Pius XI had confided to him that “it was you (Cardijn) who taught him the meaning of Catholic Action.”103

Duly impressed, Van Roey commented that it was “no longer possible to doubt” the JOC’s “hierarchical mandate.” “The JOC is truly an institution of the Church, official and public, charged by the Hierarchy with the reconquest of the young workers,” Mercier’s successor concluded.104

Having started completely outside the framework of Catholic Action at the beginning of Pius XI’s pontificate, the JOC and its sister specialised movements had transformed the heritage of the Lamennais and the Sillon into a family of movements that was already sweeping the globe.

Chapter 3 – Cardijn’s ‘Christian Dialect’

Towards a grammar of the JOC

The explosive growth of the JOC quickly created challenges. On one hand, the JOC benefited enormously from its status as “authentic” Catholic Action. On the other hand, even among the movement’s proponents, many understood this only partially while others continued to oppose its inductive, self-education methods. Or they viewed its working-class orientation as socialist or communist. Worse, some priests and bishops sought to use the name while modifying JOC principles and methods.

Worried, Cardijn sought advice from Pius XI, who counselled patience, reminding him that “language comes before grammar.” In response, Cardijn started compiling a series of easily-remembered trinomial expressions, including the see-judge-act, or binomials like the Sillon-derived conscience-responsibility, that concisely captured the movement’s essence.

A movement of study circles

Cardijn had begun this task as early as 1914 with his article “Hoe werkt een Studiekring?” or “How does a Study Circle work?”¹ “Everything in the study circle exists in function of personal formation, personal flourishing,” Cardijn wrote, drawing on Aristotle and Ollé-Laprune. Hence, the need for “an examination of the lived experience of the week,” Cardijn emphasised, highlighting the core of what later become known as the “review of influence” or the “review of life.”

“The leader will speak of his/her experience, of what he or she saw, heard and felt him or herself,” Cardijn wrote. “What means, what solutions do they propose?” Once they have done this, “have no fear, your members are won over,” he argued. “So, you can now start to speak of principles based on the intervention of the Church and the State, of particular initiatives, their initiatives and they will understand you.”

This was the basis of the future see-judge-act as Cardijn understood it: ownership of the facts and taking responsibility for their own action would open up the minds of the young workers to the principles defended both by the Church and the state. This was also the way to form “a core and an elite” of young worker leaders.

Yet this personal focus also had a fundamental, outward dimension. “The influence on a given milieu by the participants (of the study circle) is incalculable,” Cardijn continued. “By the common action and the personal influence of its members, a good study circle leads to the transformation, the re-creation and the conversion of a milieu,” he added in his own application of Taine’s theory.

Equally important was the “systematic and permanent hunt for members,” Cardijn wrote, foreshadowing the movement’s missionary outlook. Above all, study circle leaders should be close to the poor. Indeed, their “predilection should be for the poorest, the humblest and the most disadvantaged,” Cardijn insisted.

By 1922, as the study circles coalesced into a movement, Cardijn’s concern turned increasingly to organisational matters. Young workers must manage “their affairs themselves,” he wrote in 1921, beginning with meeting reports, financial statements, invitations for speakers.2 “Have you ever sensed how much the authority that one gives to someone increases their feeling of responsibility, develops their consciousness, awakens their energy and transforms their being?” he asked, emphasising the need for “self-education,” learning through action and practice, as well as “moral education,” meaning education in virtue ethics.3

Catholic Action

Cardijn’s first article on “Catholic Action,” entitled “L’Action Catholique dans la classe ouvrière” – “Catholic Action in the working class” – appeared in the movement magazine, La

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Jeunesse Ouvrière, in August 1924, just one month after the movement changed its name from La Jeunesse Syndicaliste to La Jeunesse Ouvrière Chretienne. ⁴

Immediately Cardijn began redefining the concept. “What does the expression “to do Catholic Action in the working class mean?” he asked. “In my view, it can only signify three things,” he answered:

1. To *teach* the working class to act *in a Catholic way* (*en Catholique*) in all the conditions of his working life: at home, at work, in the street, in both his private and public life;

2. To *assist* the working class to act in a Catholic way in these circumstances;

3. To *organise* the working class to facilitate and to generalise this formation and Catholic action.

And we say that in practice these three things – formation – action – organisation, cannot be separated if they are to be effective.

This was significant for several reasons. First was Cardijn’s use – preempting Maritain – of the expression acting “*en catholique,*” here translated as “acting in a Catholic way,” since it implies acting in one’s own personal capacity in the various circumstances of life rather than as a representative of the Church. As always, the starting point for Cardijn was the life of people, namely the young workers in this instance. “Some conditions of their life are diametrically opposed to Catholic doctrine,” he wrote, citing “certain slums, houses, and factories” where they lived and worked.

The objective of Catholic Action, then, was to enable young workers to take action amidst the real difficulties in which they lived, namely to “realise that doctrine and live in a Catholic way, without anyone demanding of them a heroism that one would not dare to demand of Catholics belonging to other social classes.” Moreover, it was essential to avoid an exclusively doctrinal conception of Catholic Action, which risked becoming “Pharisaic.” This amounted to a form of “dualism” containing the “seeds of death,” Cardijn warned.

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The second point of note was Cardijn’s trinomial formulation of the purpose of Catholic Action in terms of *education*, (assisting) *action*, and *organisation*. Why did he choose these terms? We will return to this question below.

**The JOC Manuals**

As the movement spread, the need grew for a more systematic presentation, leading to the publication in October 1925 of the first edition of the *Manuel de la JOC*. This led to further criticism of the movement’s focus in its General Program on socio-economic issues. Indeed, not once in the Manual’s 229 pages was there any reference to evangelisation.\(^5\) The only mention of Jesus arose in the context of establishing “the social reign of Jesus Christ”\(^6\) while in a page devoted to fundraising, the Manual appealed to people to “help us generously, thus transforming the material values of this world into unchangeable treasures for Eternity, according to Christ himself.”\(^7\)

Nevertheless, the movement’s statutes made clear that “the purpose of the JOC” was “education with a religious basis for young workers” and “Catholic Action by young workers in the working class.” This was combined with the need for propaganda “in favour of all Christian social organisations, particularly trade unions and mutualities” and the need to defend “the specific interests of young workers, including vocational orientation, job finding, apprenticeships, holiday programs, etc."\(^8\)

Justifying this approach, the Manual insisted that the JOC was “a vast laboratory through which generations of future workers are formed.” Rather than theoretical knowledge, the key was “knowledge which is lived, conscious conduct and behaviour and a living organisation [to] each complement and condition one another.”\(^9\) Even so, the faith of the JOC leaders and chaplains emerged clearly. A report on the first national congress noted that Cardijn distributed communion to all delegates “to request the grace of being able to immolate themselves with Him for the salvation of the working class.”\(^10\)

\(^5\) *Manuel de la JOC*. (Brussels: Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne, 1925), 4.
\(^6\) Ibid., 112
\(^7\) Ibid., 161.
\(^8\) *Manuel 1925*, 5.
\(^9\) Ibid., quoted in Fiévez-Meert, *Cardijn*, 137.
\(^10\) *Manuel 1925*, 14-18.
Thus, while the 1925 Manual proved extremely successful, many claimed it underplayed the Christian dimension. Meeting these criticisms, the 1927 Manuel de la JOCF for the girls’ movement clarified that its task was “above all a work of education, safeguard and rechristianisation of young (female) workers.” Moreover, through its belonging to the general grouping of Catholic Action it intended “to participate in the universal apostolate of the Church.”

Significantly, the JOCF manual now included a section on the Le Cercle d’étude et ses méthodes (The study circle and its methods). The “best methods” here answered “three needs: to learn to see, to judge and to act,” formally introducing the classical expression of the JOC method.

**Second Edition**

The 1930 edition of the JOC Manual, which emerged as the definitive reference, was published jointly by the Belgian and French JOCs, albeit with a few minor terminological changes in the French version, greatly increasing its audience. It had now grown to 391 larger-format smaller-print pages, with most extra space devoted to a new Part Five outlining the “jocist method.”

No doubt fortified by Pius XI’s repeated approvals and encouragement, the manual overtly identified itself as “a Catholic Action organisation” for “the mass of young workers.”

Via its methods of formation, action and organisation, the movement sought a) “to integrally form” young workers b) to transform their milieu of life and work and c) to represent all young workers before the public as well as private and state authorities. Expressed differently, in another Cardijn trinomial, it was “a school where they formed themselves among themselves, by themselves and for themselves; it was a service organising a range of educational and professional services useful in “the conquest of their milieu;” and it was “a representative body” that spoke on behalf of young workers. In summary, the movement’s role was to educate, serve and represent.

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12 Manuel de la JOC, 2nd ed. (Brussels: Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne, 1930).
13 Ibid., 211-212.
Its methods were active but above all realist, meaning that young workers should learn through their own enquiries:

To see the facts, their situations, the challenges of their work, their future, their life; to judge whether those facts are a cause of happiness or unhappiness, whether they are in conformity with their human destiny and Christian life, to the doctrine of the Church and the Divine Will; to act individually and collectively so that their work, their life and their milieu led to the happiness of people and the glory of God.\(^\text{14}\)

Already, the manual contained many classical elements of the JOC model that was beginning to mushroom around the globe. There were separate “study meetings” for leaders (“the elite”) as well as outreach meetings and services targeting “the mass,” plus a variety of publications for leaders, chaplains and the general young worker public.

Particularly important was the emphasis on “intégral” or “holistic” formation. For Cardijn, still faithful to Ollé-Laprune and the Sillon, this meant a life-centred formation, since it was “life” itself, which formed young workers. Hence the need for a wide-ranging “intellectual, moral, professional and religious formation” for young workers enabling them “to discover themselves the marvellous realities of the spiritual world, the hidden riches of religious life.”\(^\text{15}\)

**Towards a Cardijn theology**

The 1930 Manual also sought to clarify the meaning of “jocist conquest.” This implied “working like the leaven in the dough, not alongside, not at a distance, but in the milieu, within the mass, to radiate, extend and propagate,” another time-honoured Cardijn expression that would resound at Vatican II. This was “the great secret of the jocist method,” the Manual argued, although the word “conquest” would later be dropped.

Quoting Pope Pius XI’s 1929 exhortation that jocists were “missionaries of the interior,” the manual stated that it was “the milieu of work and the worker milieu that the JOC wishes to evangelise and rechristianise.”\(^\text{16}\) This was possibly the first time that the JOC and/or Cardijn

\(^{14}\) Manuel 1930, 213.  
\(^{15}\) Ibid., 218.  
\(^{16}\) Ibid., 283-284.
made explicit reference to “evangelisation.” However, it remained a term that, unlike his French counterparts, Cardijn himself would rarely use before World War II.

Finally, Part I of the Manual on “The problem of salaried adolescents,” after presenting the problems faced by young workers, now added a chapter on “Catholic doctrine” – an initial response to the Honnay critique, no doubt. “Young workers – like all people – are destined to the glorious life of heaven and eternal beatitude,” the manual stated, echoing Gratry:

This eternal destiny is the supreme goal of their life, the source and the foundation of their rights and of all their duties: this is the essential truth that must enlighten and orient the whole of the earthly life of young workers…

In the accomplishment of this temporal destiny, young workers are the conscious and free collaborators of the Creator and Redeemer. Their temporal happiness and their eternal happiness depend infallibly on each other…

Learning to know and to love this temporal and eternal destiny is the task of Christian education that young workers must receive.17

Yet, this magnificent temporal and eternal destiny contrasted with the harsh conditions in which young workers lived and worked, the manual explained. These were “a shame for our civilisation” and had “the most disastrous consequences on the future and the eternity of these young people,” the manual continued in an early expression of what Cardijn would later call his “Christian dialectic.”18

This comprised the first significant expression of Cardijn’s developing theology of the movement. Were there also echoes here of the theology of Belgian Jesuit missiologist, Pierre Charles, who spoke of the Church acting as a leaven and who emphasised God’s work of creation and redemption?19 Like Cardijn, Charles was a member of the editorial board of Victoire Cappe’s *La femme belge*, and had worked to counter the Maurras influence.20 Indeed, he appears to have been one of the network of progressive Belgian Jesuits who cooperated with Cardijn during this period.

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17 *Manuel* 1930, 21-22.
18 Ibid., 9.
20 *Charles Maurras, Maître de la Jeunesse Catholique?* (Liège: Editions des Etudes Religieuses, undated (1928?)).
Cardijn’s *tria munera*

Also prominent was the new education-service-representation trinomial and its formation-action-organisation corollary, which Cardijn had already used as the basis of his 1924 definition of Catholic Action. Although Cardijn seems never to have stated it explicitly, it was clear from the context that the theological source of these trinomials was the classical conception of Christ’s triple role as prophet, priest and king – the *tria munera* or *munus triplex.*

Historically, Aquinas had used the concept in relation to Christ, as did the Catechism of the Council of Trent. From the time of the Reformation, however, a broader notion of the *tria munera* applying to the Christian people developed mainly within the Protestant tradition, beginning with John Calvin’s article “*Three Things Briefly to Be Regarded in Christ, Viz. His Offices of Prophet, King and Priest.*” Lutheran Christology also emphasised the concept. Meanwhile, it fell into disuse among Catholic theologians.

During the nineteenth century, however, the *tria munera* made a Catholic comeback in part via John Henry Newman. “Christ exercised His prophetical office in teaching,” Newman wrote, in “the priest’s service when he died on the Cross,” and in showing himself “as a conqueror and a king, in rising from the dead… and in forming his Church to receive and rule” over the nations.

Since Cardijn was familiar with Newman’s writings, it is unsurprising that the former’s conception of the *tria munera* corresponded closely with the former’s education-service-representation trinomial. In this framework, prophecy corresponded to education, and priesthood to service for both Newman and Cardijn. On the other hand, for Newman,

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22 Ibid.
kingship corresponded to “receiving and ruling” over the people. Cardijn interpreted it as “representation,” giving a slightly different emphasis to the kingly office.

In adapting Newman’s *tria munera*, Cardijn likely also drew inspiration from Pius XI’s first encyclical, *Urbi Arcano* in 1922 where the pope linked the role of the “faithful children of the laity” to the “kingly priesthood” cited in 1 Pet 2:9.26 Here, it is relevant to recall both the Society of St Vincent de Paul’s and Cardijn’s own previous references to a “lay priesthood.” Thus, Cardijn’s concept of Catholic Action focused on forming lay people to take up their lay share in Christ’s triple office of teaching, sanctifying and governing the (secular) world, transforming it through their own work of education, service and representation of their peers.

Many progressive Belgian theologians began to reflect on this issue during this period, almost certainly inspired at least partly by Cardijn and the JOC. In 1931, Jesuit Paul Dabin expanded on the “priesthood of the laity” in a pioneering study of lay apostolate.27 He complemented this in his 1937 book on Catholic Action, again relating the lay apostolate to “the royal priesthood,” as Pius XI had done.28 His later classical volumes delved further into the biblical and patristic sources of this concept,29 while two years later the Louvain exegete and Vatican II peritus Lucien Cerfaux also published an article on this theme.30

Similarly, Yves Congar, who made contact with the JOC from the late 1920s, also began to reflect on the *tria munera*, although he drew theologically on his German inspiration Johan Adam Möhler.31 Later he developed the notion further, drawing on Dabin, in his master work *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*.32

Over the next three decades succeeding generations of JOC chaplains, theologians and future Vatican II bishops continued this work. Besides Congar, these included the Chilean Bishop Manuel Larrain, the German Joseph Schröffer as well as Cardijn’s compatriot, Emile-Joseph De Smedt, whose conciliar contribution on this point was characterised by Ormond Rush as “crucial.”

The grammar

In summary, the influence of the 1930 Manual, which was translated wholly or partly into several languages, soon reached every continent including Australia in what was effectively a first draft of the jocist grammar.

It included the first systematic presentation of Cardijn’s emerging series of trinomials encapsulating the core principles and methods of the JOC. These quickly proved to be an ingenious educational tool for enabling young worker leaders – most of whom had not finished high school – to gain a practical grasp of complex theological and philosophical concepts. Movement chaplains also latched on to these trinomials, many or all of which had deep theoretical – philosophical, theological, sociological or historical – roots.

Moreover, faithful to its sillonist roots, the 1930 Manual was saturated with references to the importance of promoting “conscious” involvement – and participation – by young workers in every sphere of life, including the liturgy, all with the objective that young workers “assume complete responsibility for their jocist roles.” Although no later edition was ever published, it remained a reference until Vatican II.

Notes de Pastorale Jociste

Cardijn continued to expand these notions in a series of speeches and articles, many of which appeared in the bimonthly publication for chaplains, Notes de Pastorale Jociste, which was launched and initially largely edited by Cardijn himself.

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33Rush, The Offices of Christ.  
34Manuel 1930, 290.
“Life, milieu and mass” were “three touchstones of the JOC,” he wrote in 1932. The JOC is a school that must educate both “the elite and the mass,” in their lives “as men and as Christians,” he added in another article the same year framed in a series of binomial and trinomial expressions. Young workers need to learn to collaborate with “God, Christ and the Church,” he emphasised, “in the magnificent work of Creation and Redemption,” that was becoming a staple element of Cardijn’s theology.35

Other articles insisted on the doctrinal and formative role of the priest while simultaneously hammering the need for young workers to act “by, with and for” themselves under their own conscious responsibility. “In some countries, it is the members of the clergy who direct and hold all authority in worker organisations,” Cardijn warned. “This is not the method of Catholic Action,” he added, in a shot at the more traditional model of “Italian Catholic Action” that he implicitly contrasted with his emerging “Specialised Catholic Action.”36

In a 1933 speech to an international congress in Mainz, Germany, Cardijn explained how to make use of the see-judge-act method in the context of “active Eucharistic formation”:

Not long speeches, long lessons in front of passive listeners, but concrete and lively discussions teaching young militants to see by themselves the meaning of the Eucharist, to judge its value against all objections and prejudices, and to act by themselves to experience the importance of Eucharistic life.37

His “Ite Missa Est” speech at the Social Week in Reims in 1933 expounding his life-milieu-mass trinomial was one of the most significant, Congar thought.38

A partnership model

During the 1930s, Cardijn also began to develop his theology of a mutually complementary “lay” and “priestly” apostolates:

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38Joseph Cardijn, Ite missa est, Causerie de M. le chanoine Cardijn, donnée à Reims le 26 juillet 1933, à l’occasion de la Semaine Sociale. (Brussels: Editions jocistes, 1933): http://www.josephcardijn.fr/1933---ite-missa-est (Accessed 18/05/2016)
The PRIESTLY apostolate is proper to the Ecclesiastical hierarchy “potestas ordinis et jurisdictionis” - it is depositary and communicator of the Person of Christ, the grace of Christ, the life of Christ, the message of Christ among members of the Mystical Body.

The LAY apostolate is PROPER to LAY PEOPLE acting on lay people in the lay milieux, on lay customs and institutions, transforming their lay life – family, professional, social and political – into a means of apostolate diffusing the grace and truth of Christ.  

In other words, the lay apostolate proper or specific to lay people was different from rather than derivative from the priestly apostolate, just as Ozanam had foreseen a century before. Moreover, it was the “fecund union” of the priestly and the lay apostolates that comprised “Catholic Action advocated by Pius XI,” he wrote, also recalling Harmel and the Sillon’s search for a new model of lay-clerical partnership.

The lay apostolate

In one of his most important articles, “Le laïcat,” later to become Chapter II of his Vatican II book, Laïcs en premières lignes, Cardijn further developed his conception of the lay apostolate.

“There is in effect an apostolate proper to lay people in the Church, which transforms lay life into a life of apostolate,” he wrote. “This lay life, genuine lay family, professional, emotional life, etc. is and will always be the raw material of Catholic Action, material which first and above all needs to be transformed into apostolic matter.

In other words, although Cardijn did not say this, Catholic Action transformed ordinary pre-existing “lay life” into “lay apostolate” in a manner analogous to the way in which a Christian marriage transformed natural marriage into sacramental marriage.

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40 Cardijn, “Apostolat sacerdotal.”
Transforming their lives into “an apostolate of extraordinary fecundity… their work becomes a missionary life, their engagement to be married becomes a magnificent novitiate and a sublime vocation,” he explained. So important was this, Cardijn wrote, that “without work, there would be no host, wine, paten, chalice, church or even religion” and “without Christian families” there would be “no priests, religious, missionaries or apostles.” By implication the hierarchical Church was even more dependent on the lay Church than the inverse.

Cardijn thus synthesised his conception of lay apostolate as the “raw material” of Catholic Action under five points:

1. An apostolate proper to lay people
2. An apostolate different from the sacerdotal apostolate
3. An apostolate complementary to the sacerdotal apostolate
4. An apostolate adapted or appropriate to lay life and milieux
5. An apostolate irreplaceable for the conquest (transformation) of lay life, milieu and mass.\(^4^3\)

Two months later in a follow up article, “Le laïcat ouvrier,” which became Chapter III in *Laïcs en premières lignes*, he added five more points under the heading *Action catholique ouvrière* – Worker Catholic Action.

6. An essential apostolate belonging to the very essence of the Church
7. An apostolate necessary for the flourishing of the life of the mystical body
8. An apostolate organised in view of conquests (transformations)
9. An apostolate hierarchically organised and dependent on the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy but endowed with its own lay hierarchy
10. An apostolate mandated by the religious authorities with an official mandate.\(^4^4\)

This “conquest” – or “transformation” as he later preferred to phrase it – of life, milieu and mass took place through the educational, service and representative action organised by the movement, which was itself “mandated,” meaning officially missioned by Church authorities


\(^{4^4}\)Ibid. (Cardijn’s emphasis)
for the task. Here it should be noted that, despite later suggestions, there was no suggestion by Cardijn of a mandate exclusive to the JOC.

Nor, despite the language Cardijn used, was there any suggestion of clerical control over this “organised” apostolate. On the contrary, at a time when there was a generalised assumption that Catholic Action was, by definition, clerically controlled, Cardijn proposed not total independence for the JOC but a mutual relationship between the movement’s “lay hierarchy” and ecclesiastical authority.

Indeed, this was Cardijn’s solution to the accusation by Pius X that the Sillon had “escaped” hierarchical control. Moreover, this autonomy or relative independence of the Specialised Catholic Action model would become one of the marks that distinguished it from “Italian Catholic Action.”

Catholic Action

In this Cardijn conception, the whole purpose of Catholic Action was to give a Christian meaning to lay life in every sphere of activity. And he said this even more clearly in a long 1935 article “L’Action catholique. Une pensée maîtresse du pontificat de Pie XI.”

“The essence of the lay apostolate flows from the very essence of the Kingdom of God, from Religion and the Church,” Cardijn wrote. “The fundamental, essential and immediate lay apostolate is the apostolate that each person must fulfil as a man, as a Christian and as a member of the Church.”

The whole of creation and the whole of humanity, in union with Christ established by Christ is [sic] primarily ordered towards the worship to be rendered to the Most Holy Trinity…

What was significant here was the way in which Cardijn interpreted this:

Therefore, the fundamental, essential, first and immediate lay apostolate is intimate, permanent collaboration by every lay person in the extension of the Kingdom of God on earth as in heaven, in time as in eternity: it is the free, proud and faithful collaboration in the implementation of the divine plan in the work of Creation and Redemption. It is the participation by every lay life,
secular and temporal as well as spiritual and eternal in the worship to be given to the Most Holy Trinity.45

Hence, returning to his *tria munera* trinomial, Cardijn again characterised Catholic Action as “a school of lay apostolate,” “at the service of the lay apostolate,” and “a representative body of organised lay apostolate, recognised and mandated by the Hierarchy” working to transform lay life, the lay milieu and the lay mass.

It was organised around a “triple hierarchy” comprising:

a) the “ecclesiastical hierarchy,” which had ultimate authority for “the apostolic mission” of Catholic Action,

b) a “lay hierarchy,” which organised the movement from local to international level, and

c) “a hierarchy of ecclesiastical assistants,” i.e. chaplains, who comprised “the hyphen” (*trait d’union*) joining the ecclesiastical and the lay hierarchies. And it was this understanding that made it possible to speak of “participation in the hierarchical apostolate” as Pius XI had done, Cardijn argued.

This was the sense in which Catholic Action was “the organised, hierarchical and mandated lay apostolate,” Cardijn repeated, in a sure sign that his message had not been understood:

The Hierarchy recognises this organisation of lay apostolate as its own, grants it its authority, makes it an official institution of the Church, giving it a determined jurisdiction, confiding a genuine mandate such as to make it genuinely participate in its Hierarchical Apostolate in view of the rechristianisation of the lay world, of lay life, the lay milieu, the lay mass, and lay institutions for the methodical and effective struggle and against all the assaults and attacks of secularism.46

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This was radically different from the prevailing understanding of Catholic Action as lay participation in the specifically hierarchical apostolate and under hierarchical control. Even many of those who supported and promoted the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action failed to appreciate just how different it was. But Pius XI had understood, adding to the significance of his 1935 autograph letter recognising the JOC as a “genuine” model of Catholic Action.

**The Three Truths**

Addressing an audience including cardinals, bishops, priests and lay leaders from twenty countries, Cardijn also grasped the opportunity during the first JOC International Congress in Brussels to deliver his iconic lecture, “The Three Truths,” in which he sought to synthesise the foundations of the movement in the form of a “Christian dialectic,” which, as he later explained, was “a response to the Marxist dialectic.”

“Three fundamental truths dominate and illuminate the problem of the working youth of the world,” Cardijn stated. “They inspire, explain, and direct us towards the solution that the JOC has to give:

1. A truth of faith. The eternal and temporal destiny of each young worker in particular and of all the young workers in general.

2. A truth of experience. The terrible contradiction which exists between the real state of the young workers and this eternal and temporal destiny.

3. A truth of pastoral practice or method. The necessity of a Catholic organisation of young workers with a view to the conquest of their eternal and temporal destiny.

**1. Thesis: Truth of faith**

The “thesis” in this dialectic was that each person had a divine origin, a divine mission, and a divine destiny. This destiny was “not two-fold: on the one hand eternal, and on the other temporal, without any link or influence of one upon the other,” he added. Repudiating the Marxist critique of religion as the opium of the masses, he insisted that there could not be “an eternal destiny by the side, at a distance from earthly life, unrelated to it.”

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A destiny cannot be disincarnate, any more than religion can be disincarnate. No, eternal destiny is incarnate in time, begun in time, develops, is achieved, is fulfilled in time, in the whole earthly life, in all its aspects, all its applications, all its achievements; physical, intellectual, moral, sentimental, professional, social, public life. Daily life, concrete and practical. Eternal destiny can no more be separated from temporal destiny than religion is separated from morality.49

Moreover, this “fundamental truth” was “the basis of the whole JOC,” he said, responding to those who claimed that the movement lacked a doctrinal basis.

2. Antithesis: Truth of experience

Yet “the life, the actual conditions of existence of the mass of young workers,” which “in terrible contradiction with their eternal and temporal destiny,” were the very “antithesis” of that truth of faith, Cardijn argued.

“We must have the courage to face this reality,” he insisted, remaining “with our eyes fixed to heaven and our feet on the earth, as inexorable for the brutality of the conditions of earthly life as we are inexorable for the demands of eternal destiny.”50

3. Resolution: Truth of pastoral practice or method

“No external or arbitrary solution” could resolve this contradiction, Cardijn contended. Rather, the solution was to be found in the movement’s “Truth of pastoral practice and method.”

Here Cardijn set out the essence of the JOC method in 800 dense words structured around his classical trinomial and binomial formulations, which he later presented in tabular form illustrating the structure of the method in a 1957 talk to English YCW chaplains.51

49Cardijn, The Three Truths.
50Ibid.
### a) Truth of faith: The unique and genuine vocation of young workers

### b) Truth of experience: The powerlessness of young workers

- The disastrous consequences
- For young workers
- For worker families
- For the Church

### c. Truth of method:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. See-judge-act</th>
<th>Formation</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Church movement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By, with and for</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Representative body</td>
<td>Groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. An apostolic and missionary movement of re-christianisation of

- Their whole life
- The whole milieu
- The whole mass
Cardijn’s “Truth of method” thus enabled young workers to see, judge and act to educate, serve and represent the mass of young workers. They achieved this through the action of leaders (the elite), who conquered or transformed the life of the young worker, the worker milieu and the whole mass of young workers. Whereas the 1930 Manual presented the Cardijn trinomials in a relatively unorganised fashion, the Three Truths now provided a structured framework for understanding the JOC as “a movement of the Church.”

As the future JOC international president and Vatican II auditor,Patrick Keegan, would later say, the Three Truths henceforth became Cardijn’s “basic thing” in hundreds of talks delivered around the world. “He never varied from this pattern,” Keegan recalled. Thus, Cardijn’s paper on the doctrinal foundations of the movement presented at the JOC International Congress in Brussels in 1950, developed his 1935 talk and also provided a framework for the work of the First World Congress on Lay Apostolate in Rome in 1951. Ten years later, the JOC International Council in Rio de Janeiro in November-December 1961, less than a year before the opening of Vatican II, again based its orientation document on the Three Truths framework, which had become globally recognised in jocist circles.

In English, Cardijn’s 1935 talk was also incorporated into a 1948 compilation of his talks and later into the 1955 book Challenge to Action compiled by the Australian, Geoffrey Chapman, which was reprinted in multiple editions around the world.

A Proudhonian dialectic

Cardijn’s Three Truths encapsulated his response to critiques of the JOC method that dated back to the Sillon, the ACJF and Le Play. Unlike a Marxian or Hegelian dialectic, which foreshadowed resolving the contradiction between the ruling class and the working class by means of a violent, once and for all revolution that would wipe the slate clean, the “jocist dialectic” sought to resolve the contradiction between the truths of faith and experience by means of its ongoing “method.”

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52 Transcript of undated interview with Patrick Keegan, Keegan Archives.
55 Joseph Cardijn, The Church and the Young Worker, Speeches and Writings of Canon Joseph Cardijn, Young Worker Library No. 1 (London: Young Worker Publications, 1948).
Moreover, its basis was revealed precisely by its form as an “ideal-real” dialectic resolved by a “method.” According to the nineteenth century French philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, “all the representations with which the human mind concerns itself are divided into two broad categories: the first we will name the ideal series; the second, the real series.” For Proudhon, truth was “found, not in the exclusion of one of the contraries, but actually in the reconciliation of the two” and the outcome of such a reconciliation would be “justice,” Proudhon argued.

This “serial dialectic” was the motor of “progress,” he suggested. In this sense, “everything always needed to begin again,” he claimed in a phrase that Cardijn would also make his own. “We are always just beginning,” as he repeated on hundreds of occasions.

Although Cardijn seems never to have acknowledged this link, it corresponded with a revival of interest in Proudhon between the wars, no doubt arising from the search for an alternative to the communist dialectic. Other jocist chaplains also developed an interest in this subject, none more than Pierre Haubtmann, the future final redactor of Gaudium et Spes, who devoted twenty years to the study of Proudhon’s work.

Conclusions

In summary, Cardijn made enormous progress in drafting the grammar of the JOC between 1925 and 1939. A whole generation of priests, particularly in the French-speaking European world, had emerged who grasped the theoretical bases of the movement. This was also true in other countries where local translations of the whole or parts of the Manual had been published.

By 1939 the JOC had become identified with both the see-judge-act and to a lesser extent with the Three Truths. In addition, building on Ozanam and Louis Cousin, Cardijn had

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59Ibid., 171.

60Ibid., 166.
clarified his conception of “the specifically lay nature of the lay apostolate” while the JOC movement had won pontifical recognition as “genuine” Catholic Action.

Many battles still lay ahead. But the Cardijn dialectic had imprinted itself into the consciousness and pastoral practice of a rising generation of priests and lay leaders, many of whom would come to prominence at Vatican II.
Chapter 4 – The development of a global jocist network

Introduction

“Of these 2,500 bishops, how many did you not meet during your travels around the world!” the Belgian bishops wrote to Cardijn from Rome for his eightieth birthday, which fell on 13 November 1962 during the First Session of Vatican II. “How many of them did you not conquer to your ideal by the attraction of your personality and the conviction of your words. How many have become your friends!” they added, underlining the way he had achieved his influence.¹

Many of those conciliar bishops had indeed made the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action the foundation of their work as priests and prelates. In many instances, it was this very commitment that had led to their episcopal appointments. Also present in Rome were a significant number of periti who had been formed by Cardijn and/or the SCA movements. As theologians, many of them pioneered the “new theology” that led to the emergence of key conciliar themes, such as the People of God, priesthood of the faithful, lay apostolate, participation, signs of the times, etc. A significant number of lay auditors had a similar background.

Prior to the Council, many had come to know each other through movement events and particularly through the World Congresses on Lay Apostolate in 1951 and 1957. What resulted was an informal jocist and SCA-linked network, led primarily by Belgian, French, Canadian (Quebec) and Latin American bishops, arguably including Paul VI himself. At the Council, many worked systematically to influence its work, often by applying the very techniques of peer influence in which they had once trained young workers and students.

In this chapter, we trace the development of this “Cardijn” or “jocist” network.

Cardijn and the popes

Pius XI

If Cardijn achieved great influence with many conciliar bishops, it was not least because of the relationships he developed with the four bishops of Rome of his era: Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI.

Indeed, Congar bracketed Cardijn’s partnership with Pius XI with those between St Francis and St Dominic and Popes Innocent III and Honorius in the thirteenth century. The JOC was “a prophetic initiative from the periphery” consecrated by a pope “equally moved by a prophetic spirit,” Congar wrote in 1950. The outcome was “a magnificent creation, an opening full of developmental promise: a prophetic work born of a twin prophetic movement linking the periphery and the centre,” he stated.

Cardijn worked assiduously to build this partnership. Following his successful visit to Rome in 1925, he continued to meet annually with Pius XI – as well as his successors – for the rest of his life (except during World War II), cultivating close relationships with many other key Vatican personnel as well.

He worked hard to obtain documentary approval for the movement, beginning with Pius XI’s influential 1931 encyclical Qua ardından Anno marking the fortieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum. Published just six years after Cardijn’s first meeting with Pius XI, this encyclical made almost explicit reference to the emergence of the JOC as “the massed companies of young workers… striving with marvellous zeal to gain their comrades for Christ.”

Warning of “the grave dangers to which the morals of workers (particularly younger workers) and the modesty of girls and women are exposed in modern factories,” the encyclical also echoed Cardijn’s 1930 pamphlet La JOC et la détresse intellectuelle et morale des jeunes...

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3 Ibid.
travailleurs.\textsuperscript{5} Pius XI’s 1935 autograph letter characterising the JOC as “an authentic form of Catholic Action” also had a massive impact.

For Cardijn, writing in 1962 on the eve of Vatican II, the most astonishing outcome of his partnership with Pius XI was the explosive growth of the JOC that resulted.\textsuperscript{6} With respect to the Council, however, the major effects included pontifical endorsement of the movement’s methods and the formation of a generation of Vatican II bishops and theologians committed to Cardijn’s vision and methods.

Moreover, it was Pius XI who appointed the first bishops with personal JOC experience, including two who would become key conciliar actors: Cardinal Achille Liénart in Lille and Bishop Manuel Larrain in Chile.

\textbf{Pius XII}

When Eugenio Pacelli was elected as Pope Pius XII in March 1939, Cardijn welcomed the arrival of a new pontiff with whom he already had a close working relationship.\textsuperscript{7} The same month, he travelled to Rome to prepare an international pilgrimage to Rome by 20,000 JOC leaders planned for September 1939.

Pius XII did not disappoint, immediately offering his blessing to the movement and “the beautiful spectacle that you are preparing.”\textsuperscript{8} Ultimately, the outbreak of war on 3 September 1939 forced the cancellation of the pilgrimage and the accompanying congress. Nonetheless, Cardijn had achieved his aim of gaining the pope’s public support.\textsuperscript{9} It was a powerful signal that the papal partnership begun under Pius XI would continue.

Yet, whereas Pius XI had made famous the definition of Catholic Action as the “participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy,”\textsuperscript{10} Pius XII preferred the formulation

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., §135.
\textsuperscript{7} Joseph Cardijn, “Pie XI et la JOC,” in Notes de pastorale jociste, 8, N° 4 (April 1939).
\textsuperscript{8} Joseph Cardijn, “Le Pape nous attend,” in Notes de pastorale jociste, 8, N° 5 (June 1939).
\textsuperscript{9} Joseph Cardijn, “Le pèlerinage jociste à Rome,” Notes de pastorale jociste, 9, N° 1 (October 1939).
“collaboration of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy.” Although he undoubtedly wished to avoid doctrinal debates over the possibility of lay “participation” in the hierarchical apostolate, it also implied a more mutual, egalitarian conception of partnership between clergy and laity based on an understanding that “lay people were in the front lines of the Church’s life” – a phrase that Cardijn also made his own – in the task of animating human society.¹¹

In another sign of favour, when Cardijn made his first post-war visit to Rome in May 1946, Pius XII surprised him with an autograph letter emphasising the role of priests in the JOC and calling for more priests to take up chaplaincy roles. “Our desire is that the YCW be set up everywhere,” the pope told Cardijn. “But we want a YCW like your own,” he insisted, indicating he shared Cardijn’s concern for the authenticity of the movement.¹²

Meanwhile, Pius XII’s policy of promoting (Specialised) Catholic Action manifested itself in the growing number of bishops drawn from the movements, including rising stars such as the Brazilian, Helder Camara, the Belgians, André-Marie Charue and Emile-Joseph De Smedt not to mention a host of French bishops.

During this period, Mgr Giovanni Montini, the future Paul VI, who first encountered Cardijn in the circles of the International Movement of Catholic Students, Pax Romana, and in his work for the Holy See Secretariat of State, played a major support role. Despite lacking direct experience of the JOC, he quickly gained Cardijn’s confidence, becoming his go-to man in the Vatican for the promotion of the movement and in the face of difficulties.

On the other hand, increasing pressure from Rome on proponents of the “new theology” including MD Chenu and Congar, who were both closely linked to Cardijn, and the French worker priests, many of whom were JOC chaplains, raised fears. This occurred even though the Vatican nuncio in Paris at this time was none other than Angelo Roncalli. Nevertheless, the future Pope John XXIII strongly supported the work of the Specialised Catholic Action movements with which he had regular contact.

¹¹ Pius XII, “Discurso sobre la supranacionalidad de la Iglesia,” 1946: http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/es/speeches/1946/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19460220_la-elevatezza.html (Accessed 16/10/2017)
¹² Fiévez-Meert, Cardijn, 177.
Meanwhile, and no doubt buoyed in his confidence in the JOC, Pius XII continued to back Cardijn’s vision, endorsing the First World Congress on Lay Apostolate – as opposed to a congress on Catholic Action as originally proposed by the Italian Catholic Action movement – held in Rome in October 1951. This was a major victory for Cardijn that would prove to be of great significance for the conciliar decree on lay apostolate.

In addition, where Pius X and even Pius XI were reluctant to endorse democracy, Pius XII backed it openly in his 1944 Christmas Message, *Benignitas et humanitas*, on “democracy and lasting peace.”13 “The people lives by the fullness of life in the men that compose it,” the pope now wrote, echoing the Sillon definition of democracy, “each of whom – at his proper place and in his own way – is a person conscious of his own responsibility and of his own views.”14 Insisting, Pius XII repeated the reference to “conscious of their own responsibility” two paragraphs later.15

Cardijn quickly pounced on this and it may have been at his suggestion that Pius XII’s 1949 autograph letter to Cardijn called for the development of a worker movement of Christian inspiration with an “active presence in factories and workshops of pioneers fully conscious of their double Christian and worker vocation, committed to fully assuming their responsibilities without rest or break until they have transformed their milieux of life according to the demands of the Gospel.”16

However, the JOC founder, who turned seventy in 1952, was ageing, as was Pius XII, who was six years older. It was becoming urgent to further institutionalise pontifical support, which Cardijn and the JOC sought to achieve by organising an unprecedented worldwide young workers’ pilgrimage to Rome.

Eventually, 32,000 young workers from around the world (albeit a large majority from Europe) gathered in Rome for an animated open-air Mass in St Peter’s Square with Pius XII.

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13 Pius XII, *Benignitas et humanitas*.
14 Ibid., §23.
15 Ibid., §25.
on 25 August 1957. The pope warmly welcomed the JOC leaders with a speech for which Cardijn had again probably suggested the content:

With your solid organisation, your method summarised in the well-known formula: “See, judge, act.” your actions at local, regional, national and international level, you prepare to contribute to the extension of the Reign of God in modern society and to enable the teachings of Christianity to penetrate with all their vigour and originality...

(The JOC) undertakes to fashion [young workers’] spirits and hearts to make men conscious of their responsibilities and ready to fearlessly take on the heaviest tasks. This is because jocism, wherever it has worked, has formed Christian leaders, who are thus a hope for the social future and the Christian regeneration of the worker world.

Thus, once again on the very anniversary of Pius X’s 1910 letter condemning the Sillon methods, Cardijn succeeded in gaining a papal endorsement of its consciousness/responsibility binomial as well as the jocist method for achieving it.

In addition, Cardijn had obtained Pius XII’s explicit endorsement of the jocist vision and method ahead of the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate, which was due a month later. Yet, no-one could have imagined that most of the one hundred jocist bishops with the JOC in Rome would meet again at an Ecumenical Council to be convoked just sixteen months later.

**The Cardijn bishops**

Indeed, when Vatican II finally opened in October 1962, more than one hundred bishops present had direct experience as JOC chaplains, including twenty-two former national chaplains, and at least another one hundred from other Specialised Catholic Action movements. It is likely that as many as ten per cent of bishops (and possibly more) at the Council had such experience.

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18 Ibid.
19 Fiévez-Meert, Cardijn, 219.
Nor did this include other bishops from the ninety countries who had welcomed the JOC and other movements in their dioceses although it is difficult to estimate numbers. Here we will simply offer a series of examples from various countries and regions, which illustrate Cardijn’s influence on the future conciliar bishops.

**Belgium: Birthplace of the JOC**

As noted previously, Bishop Honoré Van Waeyenbergh, rector of the University of Louvain and auxiliary of Malines-Brussels, had been one of the first seminarians to work with Cardijn from 1919. André-Marie Charue of Namur was another Belgian bishop closely linked to the JOC, who played a key role in the drafting of several Vatican II documents including *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*.

As a young priest, Charue returned from the 1924 ACJB conference embracing the JOC’s “beautiful dream of worker conquest.” As a bishop, he published his “directives” in 1948 under the auspicious title “*Problèmes actuels de pastorale*” (*Current pastoral issues*) in what amounted to a manual for establishing Specialised Catholic Action throughout the diocese. Citing Pius XI, Charue espoused “the jocist conception” of reaching out to “the working masses.”

The priest initially charged with implementing this program was Charles-Marie Himmer, later bishop of Tournai, another industrial and mining region bordering France, and future patron of the *Jésus et l’Eglise des pauvres* (*Church of the Poor*) group at the Council. Like Charue, Himmer had taken part in the 1924 ACJB Congress. After years of working with the SCA youth movements while teaching philosophy at a minor seminary, he became responsible for diocesan social action in 1944 in which capacity he also taught Catholic Action at the major seminary. “I practised the Cardijn method to the full: see-judge-act,” he later said. “I stayed faithful and I still believe in it.”

22 Ibid., 36-38.
23 “Charles-Marie Himmer” in *Wikipedia*: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles-Marie_Himmer: Although the article fails to provide a source for the quote from Himmer, it is consistent with his commitment to the JOC, and his lifelong concern for workers. (Accessed 16/10/2017)
The story was similar in Belgium’s Flemish provinces, where Emile-Joseph De Smedt, future bishop of Bruges, was swept up in the enthusiasm for the Cardijn-inspired “new methods.” His personal archives contain dozens of notes and talks on the Specialised Catholic Action movements, particularly for the VKAJ, the female Flemish jocist movement, where his sister, Livine, was a fulltime worker. As a professor at the new St Joseph’s Seminary in Malines, De Smedt taught a course on Catholic Action and edited the Flemish national Catholic Action magazine, *Katholieke Actie Tijdingen.*

As a bishop, he also made Specialised Catholic Action the centre piece of his pastoral strategy. On the eve of the Council, he published an influential pastoral letter entitled *The Priesthood of the Faithful,* soon translated into French and English, for which he consulted Cardijn just as the JOC founder would consult him in the drafting of his own conciliar interventions.

Finally, there was Jean-Baptiste Janssens, who became a Council Father as superior-general of the Society of Jesus. Janssens, like other progressive Belgian Jesuits, had long supported Cardijn, including as rector at the Jesuit Theologate at Louvain from 1929-35 when several Jesuit theologians made major contributions to the JOC. Janssens was also close to (Saint) Alberto Hurtado, who had studied there and later played a major role in the development of Specialised Catholic Action in Chile.

Janssens’ 1949 *Instruction on the Social Apostolate* also made a great impact, encouraging Jesuit tertiaries in Cardijn-like terms to “visit frequently the workers in their homes, and learn at firsthand the condition of their lives” and promoting the foundation of Jesuit institutes that would provide courses that would assist those involved in social action.

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The Suenens exception

By the time of Vatican II, such support for the Specialised Catholic Action movements was close to universal among the Belgian bishops – with one notable exception, Cardinal Léon-Joseph Suenens, who, as Gerard Philips told Congar, found himself “isolated among Belgian bishops” owing to his views on the lay apostolate. Indeed, it is striking that Suenens, who was studying in Rome in 1925 when Cardijn first met Pius XI, did not join the ranks of Belgian priests who enthused for the JOC.

Suenens himself offered a clue to this in his autobiography, *Souvenirs et espérances*, linking his political awakening to a visit to his primary school by the ageing Catholic Party leader and Prime Minister, Charles Woeste, the very man who had battled the labour priest, Fr Daens, who inspired Cardijn. While studying in Rome, Suenens also became the local correspondent for an Antwerp newspaper that he himself described as “conservative liberal.” From his youth, Suenens’s social and political disposition was thus decidedly different from Cardijn’s, providing the backdrop for a series of conflicts that would flare at Vatican II.

France: Superpower of Specialised Catholic Action

Liénart of Lille

Although Paris always remained the organisational centre of the French JOC, it was Lille under Cardinal Achille Liénart, which became the intellectual centre of the movement and acted as a turntable for exchange between France and Belgium. As a seminarian in Paris, Liénart had been in contact with the Sillon, doing youth work in church-operated youth clubs from which the Sillon and later the JOC would often recruit their leaders.

Thus, when the first JOC teams in France began to form in 1927, then-Canon Liénart, a

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30 Ibid., 22.
parish priest in Tourcoing, an industrial suburb of Lille, did not hesitate to become chaplain to a JOC team in his own parish. On 29 June 1927, Cardijn visited Tourcoing, meeting Liénart for perhaps the first time. In October 1928, weeks after his appointment as bishop of Lille, his first pastoral letter specifically mentioned the JOC:

We see before us above all the multitude of workers who no longer know how much Jesus Christ loves them, and we desire that our social works and our young Christian workers, together with our priests and our faithful, achieve their conquest.

Liénart thus signalled his intention to make (Specialised) Catholic Action the centrepiece of his episcopate, probably the first in the world to do so. For the next forty years, Lille became a powerhouse in the field, with the Université catholique de Lille and the Major Seminary emerging as major centres of theological reflection. Liénart’s backing for workers and his line against the Action Française was equally emphatic, quickly attracting the attention of Pius XI, who made him a cardinal in June 1930, just over eighteen months after his episcopal ordination.

The French bishops evidently appreciated Liénart’s qualities, electing him in 1940 as president of the Assemblée des cardinaux et archevêques (Assembly of cardinals and archbishops), a position he retained until 1969. This influence was also reflected in the number of future French bishops who emerged under Liénart’s tenure. Another JOC chaplain, Louis Liagre was the first of these, becoming bishop of La Rochelle in 1938. Others including Gerard Huyghe of Arras and Alexandre Renard, later cardinal of Lyon, also played significant roles at the Council.

Under Liénart’s leadership, the French bishops at the Council emerged as major promoters and defenders of Specialised Catholic Action, with Liénart himself becoming one of Cardijn’s principal allies.

32 Ibid., 86-87.
33 André Caudron, Lille Flandres, Dictionnaire du monde religieux dans la France contemporaine (Paris: Beauchesne, 1990), 260.
34 Masson, Le cardinal Liénart, 156.
Gerlier and the Lyon bishops

In 1927, the future Cardinal Pierre-Marie Gerlier, future patron of the conciliar Church of the Poor group, assisted the foundation of the JOC in Paris in 1927. Later, as bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes, he hosted a series of pilgrimages by the French and Belgian JOC movements. Appointed archbishop of Lyon in 1937, he made his archdiocese a bastion of Specialised Catholic Action with the notable assistance of his long-serving auxiliary, Bishop Alfred Ancel, who during the 1940s became the first and only “worker bishop.”

As well as taking part in the foundation of the JOC in Lyon, Ancel delivered the keynote address at the JOC International Congress in 1950. He later characterised the movement as “the starting point of a recognition by the Church of what the laity was in the specificity of its mission.”

“There have always been lay people in the Church, devout lay people,” Ancel wrote. “But the laity considered as responsible for the mission of Christ among men, that is something that the Vatican Council developed; and it did it, at least in part, owing to the existence and action of the JOC.”

“In the past people believed that it was necessary to separate themselves from life in order to encounter Christ,” Ancel wrote. But the JOC overcame that dualism. “Thanks to the JOC I learnt to discover Christ present in the action of men and in my own action; I was able to achieve the unity of my life in Him.” This was particularly important within a French Catholic culture imbued with a rigid conception of divided spiritual and temporal spheres. In addition, Ancel’s conception of religious freedom would also make a major contribution to the Council.

By the time of Vatican II, all Gerlier’s auxiliaries were close to the SCA movements, including Marius Maziers, later archbishop of Bordeaux, who encouraged the movement to

reach out to Muslim workers. Maziers was also keen to promote the heritage of the Sillon, even adopting the conscience/responsibility binomial in his conciliar speeches. Later he characterised Vatican II in precisely these terms: “For four years, nearly a thousand men, invited in various capacities by Pope John XXIII, then Pope Paul VI, marched together, conscious of the same responsibilities, bearers of the same hope.”

Completing the team was another auxiliary, Bishop Gabriel Matagrin, a member of the JEC in the mid-1930s before entering the seminary, who became a peritus before his episcopal ordination in 1965.

**Garrone, Guerry and Ancel**

Together with Gabriel Marie Garrone and Emile Guerry, future archbishops of Toulouse and Cambrai respectively, Ancel formed a trio of French conciliar bishops who had studied together at the Séminaire français de Rome during the early 1920s. All three became leading proponents of Cardijn-inspired Specialised Catholic Action.

As a major seminary professor in Chambéry, Garrone, like his Belgian counterparts, taught Specialised Catholic Action, becoming a counsellor and preaching countless retreats for the movements of the archdiocese. In Toulouse, he continued to promote the movements, publishing a 1958 book entitled *L’Action catholique*, which was largely a riposte to Suenens’ critique of the Specialised Catholic Action movements, and which, according to AG Martimort, foreshadowed *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Vatican II decree on the lay apostolate. “Those who experienced the beginnings (of the JOC), welcomed its birth like an aurora, followed its fortunes, reflected in a sustained manner on its meaning,” Garrone wrote, characterising the JOC in line with Pius XI as “a complete form of Catholic Action.”

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38 Ibid., 148-149.
41 Ibid., 6.
The case was similar with Emile Guerry. Born in 1891, he studied law before entering the seminary, eventually gaining a doctorate in law in 1921 on women's trade unions that he completed during his seminary studies. He was close to the dissident sillonist priest, Jean Desgranges, and possibly belonged to the Sillon himself before becoming a leader of the ACJF in his home diocese of Grenoble.

Returning to Grenoble from Rome, he became a seminary professor. By 1932 he was vicar-general in which capacity he founded the JOC and its rural equivalent the JAC in the diocese. In 1936, he published the influential book *L’Action catholique*, a collection of pontifical texts. This was followed in 1957 by *La doctrine sociale de l’Eglise*. Meanwhile, he played a key role in 1949 in launching the *Action catholique ouvrière*, the adult counterpart of the JOC.

At the Council, Guerry, a strong promoter of episcopal collegiality, also played an important role in the drafting of *Christus Dominus*, the decree on the pastoral office of the bishops.

**Paris: A succession of jocist cardinals**

With Gerlier’s backing, Cardinal Dubois of Paris approved the foundation of the JOC in France in 1926. His successors Cardinal Jean Verdier and Cardinal Emmanuel Suhard took this to even greater heights during the 1930s and 1940s. If, according to Jean Vinatier, Liénart at Lille was “the cardinal of the social question,” Suhard in Paris was “a cardinal born of Catholic Action.”

Thus, it is unsurprising to find that Suhard’s landmark 1947 episcopal letter, *Essor ou déclin de l’Eglise* (published in English as *Growth or Decline? The Church Today*) comprised a see-judge-act on the situation facing the people and Church of France after the war. In this sense, it prefigured *Gaudium et Spes* and certainly served as a model for many French bishops at the Council.

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Cardijn himself was deeply impressed by Suhard, writing in 1964 that although he was “less outgoing than John XIII, he was forged from the same material” and “lived all the themes of the Council in advance,” wanting “to hasten the living realisation of the Church, the priesthood, the laity.” At Vatican II, he quoted Suhard’s concern for the “gulf” between the workers and the Christianity.

Suhard’s successor Maurice Feltin was another long-standing partisan of the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action. A friend of Liénart with whom he had studied for the priesthood, he was ordained a bishop in the same year, 1928, as part of Pius XI’s effort to renew the French episcopate after the condemnation of the *Action Française*. When the Holy See sought to close down the worker priests’ initiative launched by Suhard, Feltin, together with Liénart and Gerlier launched an appeal to Pius XII, albeit unsuccessfully.

The outcome of all this was that more than eighty conciliar French bishops (out of 138), including six cardinals, had direct personal experience of the JOC and the Specialised Catholic Action movements, and they did not hesitate to use their influence.

**Other European countries**

Although no other European country rivalled France and Belgium in the number of jocist bishops, the movement nevertheless achieved serious influence. At least five German bishops had close links to the movements, including Cologne’s Cardinal Josef Frings while Cardinal Bernard Alfrink was one of several Dutch bishops who supported Specialised Catholic Action movements.

Similarly, the United Kingdom had at least six conciliar bishops close to the movement. Portuguese Cardinal Manuel Cerejeira was one of the earliest to back the JOC during the 1930s. In Poland, the future Archbishop Karol Wojtyla of Krakow visited Belgium and France in 1947 with a view to launching the movement, only to be blocked by the communist

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47 Gigacz, *Jocist Bishops and Periti*.
If, as Ralph Wiltgen later argued, the Rhine of trans-alpine Europe flowed into the Tiber at Vatican II, the role of the jocist bishops and periti in this cannot be ignored.\footnote{Ralph Wiltgen, \textit{The Rhine Flows into the Tiber}, 1.}

The JOC in other continents

Canada

Outside of Europe, it was in French-speaking Canada that the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action made perhaps their greatest impact. Once again, a similar pattern emerged of many future Council Fathers, who played significant or even decisive roles.

The future Cardinal Maurice Roy, first president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, was another early JOC chaplain in Quebec. Indeed, it was his Oblate of Mary Immaculate cousin, Henri Roy, who founded the movement there in 1929.\footnote{L’Ilot, “La deuxième berceau mondial de la JOC”: http://www.ilot.ca/userImgs/documents/root/exposition2012/pdf/4_ILOT_EXPO_2012.pdf (Accessed 16/10/2017)} The same year, Maurice Roy began studying at the Sorbonne and at the \textit{Institut catholique} in Paris where one of his contemporaries was another Quebec priest, Paul-Emile Léger.\footnote{Micheline Lachance, \textit{Paul-Emile Léger, Le prince de l’Eglise}, Vol. I (Montreal: Editions de l’homme, 2000), 50-51.} A year later, the future Cardinal Léger was named spiritual director for English-speaking students at the Issy-les-Moulineaux national seminary just outside Paris. Did either or both these priests hear Cardijn’s famous speech to 500 seminarians there on 4 December 1929?\footnote{Joseph Cardijn, “L’apostolat de la jeunesse ouvrière,” 1929: http://www.josephcardijn.fr/1929---l-apostolat-de-la-jeunesse-ouvriere (Accessed 16/10/2017)} In any event, they imbibed the atmosphere, becoming great promoters of the JOC. As bishop of Trois Rivières, Roy hosted an international training session for chaplains in 1947, while Léger, who initially forged his career in the Vatican diplomatic service, became archbishop of Montreal in 1950.

At Vatican II, both Roy and Léger became members of the Doctrinal Commission, which had responsibility for both \textit{Lumen Gentium} and, in partnership with the Commission on Lay...
Apostolate, for *Gaudium et Spes*. All told, there were at least eighteen Quebec bishops at the Council who had previously worked with the JOC, the JEC and other SCA movements.

**Latin America, Africa and Asia**

Although difficult to document and on a smaller scale, the story was similar in other countries and continents. Some, if not many conciliar bishops, first encountered Cardijn during their studies in Rome, including Larrain and the South African Denis Hurley of Durban.\(^{52}\) Hurley was another Oblate of Mary Immaculate, a French order founded in the early nineteenth century with the objective of reaching out to poor rural and industrial communities.\(^{53}\) Indeed, the Oblate connection proved particularly fruitful for the JOC in several countries including Sri Lanka where the future Colombo archbishop, Thomas Cooray, promoted Specialised Catholic Action before becoming a cardinal at the same 1965 consistory as Cardijn.

Historical connections also led to the foundation of many JOC and other SCA movements in many (former) European colonies. Thus, Archbishop Jean Zoa of Cameroon had been a JOC chaplain as had Cardinal Paul Zoungrana from Burkina Faso while Bernardin Gantin from Benin was a JEC chaplain.

Similarly, in Asia, the outspoken Archbishop Eugene D’Souza from India was close to the local YCW along with several other bishops, while the Chinese Bishop Paul Yu Pin attempted to launch the movement in mainland China prior to the 1949 Revolution. In Australia, Archbishops Justin Simonds, James Gleeson and Francis Rush were convinced Cardijn acolytes.

Except for Canada, however, it was in Latin America that the JOC and the SCA movements exercised the most influence prior to the Council. In Brazil, at least twenty bishops were involved with the movements, beginning with Helder Camara, an early JOC chaplain, and José Tavora, a national chaplain. There were at least eight more from Argentina, another six

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\(^{52}\) Paddy Kearney, *Guardian of the Light: Denis Hurley: Renewing the Church, Opposing Apartheid*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), 245.

from Chile as well as Marcos McGrath from Panama, Ramon Bogarin from Paraguay and Leonidas Proaño from Ecuador, many of whom played key roles at Vatican II and in the Latin American bishops’ conference, CELAM.

The jocist theologians and auditors

The University of Louvain

Reflecting on Cardijn’s influence over the theologians of his generation, Louvain professor and Church historian Roger Aubert noted that while Cardijn never claimed to be a theologian, it was “difficult to exaggerate the degree to which he promoted theological reflection.” Examples of this were the theology of work, developed by MD Chenu and the theology of terrestrial realities of Louvain professor Gustave Thils. Indeed, Cardijn maintained very close links with the theology, philosophy and sociology departments at his alma mater the University of Louvain, which eventually awarded him an honorary doctorate.

Thils, who taught in the Malines Major Seminary during the 1930s before going to Louvain, had links with the student Catholic Action movements JEC and JUC as well as the JOC, “animat(ing) reflections in these movements for a better understanding of the Christian meaning of social, cultural, political, scientific and technical realities.” His well-known book Théologie des réalités terrestres was a compilation of these reflections and the expression “terrestrial realities” was incorporated in Gaudium et Spes, where Thils was a peritus.

Albert Dondeyne was probably the closest of Cardijn’s early Louvain collaborators, making presentations at many jocist training sessions, becoming a privileged interpreter of Cardijn’s own theological insights. He also played a key role in the foundation of the Hoogstudenten Verbond voor Katholieke Aktie (High School Union for Catholic Action) in 1933–34 as well

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56 Purwanto, “Thils.”
as several important national and international events, including the Belgian Catholic Congress at Malines in 1936, the Belgian National Conference on Lay Apostolate in 1956 as well as the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate in Rome in 1957.\footnote{Jean Ladrière, “In memoriam Albert Dondeyne,” \textit{Revue philosophique de Louvain}, 83, No. 59 (1985): 462-484.}

Dondeyne summarised Cardijn’s major contributions in the theological domain under three headings: the religious meaning of lay life, an incarnational Christian presence in the world, and – once again – with respect to the world of work.\footnote{Dondeyne, \textit{Un message libérateur}, 191-198.} As a conciliar peritus, he took part in the drafting of \textit{Gaudium et Spes}, particularly the chapter on culture, and assisted Cardijn in the drafting of his own interventions.

Pauline exegete Lucien Cerfaux, a seminary professor in Tournai as well as at Louvain, who had been involved in the campaign against the \textit{Action Française}, was yet another future peritus to whom Cardijn turned for advice in the late 1940s when the JOC was facing new challenges as it expanded to other continents.

After World War II, the sociologist, François Houtart, a self-professed Marxist, became a close collaborator of Cardijn and the JOC in Latin America. Houtart played a major role in promoting links between the bishops of Latin America that led in 1956 to the foundation of the Latin American Bishops Conference, CELAM, and also implemented a major sociological survey of the religious situation on the continent that helped prepare the Council.\footnote{Stefan Gigacz, “Remembering François Houtart,” \textit{Cardijn Studies}, No. 1 (2007): 97-102.}

Houtart also became secretary of the conciliar Signs of the Times Commission, in which capacity he prepared the first draft of the \textit{Introductory statement on the human condition in the world of today} in \textit{Gaudium et Spes}, drawing on his 1964 book, \textit{L’Eglise et le monde, à propos du Schéma 17}.\footnote{Stefan Gigacz, “Interview with François Houtart”: http://videos.stefangigacz.com/francois-houtart (Accessed 16/10/2017)}

Later he confirmed the importance of the jocist influence at the Council, noting “the number...
of bishops at the Second Vatican Council who had been associated in different ways with the YCW,” including many who had been chaplains or sympathetic to the movement.62

“Especially in Latin America… the renewal of the Church in Latin American before Vatican II was very much associated with the YCW, because the priests in charge of the YCW were also the ones who were very active in renovation of the liturgy, in biblical studies and pastoral work,” Houtart concluded.

Gerard Philips

Nevertheless, of these Belgian theological and philosophical collaborators of Cardijn, it was perhaps Gerard Philips who played the most extensive role at Vatican II, notably in the drafting of Lumen Gentium. Philips’s collaboration with Cardijn began as early as 1931 when, still studying in Rome, he helped host the VKAJ (Flemish Girls JOC) pilgrimage to the Eternal City. Back in Belgium, he worked closely with the Flemish JEC and later directly with Cardijn in providing training for seminarians on Catholic Action. During the 1950s, he achieved prominence with his theology of the laity, culminating in a keynote address to the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate in 1957 and a series of books.

“The turning point, the critical moment in the religious field was announced for our working youth by the call of Pope Pius XI in favour of Catholic Action and the discovery of the JOC by Monsignor Cardijn,” Philips wrote recognising Cardijn’s role. “Without the man, the idea would have remained at the level of theory and would never have had any practical influence.”63 Nevertheless, theological differences also emerged between the two men.

The French Dominicans

From the beginning, Dominican priests played an instrumental role in the rise of the JOC, beginning with Fr Ceslas Rutten, a Leplaysian sociologist who worked closely with Cardijn from 1912. Cardijn’s personal library also witnesses to the influence of AD Sertillanges, the

62 Ibid.
Sillon chaplain and philosopher, whose analysis of Aquinas’s treatment of the virtue of prudence was important in the development of the see-judge-act. Moreover, many French Dominicans were stationed at Le Sauchoir convent, then located near Tournai in Belgium. These included Chenu and Congar, who were quick to grasp the significance of the developing jocist method.

Congar confirmed this, later describing his JOC experience as “decisive.” With other Dominicans, he gave regular retreats to jocist leaders, the handwritten notes of which survive in his archives. These experiences together with his links with other Specialised Catholic Action movements in France, particularly the Action Catholique Ouvrière, provided the raw material for the development of his own theology of the laity in Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat, translated into English as Lay People in the Church: A study for a theology of the laity, and in many other scholarly articles and publications.

Of the Dominicans, MD Chenu was closest to Cardijn, who wrote a preface for the former’s landmark 1937 article Dimension nouvelle de la Chrétienté (New dimensions of Christendom). Signs of the times, incarnational theology, theology of creation and redemption, theology of work – all these formed subjects of close collaboration between the two men inspiring Chenu to characterise the JOC as “un lieu théologique” – a theological locus.

Chenu, like Congar, began his involvement with the JOC from 1928 when movement chaplains from Lille crossed the border for reflection weekends at Le Saulchoir. Their example also greatly influenced other Dominicans, including Louis-Joseph Lebret, born like Lamennais in Saint Malo. Having completed his formation at Lyon, Lebret returned to his home town where he founded the Jeunesse maritime chrétienne, a Specialised Catholic

Action movement for young seafarers modelled on the JOC.

Pierre Haubtmann

At least a dozen former movement chaplains became periti at the Council. Except for Philips, probably no other played a more important role than Pierre Haubtmann. Born in St Etienne in 1912, he studied for the priesthood at the French Seminary in Rome then at the Gregorian University. In 1936 he was ordained for Guerry’s diocese of Grenoble.

In 1937, while studying social science at the Institut catholique de Paris, he became a local JOCF chaplain at Meudon. Here, he befriended the Jesuit jocist chaplain and theologian, Yves de Montcheuil, author of *L’Eglise et le monde actuel*, who oriented him towards the study of Proudhon. Thus began a twenty-year odyssey, during which Haubtmann wrote four doctoral theses on Proudhon in the fields of letters (main and complementary theses, Sorbonne), social sciences, and theology.

Mobilised during the Second World War, he was captured and remained a prisoner of war until 1942. Returning, he became chaplain to adult worker teams belonging to the League of Christian Workers (LOC), which later became the Action Catholique Ouvrière (ACO), becoming national chaplain from 1954 until the eve of the Council. He also worked with the Action Catholique Indépendente (ACI), a Specialised Catholic Action movement for professionals and business people.

In 1962 he took up a post as professor of social studies at the Institut catholique. The same year the French bishops appointed him as national director of religious news leading directly to his role as media liaison person at the Council. Haubtmann thus began to publish a series of regular summaries of the Council’s progress under the title *Le point sur le Concile*, the excellence of which attracted much attention. In 1963, he was appointed as a peritus in the commission working on Schema XIII, which became *Gaudium et Spes*, leading to his selection at the end of 1964 to oversee the final stages of its drafting.

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Other JOC and SCA chaplains

As we will see, other movement chaplains also played significant roles at the Council, particularly in the Lay Apostolate and Schema XIII Commissions. Although they remained a tiny minority among the more than 400 Vatican II periti, their influence was magnified by the roles they had played and the confidence shown in them by the conciliar bishops.

The emergence of a jocist network

Particularly significant for the Council was the network that began to form around these bishops and theologians formed by Cardijn, the JOC and the SCA movements. Locally and nationally, congresses and training events for both lay leaders as well as for chaplains helped foster this development. Even more significant in an era when international travel was prohibitive were the continental and international events organised by the movements.

The JOC international congresses played a major role in globalising this network, beginning with Brussels in 1935, Paris 1937, Montreal 1947 – the first outside of Europe – another in Brussels in 1950, Rome 1957, in particular, and Rio de Janeiro 1961, less than a year before the Council opened. The movement also organised semi-regular sub-continental and continental meetings and gatherings in every continent, including Africa, a possibly unprecedented feat for any movement.

The World Congresses on Lay Apostolate

The First Congress: Cardijn’s zenith

Perhaps no events were more important in the emergence of this jocist network than the World Congresses on Lay Apostolate of 1951 and 1957.

“I remember the very great impact (one of the greatest of my life) when, during the First World Congress on Lay Apostolate here in Rome, (Cardijn) presented us with a complete

In Belgium, Philips was similarly impressed by Cardijn’s “magistral and impressive” intervention. “A courageous realism” characterised his description of the “present conditions that make the apostolate of the laity particularly urgent,” he added, noting “the fire and the emotion of his heart and the perspicacity and the synthetic strength of his spirit.”\footnote{Gérard Philips, “Réflexions d’un théologien,” in \textit{Notes de pastorale jociste}, 17, N° 1 (1951) 49-53: http://testimonies.josephcardijn.com/1951---congres-mondial-sur-l-apostolat-des-laïcs---réflexions (Accessed 17/10/2017)}

As these observers perceived, Cardijn’s speech, entitled “The world today and the lay apostolate,” proved to be a defining moment, introducing two major shifts in perspective. First, it introduced the JOC’s reality-based see-judge-act as the method of work at the Congress instead of the traditional doctrinal approach beginning from Church teaching. Secondly, and equally if not more important was Cardijn’s conception of lay apostolate as the role of the lay person transforming the world “in his personal life, in his family, professional, social, cultural and civic life, on the national and international planes” rather than in terms of personal piety, charitable and even social action.\footnote{Joseph Cardijn, “The Apostolate of the Laity,” 1951: http://www.josephcardijn.com/the-apostolate-of-the-laity (Accessed 17/10/2017)}

In addition, for many of the future Council participants, Cardijn’s speech provided the template for \textit{Gaudium et Spes}. Organised on his familiar see-judge-act template, it began with an overview of the prevailing world situation, contrasting this with the Church’s understanding of God’s plan of love, creation and redemption, and proposing as a solution the development of conscious and responsible laity acting as a “leaven and ferment of a new humanity,” working in partnership with the ministerial priesthood, whose role was to guarantee Christ’s presence and action in the Church and particularly to empower the laity who had “come of age.” In effect, it was a new vision of lay apostolate that contrasted starkly

with the traditional conception of lay groups focusing on pious and charitable works or defence of the Church.

**Lay apostolate on the agenda**

Originally envisaged as a congress on Catholic Action, the shift in focus to “lay apostolate” of the 1951 Congress was entirely due to a coordinated campaign led by Cardijn and the Belgian movements, supported by the French, backed by the initiator of the event, Vittorino Veronese, and Montini, who mediated with Pius XII. Without this, it is almost inconceivable that the Council could have adopted a decree specifically on “lay apostolate” fewer than fifteen years later.

In his closing speech, Pius XII endorsed much of the Cardijn vision, becoming the first pope to adopt the phrase “signs of the times” with respect to the observation of present realities, which he appeared to take for granted as the method to be used by lay people. And, in a nod to his 1944 speech on democracy, the pope twice referred approvingly to the growing “consciousness of their responsibilities” on the part of both priests and laity.⁷⁵

Also significant was the emergence of several Vatican II actors linked to Cardijn. Future members of the conciliar lay apostolate commission included Larrain, Franz Hengsbach, soon to become bishop of Essen, national centre of the German CAJ (JOC), as well as the Austrian Catholic Action chaplain and theologian Ferdinand Klostermann, the French jocist chaplain and Caritas International co-founder, Jean Rodhain, Antoine Cortbawi, a jocist chaplain from Lebanon. In addition, there were Albert Bonet, a founding chaplain of the JOC affiliate in Catalonia, Pietro Pavan, then head of the Catholic Institute for Social Studies in Rome, also close to Cardijn, and of course the JOC founder himself. Philips would also play a huge role in the doctrinal commission. Members of both these commissions would be responsible for the drafting of *Gaudium et Spes*. In addition, the Argentinian Cardinal Caggiano, episcopal founder of the JOC in Argentina albeit extremely conservative, would later become a member of the Vatican II Presidency group.

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Finally, many future Vatican II lay auditors were present including Patrick Keegan, Auguste Vanistendael, Marie-Louis Monnet, who had founded the JIC (*Jeunesse Indépendente Chrétienne*) for young professionals after meeting Cardijn at Lourdes in 1931, Veronese, as well as several others who were close to the Specialised Catholic Action movements.

These were radical developments. Thus, it is perhaps unsurprising that once the initial euphoria over Cardijn’s keynote had subsided, considerable resistance soon developed against these changes within the working groups of the COPEICAL – the Permanent Committee for International Lay Apostolate Congresses – created by Pope Pius XII in 1952 to extend the work of the Congress.

**Conflicts emerge with Suenens**

This resistance gathered pace throughout the preparation for the Second World Congress in 1957, placing Cardijn at odds with his own compatriots, Philips and the future Cardinal Suenens, over both issues of method and particularly the nature of the lay apostolate. Suenens, who had helped introduce Frank Duff’s Legion of Mary into Belgium, had a long history of opposition to Cardijn dating back at least to 1951. As auxiliary bishop in Brussels, Suenens had objected to Cardijn’s review of his book *Théologie de l’apostolat*.

His next book, *L’Eglise en état de mission*, although couched as a critique of the French Dominican, Maurice Montuclard’s “thesis” of “civilisation first, evangelisation later,” amounted to a thinly veiled attack on Cardijn’s own theology of the specifically lay apostolate and his methods of formation. Insisting on the need for a “direct religious apostolate”, for “the unity of sacerdotal and lay apostolate”, “the apostolic role of the auxiliaries of the clergy”, and “the need for direct formation for the apostolate,” Suenens espoused the old ACJF/ACJB prayer-study-action formula in another swipe at the jocist method.76

In place of the Montuclard civilisation versus evangelisation distinction, Suenens also

proposed a new framework framed as “directly religious” or “indirectly religious”:

    Just as one can influence the body by the soul, or the soul by the body, so there exist two methods of apostolate. The first, the direct religious apostolate, passes from the religious to the human; the second, the indirect apostolate, passes from the human to the religious. A religious apostolate cut off from life is inconceivable, just as much as a social apostolate without a religious base.\(^\text{77}\)

On this point, Cardijn contented himself with congratulating Suenens for dissipating the ambiguity of the “humanise or evangelise” slogan.\(^\text{78}\) Yet, Suenens’s direct-indirect framework would later cause Cardijn very serious problems in the Vatican II Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate.

Meanwhile, Suenens launched another attack against the (Specialised) Catholic Action movements, accusing them of “monopolising” the term to the exclusion of others, including the Legion of Mary, who the Brussels auxiliary bishop argued, also had a right to be considered as such.

**The Second Congress**

These issues came to the fore in the preparation for the Second World Congress. Here Cardijn was opposed by his Belgian compatriots, Philips, and the Jesuit Georges Delcuve, who had founded the *Lumen Vitae* catechetical training centre in Brussels. Philips and Delcuve, who seem to have been acting as proxies for Suenens who emerged as leader of the Belgian delegation, both insisted that the Second Congress should start with doctrine.

Thus, although they adopted Cardijn’s “three truths” template, their plan began not with “the truth of reality” as Cardijn had done in 1951 but with “the truth of faith”:

a) A summary of doctrinal principles,

b) A panorama of the current world situation, and

\(^\text{77}\) Ibid., 52.

c) The formation of the laity starting from family life, education, professional and cultural life, and eventually international life.  

Although Cardijn fought the point, preferring as always to begin “bottom up” with reality, he was now forced to concede in a battle that would re-emerge at the Council in the debates over the structure of *Gaudium et Spes*. In another significant victory for the Suenens line, Pius XII in his opening speech also called for a change in terminology that would give a “general meaning” to the term Catholic Action, applying it “to the ensemble of lay apostolic movements.”

**Larrain takes the floor**

This was the context in which Chilean Bishop Manuel Larrain stepped up to defend the jocist approach in a paper entitled *Croissance de vie chrétienne chez les laïcs d’aujourd’hui* (Growth of Christian life among lay people today), which addressed the question: What are the elements that comprise the spirituality of lay people who intervene in the temporal realities of the present world?

The answer to this, Larrain argued in terms that owed everything to Cardijn (and Gratry), was that each Christian had a double temporal and eternal duty, based first on the instruction in Genesis Chapter 1 to multiply and fill the Earth, and secondly on Jesus’ command in Matthew Chapter 28 to baptise and teach all nations. For Larrain, these “two great imperatives… associate the Christian in the double task of the Creation and the Redemption.” Following Cardijn and contrary to Philips, he repudiated the latter’s direct/indirect framework that dissociated the divine and secular spheres, in effect relegating the lay role to the latter.

The issue was the way “in which this task impacts on the present time, since this double growth of the world and the Church is realised historically,” Larrain argued, launching into a

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82 Ibid., 157.
see-judge-act analysis. Acknowledging the emergence of a “new era of human history” which was opening up thanks to technological progress and structural changes impacting on “the life, culture and mentality of man today,” he argued, with echoes of Lamennais, that the Church itself was entering “a third age.”

“From this vision of the Church today in the world today,” Larrain added, “one could deduce the fundamental structure of the kind of Christian that our time requires.” 83 What was needed was “a conscious and freely adopted Christianity,” Larrain continued, in line with both Cardijn and Lamennais. This implied a community sense, a liturgical sense, a biblical sense, a missionary spirit, holiness and a sacred sense of life and the lay vocation that directed each person’s attitude before the world.

Such an attitude regarded “life as a vocation from God,” “civic duty as the path of God” while unifying “the double secular and missionary work of this divine vocation… in the development of the world and the Church,” Larrain concluded in an important intervention that prefigured his role representing the progressive Latin American bishops at Vatican III. 84

**Framing the conciliar debates**

Unable to resolve these controversies, the Congress decided not to draw “conclusions,” bar a “special resolution” expressing solidarity with the “Church of silence” in the communist world and an ordinary “resolution” proposing to “study” the Catholic Action issue raised by Pius XII. This was a green light to Suenens, who proceeded to publish an influential article on “L’unité multiforme de l’Action catholique” (The multiform unity of Catholic Action) again calling for the term Catholic Action to be used “generically.” 85

Thus, compared to the triumphs of the First Congress, the Second Congress was a serious setback for Cardijn and his allies. Nevertheless, it helped isolate the issues concerning evangelisation, lay apostolate and the role of the Church in the world that would resurface at

84 Ibid., 174.
the Council. It had also drawn many of the jocist bishops and theologians even closer together in a genuinely international albeit informal Cardijn network that would exercise an influence far beyond their number at Vatican II.
Part II

Preparing for the Council
Chapter 5 – *Mater et Magistra* and John XXIII’s call for a New Pentecost

Announcing the Council

By his own account, Cardijn had never heard of Cardinal Angelo Roncalli before his election as Pope John XXIII on 28 October 1958, although the latter had already encountered the French JOC while stationed as nuncio in Paris from 1944 to 1953.¹ Indeed, the advent of John XXIII meant that, for the first time since 1925, Cardijn did not personally know the reigning pope, adding to his fears for the future of the JOC, the lay apostolate and Specialised Catholic Action, particularly after the setbacks of the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate.

Nor is there any record of Cardijn’s immediate reaction to the new pope’s announcement on 25 January 1959 that he was calling an Ecumenical Council and a Synod for Rome. Nevertheless, for all the consternation that John XXIII’s announcement generated within the Roman Curia, his initial aims were quite limited: “[The Council and the Synod] will lead happily to the … updating of the Code of Canon Law, which should accompany and crown these two tests of the practical application of the provisions of ecclesiastical discipline.”²

In the early “antepreparatory” phase of the Council, perhaps the only external factor hinting at change was the fact that Roncalli was not a man of the Curia, having taken up his first diplomatic appointment in Bulgaria in March 1925, the very month that Cardijn first met Pius XI. This experience as well as his next appointment in Turkey no doubt inspired the pope’s announcement that the Council was not just for “the spiritual good of the Christian people” but also “an invitation to separated communities for the search for Unity.”³ The next public clue that the Council might be genuinely different emerged

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³ Ibid.
in John’s homily on Pentecost Sunday 17 May 1959 when he called for the coming Council to become “a new Pentecost” in the life of the Church.4

**The antepreparatory phase**

**John’s first encyclical**

Among the first to realise the Council’s potential was Yves Congar, who in mid-February 1959 suggested five areas of work, including confirming the unity of the Church, promoting pastoral activity, reasserting the spiritual vocation of the human person as well as combating doctrinal error and completing the work of Vatican I a century before.5

The key document that oriented the initial preparations or “antepreparatory” phase, however, was the pope’s first encyclical *Ad Cathedram Petri* on “Truth, unity and peace in a spirit of charity,” published on 29 June 1959.6 Cardijn undoubtedly studied this attentively. Indeed, the general themes concerning the search for truth, unity and peace resounded with his own vision of unifying a world in need of peace.

Moreover, the encyclical made specific reference to Catholic Action, noting that “priests, religious men, and virgins consecrated to God cannot reach every class of person” (§115), a phrase that quaintly echoed Cardijn’s own concept of specialisation. On the other hand, the encyclical’s narrow understanding of it as “the cooperation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy” and instruction that members “must align themselves beside their bishops and be ready to obey every command” was bound to disappoint him (§121).

More positive, from Cardijn’s point of view, was the distinction the encyclical recognised between Catholic Action and “the many pious associations which flourish in

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the Church” (§119). For John, at least, not every lay initiative fell under the rubric of Catholic Action. Also significant was the insistence on “particular attention to personal formation in Christian wisdom and virtue,” most of all for the young (§123).

The Antepreparatory Commission begins

Meanwhile, on 17 May 1959, John formally appointed an Antepreparatory Commission to provide initial direction and begin the massive task of technical planning.  

One month later on 18 June 1959, new Secretary of State, Cardinal Dominic Tardini, announced an open-ended worldwide consultation process. And in an encouraging sign, the Commission eventually received 2150 responses, although there is no indication of any involvement by Cardijn at this stage. Moreover, despite the number of responses, the final consultation report dated 12 March 1960 and grandly entitled “Final synthesis of the resolutions and suggestions for the coming Ecumenical Council from their Excellencies the Bishops and Prelates of the entire world” totalled a mere eighteen pages.

According to historian Etienne Fouilloux, the report, which was distributed to the Antepreparatory Commission, drew mainly on the response of the Italian bishops. Its observations included concern about developing disorder in seminaries caused by “the spread of methods, so-called of ‘self-education, self-control and personal autonomy’,” which was evidently deplored and “the restoration of discipline requested.” Cardijn, fortunately, probably had no knowledge of this but it was evidence of the prevailing Curial climate.

Worse news emerged on 3 July 1959 when Pizzardo wrote to French Cardinals Feltin and Liénart clamping down even further on the worker priests, prohibiting even part-time work. Externally, the signs for the Council were far from promising.

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8 Ibid., 94.
9 Ibid., 98.
10 Ibid., 146.
11 Ibid., 147.
Cardijn and Pope John

The first meeting

As usual, however, Cardijn refused to rely on the views of others. Back from his 1958 Antipodean and Asian tour, he travelled to Rome in February 1959 to seek an audience with the new pope. JOCI president Romeo Maione later recalled Cardijn’s nerves and fears prior to meeting John XXIII, who calmed him with the words: “You are sure an important man, a man must be elected Pope before he is allowed to meet you.”

“I have known you for such a long time!” the pope told an emotional Cardijn. “I have been following you and your work. I will support the YCW as Pius XI and Pius XII, indeed even more than they did!” More than Pius XII? Perhaps. More than Pius XI? This was a stirring and amazing promise. Nor did the pope fail to mention the Council. “He spoke so freely of a new Pentecost!” Cardijn recalled. “I will never forget our first meeting.”

The pope who knew Cardijn

Although this first audience astonished Cardijn, their rapport is less surprising given their one-year age difference and given John’s own personal journey. Prior to his first diplomatic appointment, Pius XI had sent Roncalli to France, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands to study “missionary action,” the very year in which the Jeunesse Syndicaliste first came to prominence. The young diplomat was thus already familiar with the context of the JOC’s birth.

Twenty years later, Roncalli arrived as nuncio to France, still basking in the golden age of Specialised Catholic Action. Perhaps because of the tensions brewing over the worker priests and the new theology, the French JOC founding chaplain, Georges Guérin and the lay leaders of the movement made a point of regularly meeting with

14 Cardijn, “John XXIII.”
15 Ibid.
16 Paul Dreyfus, Jean XXIII (Paris: Fayard, 1979), 64.
Roncalli, who was duly impressed, noting twice that these meetings were “particularly remarkable.”

Marc Sangnier also died on Pentecost Sunday 1950 during Roncalli’s Paris sojourn, prompting the nuncio to write to the Sillon founder’s widow “The powerful charisma of his words and his spirit enthralled me,” Roncalli wrote of a 1903 speech delivered by Sangnier in Rome. “The most vivid memory of my whole youth is of his personality and his political and social activity.”

Moreover, Roncalli had been heavily involved in Catholic social action from his seminary days in Rome when he worked closely with Fr Giacomo Radini-Tedeschi, then national chaplain to the lay organisation, Opera di Congressi. Leo XIII had sent Radini-Tedeschi and the future Pius XI, Fr Achille Ratti, to France in 1893 to promote his 1892 encyclical Au milieu des sollicitudes, which called on French Catholics to abandon their dreams of restoring the monarchy and “rally to the republic.” As Roncalli recalled in his biography of Radini-Tedeschi, revealingly entitled My bishop, the latter had shared an apartment in Rome with Msgr Jules Tiberghien, another French monsignor from Tourcoing near Lille, who with Msgr Vanneufville had mediated with the Vatican on behalf of the Sillon.

Yet, within a year of his election, on 28 July 1904 in a foretaste of the Sillon’s fate, Pius X had suppressed the Opera di Congressi, owing at least in part to its democratic orientation and its independence of episcopal control. Soon after, in January 1905, he appointed Radini-Tedeschi as bishop of Bergamo, where the latter made Roncalli his secretary. Grasping his opportunity, Radini-Tedeschi transformed the industrialising region into a powerful and influential centre of Catholic Action. Study circles, trade unions, cooperatives flourished in a diocese that became a model for the whole country and beyond, as indicated by strong international links, including with the Sillon. Fifty

(Accessed 07/10/2015)
20 Ibid., 29.
21 Ibid., 43.
years later, the fruit of this experience found expression in John’s 1961 encyclical *Magister et Magistra*.

**A new social encyclical**

Encouraged by his first audience, Cardijn returned in February 1960 for a second meeting with John. The same month, he had drafted a short paper, “Les prêtres et la doctrine sociale de l’Eglise,” in which he lamented the lack of understanding of Church teaching that he had observed during his recent trip to Latin America. “Rare are those who exalt the dignity of human work, of workers, worker families and their most basic rights,” Cardijn wrote.22

Thus, Cardijn now dared to suggest that John prepare an encyclical to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*.23 “The [social] question is not the same in 1960 as it was in the time of Leo XIII or even in the days of Pius XI,” he told the pope. “An encyclical on the world of work of today would have even more influence than *Rerum Novarum* or *Quadragesimo Anno*, but an encyclical that is positive and open to all the collaboration that would be needed!” he proposed, no doubt with an eye to the Council.24

In a sign of their growing mutual esteem, John requested Cardijn to detail his proposal in a written note.

**Mater et Magistra**

**A focus on labour**

Cardijn responded quickly with a twenty-page typed document entitled “L’Eglise face au monde du travail” (The Church before the world of work), containing a detailed analysis of the worker problem. Sending it to Archbishop Angelo Dell’Acqua,

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23 In his 1963 article, Cardijn cites the date as 1959 as does Maione. However, Fiévez and Meert place the meeting in 1960, the date of Cardijn’s correspondence with the Holy See on the encyclical.
24 Fiévez-Meert, *Cardijn*, 211.
Substitute at the Secretariat of State, on 13 April 1960, he noted that “the moment is truly ripe for a psychological shock in the world,” which he hoped the new encyclical would provide.25

“Never has the problem of labour taken on (such) a dimension, significance and gravity,” Cardijn began apocalyptically. The present changes were “merely the beginning of a vertiginous transformation both with respect to work and all the agents involved in it.” Work, Cardijn continued, was in the process of overturning the whole world, becoming increasingly technological to the point of radically transforming “various aspects of human life – personal, family, social, cultural and recreational, political, national and international.”

Hence, the need for an encyclical centred on the problems of labour, including the “birth of the proletariat,” the Church’s position, “work as a global issue,” formation of the laity, particularly young people, as well as “collaboration towards fraternal union,” meaning ecumenical relations.26

**The drafting team**

Ever the realist, Cardijn clearly had little expectation that his suggestions would be taken up in the form he proposed. Nevertheless, he recommended that a “study committee” be created to draft the text, a suggestion adopted by the pope who appointed four of his former colleagues from the Lateran University.27

These were Pietro Pavan, Msgr Agostino Ferrari Toniolo, a professor of labour law and grandson of the Leplayesian Italian Catholic Action pioneer Giuseppe Toniolo, Msgr Santo Quadri, chaplain to ACLI, the Italian Catholic Workers Organisation, and Msgr Luigi Civardi, a longstanding chaplain and writer on Italian Catholic Action, who was also personal confessor to the pope, all of whom were well known to Cardijn.

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25 Cardijn to Dell’Acqua, 13/04/1960, AC1807.
Like Pavan, Toniolo was also a partisan of the see-judge-act, at least in its Leplaysian form (situation, doctrine, application) as later noted by Congar during a 1964 meeting of the Schema XIII Commission.\(^{28}\) Others who contributed to the eventual encyclical were the German Jesuits Oswald von Nell-Breuning and Gustav Gundlach, the latter of whom covered the Sillon experience in his lectures at the Gregorian and also knew Cardijn.\(^ {29}\)

As the testimony of the Belgian priest, Fr Basil Maes, illustrates, Cardijn also had contact with the drafters during the preparation of the encyclical. “I still see him joyfully entering my room, enthusiastically shouting: ‘Basil, it’s happened! See, judge, act!’,” Maes recalled concerning Cardijn’s reaction after *Mater et Magistra* was published on 15 May 1961.\(^ {30}\)

**Canonising the see-judge-act**

Indeed, *Mater et Magistra* did adopt the Cardijn method in §236:

> There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgement on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: look, judge, act.\(^ {31}\)

Moreover, the document also followed the see-judge-act in its structure, beginning with a review of developments since Leo XIII’s encyclical, moving to a study of Catholic social teaching on current issues before dealing with “new aspects of the social question” including “remedies,” a particularly Leplaysian expression.

As Maes’s testimony indicated, Cardijn had lobbied for this, although the note he sent to Pope John, did not particularly follow the see-judge-act format nor did he make specific


\(^{29}\) Anton Rauscher, Email to Stefan Gigacz, 27/09/2012.


mention of it. Pavan’s biographer, Franco Biffi, also confirmed Cardijn’s influence on the drafting process, noting that the method Pavan proposed “was the one he had come to know through his friend Fr (later Cardinal) Joseph Cardijn.”

A sense of responsibility

Significantly, Mater et Magistra also included the phrase “sense of responsibility” seven times. This was an expression Cardijn had also used in his preparatory note. Indeed, the word “responsibility” was almost a leitmotif of the encyclical. The English version contained a total of twenty-three references to responsibility and its derivatives, while the (mostly original) Italian version contained thirty-one references to “responsabilità,” “responsabili,” “senso di responsabilità,” etc., which in turn implied the need for an “Educazione al senso della responsabilità,” i.e. education for a sense of responsibility (

In the official Latin text, however, the term responsibility was mostly rendered as “officium,” literally office, duty or function, since “responsibilitas” was not yet the accepted Latin word, a problem that would recur in the drafting of Gaudium et Spes. On the other hand, the Latin often used the term “conscii” instead of sense or attitude, e.g. “officiorum conscii,” meaning “conscious of responsibilities,” which, as we know, was the Pius XII and Cardijn gloss on the Sillon definition of democracy.

Also significant was the fact that Mater et Magistra sourced this expression from Pope John’s 3 May 1960 address to the FAO in which he called for “consciences” to be “awakened to the responsibility” to tackle the problem of world hunger.

Was this use of the sillonist expression also the work of Pavan? Did Gundlach have a hand in it? In any event, it fit with John’s own sympathies for the Sillon. By this time, there were few who recognised the origin of the expression. But one who appeared to do

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33 John XXIII, Mater et Magistra: §§83, 84, 90, 118, 145, 158, 195.
so was Pierre Haubtmann, future redactor of *Gaudium et Spes*, who highlighted the use of the term in his annotated version of *Mater et Magistra* published in 1961.\(^{35}\)

**A theology of work?**

As Cardijn had requested, the encyclical also tackled the issue of human labour. In §18 it spoke of work as “a specifically human activity” that was “not merely a commodity.” It endorsed worker “associations” in §22 and repeated Leo XIII’s doctrine that work was “a duty and a right” that ought to be regulated by the state. In §259, it referred to human work as “helping extend the fruits of Redemption all over the world.”

Still, it lacked the punch of Cardijn’s own theology of work, linking labour not only to the Redemption but also and above all to God’s Creation:

> The worker by and through his work is the necessary and irreplaceable collaborator of God in the execution of his plan of love in the work of Creation; and after original and actual sin in the work of the Redemption. The worker, conscious of the meaning and purpose of work, collaborates with the Redeemer to restore the divine order in the world of work and in the whole world: the worker by his collaboration participates in the terrestrial and eternal glorification of God Creator and Redeemer.\(^{36}\)

**Reception of the encyclical**

Whatever its limitations, Pope John’s new encyclical immediately won plaudits for its “new tone,” its openness to the modern world, as well as for its new methodology.\(^{37}\) Canadian Cardinal Paul-Emile Léger noted its “youthful spirit of confidence in the future” while Belgian Jesuit Jules De Meij highlighted its “open appreciative reception” of “modern society” in contrast to “the nostalgia for outdated structures” that had previously characterised much Catholic thinking.\(^{38}\) Indeed, these were all marks of the positive approach advocated by Cardijn and Pope John.


\(^{36}\) Cardijn, “L’Eglise face au monde du travail.”


\(^{38}\) Cited by Mich, Ibid., 197-198.
But Vatican II would soon add enormously to this impact, with *Mater et Magistra* becoming a benchmark for the drafting of Council documents. *Gaudium et Spes* contains sixteen references to the encyclical, the greatest number of citations of any encyclical in any conciliar document. In this sense, *Mater et Magistra* marked the first decisive impact by Cardijn on the documents of Vatican II.

John XXIII greatly appreciated Cardijn’s contribution, explicitly crediting and thanking the JOC founder for his inspiration on several occasions.39 Before the Council Fathers gathered, however, much work lay ahead in the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate, where Cardijn would face a much cooler reception than he received from John XXIII.

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Chapter 6 – Church, world and lay apostolate:
Cardijn in the Preparatory Commission

Introduction

Having accepted Cardijn’s proposal for an encyclical to commemorate *Rerum Novarum*, it was natural that Pope John would call upon him as a member of the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate (PCLA) for Vatican II. Still travelling extensively despite his seventy-eight years, Cardijn drafted a series of seventeen papers for this Commission advocating his conception of the lay apostolate and insisting on the need for formation based on the jocist method.

These “Notes,” numbered by hand in red pencil, form part of a series of thirty-four conciliar papers preserved in his personal archives. Together with the accounts of the Commission’s work compiled by its secretary, Mgr Achille Glorieux, and by the Austrian Catholic Action chaplain and theologian, Ferdinand Klostermann, these notes enable us to trace Cardijn’s efforts in the PCLA and the corresponding conciliar commission.

As Fiévez and Meert recalled, the work of the Commission was “a trial of patience for [Cardijn] and doubtless, too, for those with whom he discussed it.” He opposed the post-war trend to “identify and limit the lay apostolate to exclusively religious witness,” which he regarded as “a disincarnate conception” that “lacked all realism.” Against this, Cardijn’s notes stressed that the “authentic lay apostolate” was “centred within secular life and in the midst of secular realities,” which was “the proper field of baptismal consecration” for the layperson: “the layperson’s specific lay apostolate,” “distinct from the Priestly Ministry and capable of transforming the daily life of the world.” As this chapter will show, Cardijn faced a Sisyphean task, which nevertheless paved the way for later success.

1 AC1576-1578.
4 Fiévez-Meert, *Cardijn*, 222.
The formal preparatory phase

A commission on lay apostolate

With the ante-preparatory period wrapped up by May 1960, Pope John launched the preparatory phase on Pentecost Sunday 6 June 1960 with the motu proprio *Superno Dei Nutu*.\(^5\) Whereas Tardini’s ante-preparatory commission had proposed six preparatory commissions, the number was finally fixed at ten, including a commission on lay apostolate that the pope had decided upon himself, describing it as a “real innovation.”\(^6\) Indeed, it was the first time that an Ecumenical Council had specifically addressed the apostolate of the laity. According to Glorieux, this decision exercised “a great influence on the whole Council, contributing to highlight the place of lay people in the Church and the importance of their role in the apostolic mission of the Church.”\(^7\)

The president of this “Preparatory Commission on the apostolate of the laity, for all matters relating to Catholic, religious and social action” was Cardinal Fernando Cento, then acting as the Major Penitentiary, but who had acted as nuncio to Belgium from 1946-53, where he had known Cardijn and the JOC very well.

Writing to congratulate Cento on 9 June 1960, Cardijn underlined the need to “study what seems to me to be one of the most serious problems for the future of the Church,” offering to place himself at the latter’s disposition “for the work of the Commission.”\(^8\) Three months later, on 7 September, Cardijn received his official nomination as a member of the Commission from Cardinal Tardini.\(^9\)

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\(^6\) Fouilloux, “The ante-preparatory phase,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, I, 159.

\(^7\) Achille Glorieux, “Histoire,” 92.

\(^8\) Cardijn to Cento, 09/06/1960, AC1585.

\(^9\) Cardijn to Cento, 07/09/1960, AC1585.
The Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate

Initially Pope John appointed twenty-nine members and nineteen consultors to the PCLA, with more added in the following months bringing the final total to thirty-nine members and twenty-nine consultors, including many who had previous involvement in the Lay Apostolate Congresses. Glorieux noted that it was the most international of all the commissions with members from twenty-six nations.

Nevertheless, Italians dominated with eleven members, including John XXIII’s *Mater et Magistra* drafting team of Pavan, Ferrari-Toniolo, Civardi and Quadri. Moreover, they benefited from a strong home ground advantage, being able to participate to a much greater extent in the drafting process. By contrast, the Commission included only three non-Europeans among its members.

Among those with jocist links – apart from Cardijn – we can identify Garrone, Rodhain, Henri Donze, chaplain to the ACI, Henri Caffarel, a former JOC national-secretariat chaplain who founded the Teams of Our Lady from France, Franz Hengsbach from Germany, Albert Bonet, founder of the JOC affiliate in Catalonia, and Antoine Cortbawi from Lebanon.

Although the consultants were much more geographically representative with three Africans, two Latin Americans, three Asians and even two from Oceania among the original nineteen, they were less directly involved in the drafting process. Once again, many had close ties to the JOC and the Specialised Catholic Action movements, notably Larrain but also McCann, Gantin, Blomjous, Gallagher, Gutierrez Granier, Delargey and Pillai.

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10 Achille Glorieux, “Histoire,” 96. Glorieux says thirteen nations were represented among the members and another thirteen among the consultants. However, I have only been able to identify twelve countries among the members and another ten among the consultors.


13 Gigacz, “Jocist Bishops.”

14 Gigacz, “Jocist Bishops.”

15 “Composition des Commissions préparatoire.”

16 Gigacz, “Jocist Bishops.”
Notably, the latter additions included several from the French Specialised Catholic Action movements in a sign that the French bishops, particularly Garrone, were not happy with Italian dominance. These included former ACO national chaplain, Jacques Bonnet, and Albert Lanquetin, a founder of the Mouvement Familial Rural (MFR), who had also participated in the foundation of the JOC in France.

Other Preparatory Commissions

Bishops with close links to the Specialised Catholic Action movements were also well represented in several other commissions, including the Central Preparatory Commission (CPC), where Cardijn would have been pleased to find Cardinals Van Roey (Belgium), Liénart and Richaud (France), Frings (Germany), Léger (Canada), Montini (Italy), Gonçalves Cerejeira (Portugal), Caggiano (Argentina), Barros Camara (Brazil), Godfrey (United Kingdom), Alfrink (Netherlands), Meyer (USA) and Gracias (Bombay, India) as well as Archbishops Thomas Cooray (Sri Lanka) and Denis Hurley (South Africa). In addition, Cardijn remained on good terms with several Vatican cardinals in the CPC, including Tisserant, who was president, Ottaviani, and Micara. Later, however, Suenens, who had not failed to make known his views on Catholic Action when submitting his vota in response to the preparatory enquiry, would replace Van Roey.

Secondly, the Theological Commission, whose work also embraced the theological aspects of the lay apostolate, included a significant number of jocist-friendly bishops and theologians such as Joseph Schroffer (Germany), Marcel Dubois (France), Vicente Scherer (Brazil),

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17 Joseph Debes, Naissance de l’Action catholique ouvrière (Paris: Editions ouvrières, 1982), 15:
http://books.google.fr/books?id=LoAF45Iq4fqUC&pg=PA225&lpg=PA225&dq=p%C3%A8re+jacques+bonnet+action+catholique&source=bl&ots=ypy4sbeY02&sig=gN8NL8VrMGCxFHFq5KcwLpAK8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=yj5RU8GQGcqQXb84IBI&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=p%C3%A8re%20jacques%20bonnet%20action%20catholique&f=false (Accessed 10/10/2015)

http://books.google.fr/books?id=Yq2YeYeYcC6C&pg=PA100&lpg=PA100&dq=abb%C3%A9+lanquetin&source=bl&ots=r6HBGMOTzF&sig=WgbrUQBdDrZvZaZvCBqrT8se8pA3o&hl=en&sa=X&ei=qkZRU4nZKMaHOJH9gZgO&ved=0CC0Q6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=abb%C3%A9%20lanquetin&f=false (Accessed 10/10/2015)

Maurice Roy and Lionel Audet (Canada) as well as Gerard Philips, the Louvain biblical scholar, Lucien Cerfiaux, Pavan, Ferrari-Toniolo and Congar, now rehabilitated under the reign of Pope John.

The case was similar with the Commission for Bishops and Diocesan Government, which included Emile Guerry, Pierre Veuillot, Jean Villot (France), Georges Pelletier (Canada), Vicente Enrique y Tarancon (Spain) as well as the French sociologist Fernand Boulard, Justin Simonds (Australia) and Helder Camara (Brazil).

Most commissions, in fact, counted at least one or two bishops with close SCA links, e.g. Charles de Provenchères (France) (Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and the Faithful), Gaston Courtois, a Son of Charity father, who had helped found the Coeurs vaillants, an SCA movement for children (Commission for Religious), Argentinian former JOC chaplain Enrique Rau (Commission for the Discipline of the Sacraments), Henri Jenny (France) (Commission for Sacred Liturgy), and François Marty (France), (Commission on Studies and Seminaries).

Finally, the Secretariat for Christian Unity included Cardinal Bea, Archbishop John Heenan (UK), Bishops François Charrière (Switzerland) and Emile De Smedt (Belgium), as well as Gustave Thils (Louvain) and the Dominican Jerome Hamer.

Although a minority, these bishops and theologians offered a voice to the orientations and concerns of the Specialised Catholic Action movements.

**The work of the PCLA**

**Method**

According to Glorieux, the PCLA's method of work was inspired by a “double concern.” The first was for effectiveness. This translated into the creation by each sub-commission of Rome-based “working groups,” which met regularly to work on draft texts that were circulated to those who were absent. These groups “included various nationalities,” Glorieux
added, somewhat defensively acknowledging the disadvantage of the system for the non-Romans. The second preoccupation was to involve all the members and consultors in the work “without great distinction between the two categories” in order to receive opinions from the broadest number of countries.\textsuperscript{20}

For Cardijn, who still followed a punishing schedule, it was a huge extra workload that he did not shirk. Meanwhile, at the first meeting of the commission in October 1960, Cardinal Cento immediately announced his intention to create three sub-commissions as follows:

**Sub-Commission I:** General notions and aspects more directly concerning evangelisation

- President: Castellano, the Italian Catholic Action national chaplain
- Members: Colli, Garrone, Bukatko, Sabattini, Civardi, Guano, Cardijn, Bonnet, Donze, Lanquetin, Caffarel, Cortbawi, Papali, Tucci

**Sub-Commission II:** Social action

- President: Hengsbach
- Vice-president: Pavan
- Members: Fulton Sheen, Géraud, Quadri, Ferrari Toniolo, Portier, Jarlot, Ponsioen, Hirschmann

**Sub-Commission III:** Charitable action

- President: Bishop Baldelli, Pontifical Mission Assistance
- Members: Babcock, Gasbarri, Rodhain, Klostermann, Bonet, Lopez de Lara.\textsuperscript{21}

This was evidently based on a Suenens-style direct-indirect evangelisation framework, combined with a traditional “works”-based understanding of the apostolate plus the addition of a newer category of social action. A far cry from Cardijn’s espousal of the lay apostolate of

\textsuperscript{21} Gigacz, “Jocist Bishops.”
lay people transforming life, milieu and world, it was a huge setback which effectively pre-determined the framework of the Commission’s deliberations.

Compounding the difficulties, the Evangelisation Sub-Commission under the presidency of Mgr Mario Castellano, included seven Italians out of fifteen members. The French participants, who eventually numbered five (Garrone, Donze, Caffarel, plus Bonnet and Lanquetin added later), plus Cortbawi and Cardijn effectively deadlocked the Sub-Commission.

Terms of reference

Meanwhile, the PCLA received its terms of reference. Trapped in the mentality of pious works and obsessively focused on hierarchical control, these inevitably disappointed Cardijn:

I. The apostolate of the laity: Determine the domain and the goals of this apostolate and its relations with the hierarchy. What are the best means for the apostolate of the laity to respond to current necessities?

II. Catholic Action: 1. To determine the notion, the domain and its subordination to the hierarchy; 2. Review its constitution in order that it be better adapted to our times; 3. Determine the relations between Catholic Action and the other associations (Marian congregations, pious unions, professional unions, etc.)

III. Associations: To study how the activity of existing associations could better respond during our time to the ends that they propose (charitable and social action).²²

Compared with the reality-based approach that Cardijn had introduced to the First World Congress on Lay Apostolate, this was back to square one – or worse. Unlike the preparation for the Congresses, which were relatively open-ended and democratic, the PCLA agenda was stymied by its terms of reference. Glorieux himself agreed that “the formulation of the questions” the Commission were to consider was rather “imprecise.”²³ Moreover, there was little time to react, Cardijn having received his nomination only a month before the first PCLA meeting.

²³ Ibid.
The movements begin to mobilise

Proposal for a sub-commission of lay leaders and militants

Although bound by the secrecy applicable to all Commission members and consultors, Cardijn strove as far as possible to involve JOC leaders. On 26 September 1960, he and the JOCI Secretariat organised a meeting with the International Federation of Christian Worker Movements (FIMOC) and the French ACO to discuss plans for the Council. According to Romeo Maione, these plans included establishing a working commission “to prepare a list of bishops convinced of the worker apostolate,” “to study each commission in order to prepare points for our friends,” “to study how to pass on the preoccupation for the worker apostolate in the decisions of the Council” and even to establish a secretariat in Rome for these purposes.24

The next day, Cardijn wrote to Glorieux expressing the movement’s concerns and views.25 Knowing that he had more support from other continents, Cardijn immediately proposed to internationalise the work of the Rome Sub-Commissions by diversifying “into continental sub-commissions which would examine the problem from an even more realistic perspective by continent.”

Glorieux responded cautiously on 3 October emphasising his and Cento’s agreement in principle with involving lay people in the work as “they alone understand certain aspects of these problems and have experience of them in the milieux of their lives.”26 Nevertheless, he questioned whether it was “opportune” to raise the issue before the Commission had begun meeting. This was hardly surprising since Frings and Döpfner had raised the issue of lay participation as early as 25 May 1961 only for Pope John to respond that the Council “was an act of the teaching not the learning Church.” The only exception was one layman, F. Vito, who participated in the Commission on Studies and Seminaries.27

25 Cardijn to Glorieux, 27/09/1960, AC1585
26 Glorieux to Cardijn, 03/10/1960, AC1585
The anguish and hopes of the young workers

Meanwhile, on 28 October 1960, in preparation for its November Executive Committee meeting, the JOCI organised a study day on Vatican II with the objective of preparing a note for the PCLA addressing two themes, namely “the mass of young workers to be saved” and “the role of lay people in the Church as we conceive it.”

Participants included Cardijn, members of the JOCI leadership team, i.e. Maione, Betty Villa (Philippines), René Délécluse (France), plus Marguerite Fiévez and several chaplains from Latin America, Africa and Europe. Maione feared that the Council would seek “to divinise parish work” while Villa pointed out that in Asia there was “no link between the Gospel preached on Sunday and daily life.” Oscar Melanson CSC, a Canadian priest working in Brazil, wished “to induce an anguish for the working masses at the Council.”

A statement drafted by the meeting entitled “Ecumenical Council” was adopted by the Executive Committee on 12 November 1960. Eschewing mention of any desire for lay involvement in the work of the PCLA, the leaders lamented the “disastrous” conditions experienced by millions of young workers and called on the PCLA to “clearly define the proper role of lay people in the Church and in the world.”

Cardijn undoubtedly had a large hand in the drafting of this statement which began in terms that uncannily prefigure the opening phrases of Gaudium et Spes:

The anguish [anxiety] felt over the consequences that may be disastrous for millions of human persons and for the future of human society, in spite of the hopes that humanity should reasonably be able to place in technological progress, vigorously inspires the leaders mandated by the Church for the apostolate of young workers, to humbly but urgently call upon those in charge of preparing the Council and the Council itself, so that a doctrinal teaching and a pastoral orientation be traced that will enlighten and guide the action of Catholics around the world in union with all people of good will...
Hence, the statement argued, the need for an apostolic formation for leaders whose Christian task would be to tackle these issues. It concluded with a call to the ninety JOC national movements to join in Council preparations, including lobbying their bishops. In effect, the statement called for a new orientation for the preparation. Also striking is the extent to which the JOC statement anticipated the line eventually adopted by Vatican II, rather than the original terms of reference of the Commission. Three days later, armed with this declaration, Cardijn joined the first full meeting of the Commission.

Note 1

The “proper and irreplaceable apostolate of lay people”

Nor was this the only document Cardijn took to Rome on 15 November 1960. On 31 October he sent to Cento the first of his numbered notes, Note 1, on “The apostolate of lay people.” This document elegantly recapped the vision Cardijn had fought for at the Lay Apostolate Congresses and in the COPECIAL and can be considered as a template for his advocacy throughout Vatican II.

Its purpose, Cardijn explained, was to “consider the proper and irreplaceable apostolate of lay people,” whom he defined negatively “as all those men and women who are not living in the priestly or religious state.” The first two chapters followed a see-judge-act format answering the Commission’s first questions on lay apostolate, while Chapters III and IV answered a series of questions about Catholic Action and other forms of association.

Characteristically, in Chapter V he answered a question that the Commission had not yet asked, setting out his vision of the ministerial priesthood in relation to the foregoing. Finally, he included two annexes on “the creation of working groups including the participation of lay people,” and “the creation of a Roman Congregation or a Roman Secretariat for the lay apostolate.”
Chapter I – The essential problems of lay life

Chapter 1 opened noting that “all lay people face the same essential and primordial problems, which were inherent in their personhood and in their lay life.” These problems (like their corresponding solutions) were “nearly always united and inseparable” in the “reality of our existence.”

Here he offered a model questionnaire that offered a far more existential basis for the work of the whole Commission, as these extracts illustrate:

- Personal level: What is the goal of my life? Who is man and where does he come from? Who am I? What is my situation? How is it that I find myself among other people? What is my vocation, my mission? What are my needs, my aspirations, my personal responsibilities, etc.?

- Physical level (health and hygiene): Am I in good or ill health? Why? What are my nutritional needs and how to meet these? How can I provide for my children?

- Family level: Who is my family? What relations do I have with my parents or with my children? And with my relatives? What are my duties and my needs?

- Immediate community and social level: Does my housing meet my desires and the needs of my family? My neighbourhood, my street, what about these?

He also added similar questions relating to culture, professional life, civic and political life, and even international issues such as the population explosion, ideological conflict. Not a word about evangelisation, spirituality or prayer, while the only mention of religion came in the last paragraph, where he asked, “why are there so many religions and aren’t they all good?”!

To PCLA members who operated from a direct/indirect evangelisation framework, this must have seemed completely irrelevant at best. No doubt anticipating this, Cardijn endeavoured to

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30 Joseph Cardijn, “Note 1, L’apostolat des laïcs,” 30/10/1960, AC1576.
31 Cardijn, “Note 1.”
explain. “All these personal and collective problems form the very tissue of day to day lay life, in which lay people are immersed by the very nature of their vocation,” Cardijn added.

In response, “lay people must become conscious of both the problems and the solutions in which they are involved as a matter of course to be able to commit themselves as Christians, freely and with love, as a response to their mission and earthly responsibility,” Cardijn continued, echoing the Sillon definition of democracy.

Lay people “must desire the accomplishment of this mission” within an increasingly vast “worldwide, inter-racial, ecumenical, cosmic” perspective, by means of an “increasingly precise knowledge of the problems of under-developed countries and continents” and “inspired by an acute sense of mutual respect, justice, solidarity and collaboration between all.”

Chapter II – 1: The apostolic and missionary dimension of these problems

In Chapter II – 1, Cardijn set out to show how responding to these issues formed the basis of his vision of the “apostolic mission of the lay person” within “the whole of lay life.” In this conception, “the problems evoked and the solutions that respond to them [had] an essential, fundamental, primordial significance” since they were “inserted... in God’s plan of love, in his work of creation and redemption,” which Cardijn characterised as the “truth of faith.”

These factors also implied a relationship both “with Christ, God made man to save people, on earth as in heaven, in time and in eternity” and “with the Church, its mission, its doctrine, its Hierarchy, its worship.” The theological and pastoral implications of this relationship therefore needed to be “explained and explored to enlighten lay people on the significance of their own mission in all lay fields and the way to realise it.”

This was “because the consciousness of this essential relationship between all the problems of human life and their final goal which is the Kingdom of God inspires responsibility, mission and the apostolic sense of lay people,” Cardijn continued, drawing on the
consciousness-responsibility couplet. Hence, “all people are on earth to establish and extend
the reign of God, to continue the redemption of Christ and the work of the Church.”

In such a context, religion and the Church, including “worship, sacraments, liturgy, interior
life and morals” were linked inseparably to “the apostolic mission of the whole Church, and
of all its members and all people.”

**Chapter II – 2: The importance of formation**

Such a vision necessitated a corresponding program of “human, divine and Christian”
formation that developed a “consciousness of the apostolic and missionary significance of the
whole of life.” For Cardijn, “the whole of religious formation” was “essentially apostolic.”
Thus, while it commenced in parish catechism and at school, it reached “its culminating and
decisive point at the age that determines the orientation of personal life – between 14 and 25
years – when the young man or young woman become adults...”

To be effective, this apostolic formation needed to be “an apprenticeship in the discovery of
human problems based on observation of lay life itself and on a conception of life in the light
of human destiny” leading to a search for and “implementation of solutions that are needed
for these problems,” judgement “in the light of a few principles” and “action beginning with
one’s immediate milieu.” Beginning from the personal, such an approach, for Cardijn, also
required a collective dimension, building from action initially in one’s own milieu and
eventually reaching a world scale.

Moreover, the eventual development of a consciousness of “the global dimension of human
problems” should lead to “an understanding of the Church in which the whole apostolic,
personal and collective mission will be profoundly embedded.” Thus, the lay person’s
relationship with the Church, Cardijn argued, needed to be based on the “two essential poles”
of consciousness and responsibility (again), namely:

a) the proper responsibility of the lay person in his or her terrestrial mission, in
the solution to human problems; [and]
b) the lay person’s filial, free and conscious, dependency on the authority of the Church as a Christian and as an apostolic chargé de mission.32

Here, Cardijn endeavoured to reconcile “responsibility and dependency” as two sides of the lay person’s relationship with the Church, which was, in effect divided into areas of lay competency in the fields of “scientific, technological, financial, economic, social (and) cultural” problems on one hand, and areas of Church competency with respect to “doctrinal, spiritual (and) moral” problems. But such a relationship could only be founded on “an openness and a positive action on the part of the [hierarchy] based on confidence in the mission of lay people themselves.”

Chapter III – A vision of Catholic Action

Since John XXIII and/or the PCLA had renewed focus on Catholic Action, Cardijn moved to explain his own vision in terms of “two essential characteristics.”

The first of these, based on the definition of Pius XI, was “official participation” in “the proper function of the Hierarchy, namely forming the faithful to share the apostolic mission of the Church in their own life and in the lay world.” Education was, thus, the essential component of Catholic Action, which by its nature belonged to the hierarchical dimension of the Church.

However, there was a second “essential characteristic,” namely “the responsibility of lay people both in the direction and in the action and organisation of the apostolic movements that have received a mandate.” Thus, for Cardijn, participation in the work of the hierarchy also involved major responsibility on the part of lay people, even though this level of responsibility varied in practice.

Achieving this double collaboration therefore necessitated internal collaboration within the Catholic Action movement “between the chaplain and the lay leaders and at every level of the organisation”, and externally “between the lay leaders and the Hierarchy as well as with the

32 Cardijn, “Note 1.”
whole clergy.” In other words, Cardijn’s understanding of Specialised Catholic Action was based on a partnership between the episcopal hierarchy and the organised lay hierarchy of the movements, each of which had priority in its own area of responsibility.

In relation to the controversial question of the “mandate,” Cardijn repeated that it applied not to individuals but only to the “the range of lay organisations that comprise Catholic Action.” The reason for requiring a mandate was because such organisations were charged with “forming the apostolic conscience of Christians, of training them in apostolic action in daily life and in groups of the apostolate,” which implied “a very close union between the Bishop and the whole Hierarchy and the movements of Catholic Action.” On the other hand, this implied that no mandate was necessary where lay groups acted independently on their own initiative, such as prayer groups, charitable groups and the like. This, in effect, constituted Cardijn’s reply to the Suenens critique of favouritism.

With respect to specialisation, Cardijn regarded this as a consequence of the need to organise around “the great problems of life, action, milieu” by which he meant specialisation based largely on economic class. But he also pointed to the need for new forms of specialisation based on the “social milieux that dominate the present world,” which implied the need to consider all factors that determined the nature of a milieu, including ethnic and religious factors, and not simply class (as it had developed in Europe).

Consequently, Cardijn’s vision of Catholic Action involved organisation at every level from local to global (“international”) and, by implication, could not function effectively if limited to diocesan level. There was also a need for coordination between movements but not by “a superstructure that places itself above the specialised movements.” Rather this coordination needed to be based on “mutual understanding, union, entente, solidarity and collaboration.”

Chapter IV – The place of other lay organisations

Chapter IV shed further light on his conception of Catholic Action by his explanation of the place of other kinds of movements:
• Formation in piety: e.g. third orders, fraternities
• Assistance to the clergy or the parish: e.g. Legion of Mary...
• Formation and support of a missionary laity: Propagation of the Faith...
• Charitable action: Caritas, Conferences of St Vincent de Paul...
• Educational, cultural or leisure action: scouting, youth clubs, sport, music...
• Professional and social action: trade unions, cooperatives, Pax Christi...
• Civic and political action: civic committees, international teams of Christian Democracy, groups of parliamentarians involved in European structures, etc...

Each of these groups had its own value, Cardijn recognised, adding that even charitable groups needed to collaborate with other professional, civic and political groups with a view to “social uplifting.”

While he conceded the right of the hierarchy to grant its mandate “to whichever association, as it sees fit,” he nevertheless insisted on the “utility” and “apostolic value” of these initiatives “independently” of any mandate, which was unnecessary in these fields. Here he added a warning on the need to avoid the spirit of competition and exclusivity. “No association,” Cardijn insisted, agreeing for once with Suenens, “whether it be Catholic Action or not has a monopoly that could exclude others.”

**Chapter V – The formation of priests, religious men and women**

Based on the foregoing, in Chapter V, Cardijn presented his corresponding vision of the role of priests and religious. There would “never be an authentic, effective and influential lay apostolate,” he argued, if the latter were not convinced that they must “collaborate with lay people in view of [their] apostolate.”

To achieve such collaboration, it was essential for seminaries and novitiates to prioritise the lay apostolate and the need for appropriate formation. This in turn implied the need for tools and resources as well as organising priests into local or regional teams.

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33 Cardijn, “Note 1.”
34 Cardijn, “Note 1.”
In a corollary to his insistence on the “specifically lay apostolate of lay people,” Cardijn continued throughout the Council to emphasise the role of the priest. Indeed, as Glorieux later remarked, Cardijn “spoke of priests with respect to nearly every theme taken up in the schema...”

Conclusion

Cardijn concluded by proposing a Council resolution calling for “a systematic effort... throughout the whole Church to promote understanding of the necessity and importance of the apostolate of lay people in view of a Christian solution to the increasingly urgent [world] problems.” He also proposed the addition of a preparatory sub-commission including lay people, and the (post-conciliar) establishment of a “Roman congregation” for the apostolate of lay people.

It was a compelling outline of the jocist vision and methodology. The problem was that, as far as the work of the PCLA was concerned, the die was already cast.

The Council: A unique opportunity

The difficulties for Cardijn emerged as soon as Glorieux presented his nine-point plan for the Commission’s work at its first meeting in mid-November 1960, which was as follows:

1. Notions and definitions of the lay apostolate
2. Forms and methods
3. Formation for the lay apostolate
4. Submission to the hierarchy
5. Priests and lay people
6. Catholic Action
7. Relations between the various forms of lay apostolate
8. Charitable action
9. Drafting of texts to be presented to the Central [Preparatory] Commission.

According to Glorieux, this plan was based on the replies received in the 1959 consultation. Justifying it in see-judge-act terms, he later wrote that it was based on the “concrete situation of the apostolate of the laity in our time enlightened by the teaching of the popes and bishops from which to derive the general principles and to propose orientations in view of its development and a better organisation.”

“Thus, the work consisted primarily of a reflection on the reality experienced by them (the commissioners) over a long period,” Glorieux explained somewhat doubtfully. In any event, “rather pragmatic” choices had to be made because of the “very novelty of the task confided to the Commission.”

But this was far from Cardijn’s own conception of a see-judge-act, which would have started from the concrete situation experienced by lay people in everyday life. As always, Cardijn deferred to the Commission. Yet he was extremely concerned as illustrated by his 14 December 1960 letter to Mgr Désiré Joos, vicar-general of Bishop Himmer’s diocese of Tournai. Referring to “the problems to be resolved by lay people and the lay apostolate in our modern world,” Cardijn noted that these were “often forgotten, if not ignored.”

“Is there any way to remedy this? The problem genuinely haunts me. The Council is a unique opportunity which will not happen again for a very long time. One way or another, these problems will be resolved: either by us or against us,” he warned.

Fully conscious of the import of the coming Council, Cardijn prepared himself for what he anticipated would be the last great battle of his career.

38 Cardijn to Joos, 14/121960, AC1579/2.
Notes 2 and 3: A new dialectic

Church, world and lay apostolate

With the benefit of Joos’s advice, Cardijn drafted two more papers, Note 2, “The lay apostolate” (dated 16 December 1960), and Note 3, “Reflection and suggestions” (dated 15 December 1960), responding point by point to the issues raised by Glorieux.

These notes presented what amounted to a new version of his three truths dialectic, which he reformulated in terms of Church (truth of faith), world (truth of reality) and lay apostolate (truth of method). Thus, in relation to the first point of Glorieux’s program, i.e. the notion and definition of the lay apostolate, Cardijn argued that the lay apostolate depended on “two initial realities,” namely:

1. The Church, its mission, and its composition, starting from the hierarchy and moving down to the “members of the People of God that comprises the Church and that in the ecclesial sense one calls lay people – hence the apostolate of lay people in the Church.”

2. The life and needs of people, created by God with a mission and a vocation “to make use of the whole of creation in view of their divine destiny.” Hence, the need to enable all people “to discover and realise the mission of man and the world.”

“Isn’t it this mission of man in the world and before the problems of the world that St Paul is referring to when he says ‘Instaurare omnis in Christo’?” Cardijn asked, citing Pius XII’s 1957 discourse to the JOC pilgrims.

He detailed this further in Note 2, dated 16 December 1960, again entitled “The lay apostolate,” explaining that this involved “two essential, primordial and inseparable aspects,” namely:

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39 Cardijn, “Note 3.”
1. Its relationship with God, Christ and the Church; with the plan of God in the work of Creation and Redemption.

2. Its relationship with the fundamental problems of man and the world, with their influences and their depth, in their total dimension.\textsuperscript{41}

**Church and world as the focus for Vatican II**

In a particularly significant passage in Note 3, Cardijn explicitly proposed that the Council organise its texts around those two dimensions of Church and world: “In the texts of the Ecumenical Council on the apostolate of lay people, can one not bring out these two aspects: the divine, Christian, ecclesial, and at the same time the fundamental link with the problems of the world and their solution?”\textsuperscript{42}

Here he anticipated the route that the Council would choose at its First Session when it adopted a Suenens proposal to organise its work around two poles of Church (\textit{ad intra}) and world (\textit{ad extra}), an approach backed by John XXIII. According to Suenens, the idea came from his discussions with the pope in September 1962. Yet, here we find Cardijn openly promoting the notion of a council organised around these twin themes at least two years earlier. Moreover, he again visited Rome in late November 1960 and April 1961, undoubtedly continuing to promote the same ideas.

Cento himself regarded Notes 2 and 3 as particularly important. “This very morning, HE Cardinal Cento, who greatly appreciated it, re-read certain passages to us, asking us to take them well into account,” Glorieux wrote to Marguerite Fiévez on 28 December 1960 while Cardijn was in Africa.\textsuperscript{43}

At a minimum, then, it is clear Cardijn’s proposal initiated a conversation on these issues within the PCLA, which in its conciliar form would have co-responsibility with the Theological Commission for the Pastoral Constitution \textit{Gaudium et Spes}. Although similar ideas were in the air, it appears to be the earliest formal suggestion that the Council should divide its work along these lines.

\textsuperscript{41} Joseph Cardijn, “Note 2: L’apostolat des laïcs,” 16/12/1960, AC1576.
\textsuperscript{42} Cardijn, Note 3.
\textsuperscript{43} Achille Glorieux to Fiévez, 28/12/1960, AC1584.
In addition, the PCLA included several members who played a key role in these later events, notably Garrone, Hengsbach and Larrain, all of whom were aware of Cardijn’s proposals. Indeed, it was Hengsbach and another Cardijn collaborator, Dutch Bishop Gerardus de Vet of Breda, who eventually developed the proposal for a mixed commission including members from the doctrinal and lay apostolate commissions to prepare a schema on the Church and the world.  

An indissoluble link

Here, however, we should not overlook the third aspect, the synthesising element of Cardijn’s Church-world dialectic, namely the lay apostolate. If in the JOC founder’s conception, Church and world were an “inseparable reality,” it was the lay apostolate above all that bridged them, forming an “indissoluble link” between the two dimensions of Church and world.

According to Cardijn, this link had the following consequences:

a) On one hand:
   - the necessity and the importance of the apostolate of lay people for the accomplishment of the divine plan and for the positive and human solution of the most decisive problems of the present time;
   - the respect, dignity, responsibility that flow from it, for the humblest as well as for the greatest of men, of whatever race and whatever colour they may be;
   - the necessity of a consciousness of all the indispensable conditions for this apostolate, conditions that must be adequately safeguarded (linkage to God, Christ and the Church, recourse to sacramental sources, etc.)

b) On the other hand:
   - the necessity of formation for the apostolate with competence from a double point of view (a) knowledge of God and his plan (b) knowledge of man and the world today.  

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45 Cardijn, “Note 3.”
For Cardijn, this also affected the way in which the lay apostolate needed to be organised, namely, as a movement from local to international level, with an “indissoluble link between formation, action and organisation,” based on specialisation and taking up “the battle against the great human scourges: hunger, sickness, social insecurity, illiteracy.”

“It would be a bitter disappointment,” Cardijn observed, if the Council failed to tackle these issues, particularly those concerning the apostolate of lay people. On the other hand, grasping this “opportunity” could produce “a truly salutary shock on world opinion,” he suggested.

A universal lay apostolate

Although the Council eventually recognised the need to address both Church and world dimensions, Cardijn’s battle to achieve acceptance of the lay apostolate proved much more difficult. This was already evident from the definition of lay apostolate proposed by the Commission, which, as Cardijn commented in Note 3, was “very clear for Catholics” but had “the inconvenience of not being appropriate for non-Catholics.”

“Doesn’t the situation of the present world, with its various milieux… and all the problems of life that these raise, demand a definition that incites all lay people, in the ecclesial sense, towards a missionary apostolate among all people and in all milieux and institutions to help the world to rediscover its divine origin and mission and bring it back to Christ?” Cardijn asked.

In this sense, the role of the ecclesial lay apostolate was to serve all people without distinction of religion. Here he cited the JOC experience, which had achieved the “most fruitful results” by using this method, resulting in “many conversions, sacerdotal, religious and missionary vocations; influence in national and international institutions; transformation of the conception of life, work, marriage, leisure, interracial and international relations, etc.”

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46 Ibid.
47 Cardijn, “Note 3.”
48 Ibid.
Not only was this a matter of serving all people but of awakening them to “the rediscovery and realisation of the divine value and mission of all men.” In turn, “as they transform their own life, [people] also little by little transform the life of all people.” This mission “raises them up” and “finally enables them to discover the true God, Christ, the Church.” In this way, people came to identify themselves as “collaborators of God, redeemers of the world with Christ” as well as “missionaries of the Church,” ready even to leave home and “carry this Good News to their brothers of different races and religions.” This “specific mission of lay people,” he repeated once again, was “irreplaceable.”

The implication was that for Cardijn the term “lay people” had both a narrow ecclesial sense applicable to baptised Catholics plus a broader sense referring to the whole of humankind, who comprised the λαός or People of God. The aim of the Church’s lay apostolate, then, was to awaken people to the development of their own mission in transforming the concentric circles of their own life, their milieu, and ultimately their world.

**See-judge-act as the basis of formation**

If every person had a divine mission, the corollary was that everyone needed to be formed in this mission of rendering glory to God by collaborating in “the installation of his Reign ‘on earth as in heaven’.” Such formation integrating prayer and sacramental life evidently needed to start from childhood. The key problem, Cardijn lamented, was the complete lack of such formation “from the age of vocation (14 – 25) and as an adult.” Most people were not formed for “the apostolate and the apostolate in their life as lay people.”

“May I be allowed to make a proposal?” Cardijn therefore asked, introducing his see-judge-act method, with its “very formal approvals from Pius XI, Pius XII and John XXIII,” which he summarised for the benefit of the Commission:

a. The YCW helps young workers above all to SEE themselves, the problems of their own life and the life of all others: personal, family, professional, civic life; local, regional, national and international life. It teaches them to see with the eyes of faith; to discover the divine and human, temporal and eternal value; to discover and penetrate the social teaching of the Church, in all its
sources and all its expressions, in a manner to have a just conception, a synthesis and a mystique based on the deep meaning of the mission and the responsibility of each and everyone.

b. Next the jocist method helps to JUDGE real situations and acts, including their deficiencies, the causes of their deficiencies, by confronting them with the doctrine of the Church and with the divine value and mission of every man; it helps to judge how it is necessary and possible to redress these situations and acts, how one can influence them through personal and collective interventions, private and public, in the doctrinal field as on the practical level.

c. Finally, the jocist method teaches to ACT as a man, as a Christian and an apostle, personally and collectively; the person formed in this way will be active, acting, in his own life (which will be transformed) and in his own milieu; he becomes a militant, with the dimensions of the problems of the present world that he meets, its needs, its mistakes and possibilities. And he acts thus, whether in and through his own organisations, or in and as part of other organisations – existing or to be created.49

“Could the Council therefore recommend a concrete and practical method of apostolic learning… that formed young people “conscious of their responsibilities ready to fearlessly confront the heaviest tasks?” Cardijn asked.

Significantly, Cardijn made these suggestions precisely while Pavan, Toniolo-Ferrari, Quadri and Civardi were in the final throes of drafting Mater et Magistra. Thus, on 23 December 1960, Marguerite Fiévez wrote to Pavan on the pretext of seeking his opinion on several of Cardijn’s notes.

“Mgr Cardijn also asked me to add a text he prepared for HH John XXIII presenting his suggestions for an Encyclical on the seventieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum. He would also like your opinion on this,” Fiévez wrote in a sure sign that Cardijn was aware of Pavan’s role in the forthcoming encyclical as well as of its decisive importance as a means of influencing the direction of the Council.50

Glorieux confirmed the impact of this on the working method of the Commission.

49 Cardijn, “Note 3.”
50 Fiévez to Pavan, 23/12/1960, AC1586.
Relations between priests and laity

“Submission to the Hierarchy” was evidently not a heading that Cardijn would have chosen, although it is indisputable that he regarded genuine submission concerning “doctrine, participation in sacramental, liturgical, parish and catechetical life” as extremely important. In temporal matters, however, this authority of the bishop depended very much on “the extent of the competence of the latter.” Moreover, Catholics could “never appear as simple executors of the orders of the Hierarchy,” he insisted.

On the other hand, the heading “Priests and laity” provided Cardijn with an opportunity to present the relationship in a more positive light, particularly in the fields of “formation of lay people” and in the “permanent collaboration” between the two in the exercise of the apostolate.

For Cardijn, this was a matter of art as well as doctrine. Thus, the priest, with his sacerdotal graces and powers, had “a role as educator, animator, counsellor and guide” and therefore needed to understand “the problems of life and the apostolate of lay people, since it was lay people who must “consecrate” the world of today, with the assistance of lay organisations.”

Catholic Action and lay apostolate

Turning to the question of whether the term “Catholic Action” should be broadened or abolished, Cardijn argued that both approaches would “produce the same result.” Rather, it would be “highly desirable” for the Hierarchy “to clarify (its position) on the apostolate and the organisations of the lay apostolate, which are indispensable to the solution of the problems of life that are emerging and will emerge with even greater acuity in the future,” he argued. In other words, the priority was to promote a genuinely lay apostolate.

As for the “mandate,” it involved more than a recognition or blessing. Rather it was “a mission order given by the religious authority in view of the apostolic care of a social milieu or a determined objective.” It in no way created a monopoly. In principle, more than one

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51 Cardijn, “Note 3.”
organisation might be mandated in the same field – not that many others were lining up to launch programs for young workers.

The corollary was an increasing need to foster collaboration between the various apostolic organisations. “The ideal,” Cardijn suggested, reviving his earlier proposal, would be to create a Dicastery that would act as “a coordinating organisation, broad enough to interest all the various associations, and supple and disinterested enough not to impose programs, methods, measures or authoritarian or majority interventions.”

**Charitable and social action**

While Cardijn distinguished between “lay apostolate” and charitable and/or social action, he also insisted on the importance of the latter. Indeed, he pushed for a greater role of “Christian charity” against the “great danger” of “nationalisation” of aid while strongly advocating greater collaboration with public institutions.

Similarly, the growing complexity of society implied a corresponding need for more social action in every field. This was necessary to “guarantee the liberty of the weakest person against the grip and pressure of private or public anonymity” both in developing and developed countries, as well as in the arena of international relations. Christian social organisations therefore needed to “collaborate as intimately as possible with organisations of the lay apostolate … responsible for the necessary formation of leaders.”

To facilitate this, Cardijn proposed “the creation of a Commission with the task of updating the social doctrine of the Church and its concrete application, through social action to the new problems of the world of work.” Although he was far from the only one to make such a suggestion, his advocacy added to the momentum for the foundation of the post-conciliar Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.  

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52 Ibid.
53 Cardijn, “Note 3.”
A Declaration by the Council

Cardijn concluded with another proposal for a “solemn Declaration by the Council emphasising the current importance of the lay apostolate” and “its growing need in the face of the present problems of the world to which the Church must provide a response.” Such a Declaration would constitute “a vibrant call to all the faithful to engage in the apostolate which is the very life of the Christian community.”

As we will see, this was partly answered by the Council’s opening Message to the World inviting “all men and all nations… to collaborate with us to establish a more ordered way of living and greater brotherhood in the world” by working for peace and social justice. Moreover, the principal drafters of this message – Chenu, Congar, Garrone, Guerry, Ancel – had all worked with Cardijn for more than thirty years.

Note 4: Collaboration between priests and lay people

Out of Africa

While working on these documents, Cardijn received a letter from Glorieux dated 13 December 1960 informing him that Castellano and “the Roman Members” of the Sub-Commission on Evangelisation had requested a presentation on the theme “Priests and lay people in the apostolate,” as well as on the role of religious brothers and sisters. This was a positive sign but Cardijn was about to leave for Lomé, Togo for a JOCI training program. There, in the equatorial heat, he drafted Note 4, “Priests and lay people in the apostolate,” setting out the collaborative relationship he envisaged between priest and lay person.

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54 Ibid.
56 Achille Glorieux to Cardijn, 13/12/1960, AC1585.
Again, he insisted on “the primordial role” of the individual and organised lay apostolate and the need for appropriate “formation and animation [to] transform the life and mission of lay people into an apostolic life and mission, inseparable from the priestly apostolate.” Hence, the imperative need for “collaboration with priests ordained and consecrated to this end.”

A partnership model

No doubt anticipating criticism, Cardijn insisted on the unicity of this apostolate “whose source and goal are common to all those who are called and who exercise it.” But the exercise and application of this apostolate was “diverse – and yet inseparable” – depending on whether they were acting based on “the sacrament of orders” or whether they were “baptised and confirmed.”

The latter exercised “a specific and irreplaceable apostolate in the Church and the world, in their whole life.” Moreover, “non-members of the Church, whether Christian or non-Christian” also shared in this role. Here, the role of Christians was to collaborate in order “to assist them to rediscover and realise the human and divine mission for which they have been created by God and redeemed by Christ.”

This universal lay apostolate was “not limited to the transformation of spirits and hearts,” but also tended towards “the transformation of milieux and secular institutions, from local to international scale” by enabling people, families and societies “to create a human social order which promotes the flourishing of the human race and the universal restoration of the Reign of God.”

In this task, the priestly and lay apostolates were mutually dependent. “Without the priestly apostolate, there is no apostolate of lay people, no apostolic transformation of the life of lay people,” Cardijn noted. But “without the apostolate of lay people, the apostolate is impotent for the human and Christian transformation of the world.” Hence, “the union and collaboration of priests and lay people” was “essential for the unity of the Church and its

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mission, for the flourishing of the whole apostolate and particularly the apostolate of lay people.”

For Cardijn, this collaboration was essential for “ecclesial objectives,” including catechesis, liturgy, sacraments etc. and “temporal, secular objective(s),” involving “the specific life of lay people, in all its aspects,” namely “family, work, leisure, economic security, collaboration in the city, national and international relations, etc.”

**Priests and religious: Animators not directors**

With respect to the ecclesial objectives, lay people were “collaborators of the priestly apostolate.” However, where temporal or secular objectives were involved, priests were “the priestly collaborators of the apostolate of lay people.” In this conception, lay people comprised the front line of the Church.

The decisive role of the priest, then, was not directive but “formative, since it was the priest “who must enable lay people to discover the apostolic scope of their daily life and their task in the organisation of the world.” In turn, this required a new kind of formation “for all priests in their role of educators, animators and counsellors of lay apostles,” Cardijn stated. Thus, a “serious study of the problems that lay people have to resolve in the modern world” needed to be included in seminary and scholastic formation.

Men and women religious had a similar – and increasingly important – role as collaborators in the lay apostolate, particularly in parishes, schools, etc., e.g. in preparing students “for an apostolic conception of their whole life and an authentic apostolic commitment after their studies.” On the other hand, religious should never replace the chaplain-priest, always remaining “auxiliaries and collaborators” of the latter. A fortiori, nor should they replace “the leader or militant in the role which is their own.” Their role was always to assist the (lay) members of apostolic organisations “to discover their apostolic mission, both in ordinary life and the organisation itself.”

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58 Cardijn, “Note 4.”
59 Cardijn, “Note 4.”
“The anguishing problem of youth will only be solved in this manner,” Cardijn concluded. Summarising the above in a “Text for insertion into the Acts of the Council,” he insisted once again on a collaboration model in place of the historical model based on hierarchical submission.

Promoting a genuine lay apostolate would only be possible on the basis of “a positive collaboration between priests and lay people, each respecting the mission of each other, conscious of an indispensable complementarity and with a vision of a final goal: the establishment of the Kingdom of God,” Cardijn concluded.60

Note 5 – The jocist dialectic again

At Castellano’s request, Cardijn (and the JOCI) also prepared another paper, Note 5, entitled “La JOC internationale,” outlining the “fundamentals” of the JOC and its methods, accompanied by a list of relevant pontifical texts. The aim was evidently to characterise the key elements of the JOC’s “authentic” model of Catholic Action.61

Once again this took the form of a reworked jocist dialectic. Thus, the document began by highlighting the Church’s “de facto abandonment” of young workers and the “pastoral problem” that ensued. This contrasted with the jocist ideal of young workers being formed themselves to discover and find solutions to the problems of their own lives.

The “solution” lay in the jocist method of “formation, action, organisation and representation” based on the see-judge-act leading to the transformation of life, milieu and mass by militants “acting as a leaven or yeast” among young workers and in the whole of working life. Here, Cardijn clearly wished to emphasise the holistic nature of the work of the JOC, which maintained “its specific characters” at each level of the movement from local to global as “an organism, an institution of the Church, with the dimensions of the problem of working youth in the world.”62

60 Ibid.
62 Cardijn, “Note 5.”
First series of draft texts

If Cardijn’s first three documents failed to achieve the conceptual breakthroughs he desired, Note 4 at least received a highly positive reception from the Commission, with Glorieux requesting forty-five copies, and Cento and others acknowledging its interest on 20 March 1961.

The following months witnessed a series of new notes by Cardijn on a variety of themes that emerged progressively in the draft texts from the various Sub-Commissions. These continued to hammer his fundamental themes of the lay apostolate of lay people, the animating role of the priest, the imperative need for formation, etc. But they also addressed other points raised by the relevant texts.

Note 6: De missione canonica et mandata hierarchiae: “Could the meaning of this term not be extended,” Cardijn asked, “to a mission which of itself belongs to lay people in the Church, which is proper to them, but the organisation of which is mandated by the Hierarchy?” Rejecting the “monopolisation” accusation again, he argued that the mandate or canonical mission “officially inserts the apostolate and the organisation within that of the Church and makes it an apostolate of the Church, an apostolic institution of the Church.”

Note 7: Religious formation and support for leadership: Cardijn here insisted on the “apostolic responsibilities” of the lay leaders for directing their own movement and spiritual formation. Again, he saw a positive role for religious in assisting lay movements while emphasising that the movements were responsible for their own formation. Thus, religious should not impose their own spirituality on the movement.

Note 8: Reflections on a note from the Commission: Here Cardijn was evidently unhappy with the Commission’s reflections on what he regarded as a disembodied form of “spiritual animation.” “Let us reserve the word ‘animation’ to the spiritual life which wishes to and must transform the whole of temporal action of lay people into apostolate for, by and with

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63 Joseph Cardijn, “Note 6, De missione canonica et mandata hierarchiae,” AC1576.
Christ and the Church,” he proposed. “The whole of catechisis and the whole of pastoral work” should be oriented to the promotion of the lay apostolate, he argued.65

Secondly, he called for a renewal of the sacrament of confirmation to “express and emphasise the importance of the apostolate of the baptised in temporal daily life” and particularly their “own proper and irreplaceable apostolic mission.”

Thirdly, on a terminological level, Cardijn now finally positioned himself in the Catholic Action debate, requesting that the terms “apostolate of lay people” and particularly “Catholic Action” should “be reserved to that proper and irreplaceable apostolate that is the apostolate of lay people in the temporal.”

Why the apparent shift? Cardijn did not explain. However, the fact was that the Commission’s terms of reference had shifted Catholic Action to the centre of its focus. Moreover, as we have seen Catholic Action had become so interwoven with the identity of the JOC, it was virtually impossible to extricate it from that framework.

Cardijn thus aligned himself with the French position on restricting the use of the term Catholic Action as proposed by Garrone in his book L’Action catholique two years before. Yet, even Garrone still understood Catholic Action simply as the action of lay Catholics organised in movements, working for “the coming of the Kingdom of God,” rather than in terms of Cardijn’s conception of lay apostolate.66

“The first and immediate apostles of lay people in life and in lay milieux will be lay people,” Cardijn insisted yet again. Although they shared in the apostolate of prayer, suffering, sacrifice, and devotion with all Christians, they also had a specific apostolate, which was “not that of religious and priests, even though the latter exercise it in a residual manner, either to initiate or to repair its deficiencies, but in which they can never replace lay people, for the good and fruitfulness of the Church.”

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66 Garrone, L’Action catholique, 11.
Clearly, the battle was still far from won, even among his closest allies.

**Note 9: Reflections on several documents**: This short note was the first to openly express Cardijn’s growing frustration with the division of work among the three sub-commissions. “Has the Second Sub-Commission consecrated to social action considered this activity of the JOC?” he asked, referring to the movement’s achievements in forming “social leaders” for all milieux and temporal issues. The JOC had “always affirmed itself as Catholic Action,” he insisted, and was not simply a movement of social action.67

**Note 10: De relatione cum hierarchia**: Here Cardijn’s fully revealed his frustrations. “The drafting of this chapter preoccupies me,” he wrote. “Is there not in this draft a lack of clarity, precision, distinction, logical sequence, openness? Does it not give the impression that the thing that preoccupies the Hierarchy the most is its sovereign power and the submission of lay apostles to this sovereign power? Doesn’t this impression do wrong both to the Hierarchy and to the apostolate of lay people?” he exploded.

What was required was a pastoral, biblical conception of these relations, as embodied in various Gospel passages comparing the pastor the “good shepherd.” “Could this [section] not commence with the notion of service,” he asked. “I did not come to be served but to serve.”

The only solution was to distinguish the various domains in which the authority of the hierarchical apostolate and lay apostolate prevailed: the former in the field of catechesis, sacraments, liturgy, etc. and the latter “in their life, their state of life, their milieux, the problems and institutions of the lay world.” Hence the need for “collaboration, dialogue, respect and mutual confidence between the lay person and the Hierarchy,” Cardijn concluded, again underlining the complementarity of roles.68

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New battlefronts

Suenens, archbishop of Malines

Despite the publication of Mater et Magistra in May 1961, a long road lay ahead in the Commission and at the Council. Unfortunately, as the Rome sub-commissions worked to draft a second series of texts, events conspired to add to Cardijn’s woes.

Three months later on 6 August 1961, Cardinal Van Roey died aged eighty-seven, ending a thirty-five-year episcopate. Although respected for his openness to ecumenical dialogue, his passing inevitably raised hopes of a renewal in the Belgian Church. Since Van Roey had been Flemish, the tradition was that his successor would be francophone, which was probably the raison d’état that prevailed in the appointment of Léon-Joseph Suenens as new archbishop on 24 November 1961.69

Four months later, on 19 March 1962, John XXIII raised him to the cardinalate and on 6 April 1962 made him a member of the Central Preparatory Commission for the Council, a stunning rise.70

For Cardijn, this placed him under the authority of virtually the only Belgian diocesan bishop who was not an ally. Whatever his feelings, Cardijn put them aside. An editorial in the next edition of Notes de pastorale ouvrière welcomed Suenens’s promotion to the cardinalate with “completely filial submission” while the leaders of the “mandated movements” declared their “disposition to work with a renewed ardour to ensure the radiation of Christ in the whole of working life.”71 Beyond the gracious words, they were effectively gently staking their claim to maintain the status quo regarding the position of the Specialised Catholic Action movements.

Nevertheless, tensions continued to mount as Suenens began to clear the decks of those identified with the Van Roey reign.

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69 According to the late Mgr Stefaan Van Calster, Flemish Bishop Emile-Joseph De Smedt of Bruges, a prominent Cardijn disciple, was the Vatican’s preferred choice. In this account, King Baudouin insisted on Suenens. Moreover, Suenens’s Legion of Mary friend, Veronica O’Brien had helped arrange Baudouin’s marriage with his Spanish wife Fabiola.


A setback for Catholic Action?

Amid all this, a young Belgian missionary to Brazil and future liberation theologian, Joseph Comblin, published his first book with the shock title *Echec de l’Action catholique?* (Setback for Catholic Action?). Ordained in 1947, Comblin had missed the Golden Age of the Belgian JOC, which never regained its pre-war glory, particularly in Brussels, although it stayed strong in Flanders and the industrial and mining belts. Comblin’s arrival in Brazil where conservative Catholicism still held sway despite the dynamism of the JOC and other specialised youth movements may also have added to his impression that Catholic Action was facing a setback. Even so, Comblin affirmed that he was “one of those who firmly believe that Catholic Action is the grace of God and the instrument of Jesus Christ, par excellence, that corresponds to this historical moment.” In Comblin’s mind, then, his book was intended as a Teilhardian-inspired search for the basis of a new way of “concretely representing the Church in the ordinary life of Christians.”

Nevertheless, it drew a furious reaction in France. “I did not like the book,” Garrone wrote in a review for the *Mission ouvrière*. “Concerning the beginnings of Catholic Action as they are described here, I doubt that anyone of those involved would recognise the JOC.” “Catholic Action exists,” he concluded. “[It] remains the hope of the Church of tomorrow... [and] bears within the great truth of a Laity filled with apostolic virtue by Baptism and the mission of the Church...” It was a powerful piece that cemented Garrone’s role as the most outspoken defender of Cardijn, the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action.

In Belgium, reaction was more mitigated, with the JOC chaplains’ magazine, *Notes de pastorale ouvrière*, in an unsigned review, welcoming the salutary “shock” the book had aroused and endorsing the need to study the “gap” between the reality of Catholic Action and the hopes of the Church.

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Although Cardijn declined to publicly respond, he did address the issue two years later in the Epilogue to *Laïcs en premières lignes* in terms close to Garrone’s:

People have been wondering whether to talk or not about a failure of Catholic Action. My reply to them is that the question is wrongly placed. My whole experience has shown me that we should rather be asking ourselves: “Have we wanted and prepared, in every possible way, an authentic lay apostolate?”

Yet the appearance of the book indicated the extent to which a new generation of younger Belgian clergy, influenced by Suenens, were moving away from Cardijn.

**The JOCI mobilises**

**An international survey**

Meanwhile, the JOCI continued to mobilise. Thus, Cardijn wrote in February 1961 promoting a participative survey, the results of which were to be forwarded to the PCLA. The results were published in July 1961. Once again, the leaders insisted on the urgency of the worker apostolate and the need for workers to take responsibility for their own struggle. They also emphasised the need for priests to work with the movement, calling for the establishment of “an institution in the government of the Church” to study the issue of lay apostolate in the world and “the promotion of an authentic lay apostolate incarnating the Gospel message in the life of the world today.”

The final document was sent to Felici and to each Preparatory Commission. Several replied encouragingly, including Cardinal Bea and Mgr Willebrands of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, who rejoiced at the JOC’s concern for ecumenism. Interestingly, Ottaviani and Pizzardo responded warmly unlike Sebastian Tromp, the conservative Jesuit secretary of the Theological Commission, who coolly answered that most of the “reflections” of the JOC did not concern his Commission, but that it would nevertheless take into account those that fell within its remit.

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77 Ibid.
Rio World Council

From 2-11 November 1961, ninety national movements attended the JOCI Second International Council in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, ironically just weeks after the publication of Comblin’s book. If the 1930s were the Golden Age of the Belgian JOC, the 1950s were those of Specialised Catholic Action in Brazil, which flourished under the leadership of Helder Camara and an extraordinary cohort of dynamic chaplains and lay leaders. Accompanied by a mass rally at the Maracanã Stadium, the JOCI Council emerged as a major event in the life of the Brazilian Church.

The Council was clearly organised with an eye on Vatican II, as evidenced by a major study prepared for it entitled “The apostolic nature of the JOC.” Drafted by the lay leaders of the JOC International Secretariat, led by outgoing president, Maione, it was again structured around the three truths. This opened with a presentation of “the high calling” of each young worker as “a Son of God” called to share in the “co-creation of God” and “co-redemption with Christ.” But it insisted that “although the JOC start[ed] with the truth of faith,” “the ‘see’ part of the enquiries” provided “the anvil” enabling “the iron of life [to] be shaped by the blacksmith’s hammer.”

The document lamented that “the tendency to consider the JOC only as a social action movement persists.” It criticised the “categorising and classifying [of] the various lay apostolate movements” in terms of (Maritain’s) distinction between Catholic Action and Action of Catholics, (Suenens’s) direct and indirect apostolate, etc. On the contrary, for the individual JOC leader, there could be “no distinction between the direct or indirect apostolate, where unity and indissolubility (sic) of the apostolate are so important.” In addition, the conflict between “to humanise first” or “to Christianise first” was a “false problem.”

“What our critics – having lived for years in an atmosphere of traditional Christianity – fail to realise,” the study concluded, “is that the methods used to spread the good news in traditionally Christian areas might not be effective in regions that have never been Christian or in areas of neo-paganism.”
Adopted a month after Suenens’s appointment as archbishop, the document evidently sought to prepare the incoming JOCI leadership under Brazilian president, Bartolo Perez for the battles ahead.

**Communion fast campaign**

Next, the newly elected International Secretariat launched an enquiry campaign among its member movements “to study how the problem of the Eucharistic fast impacts young workers in your country, particularly on those who, through Catholic Action, discover the meaning of the Eucharist and desire to participate regularly.”

“If you consider that a reduction in the length of the Eucharistic fact [sic] would be advantageous, we request you to urgently take it up with the Hierarchy in your country and to write a letter to the Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of the Sacraments.” This globalised a long campaign by local JOC movements which evidently required a Vatican-level response. Thus, Cardijn himself wrote to Cardinal Masella of the Pontifical Commission on the Discipline of the Sacraments seeking the reduction of the fast to one hour.⁷⁸

Meanwhile, Perez and the new team began to systematically compile a list of bishops “friendly” to the JOC.

**The second series of texts**

**Activity intensifies**

While these events occupied Cardijn for the latter part of 1961, the PCLA continued its work on a second series of draft texts that aroused Cardijn’s concern. Thus, on 29 December 1961, he wrote to Garrone, communicating “the anguish that I feel” upon receiving the latest texts from the three Sub-Commissions.

⁷⁸ Cardijn to Cardinal Masella, 27/02/1962, AC1626.
“The further I go, the more frightened I am by the ignorance and the almost carelessness of the clergy regarding the apostolate of lay people, and the secular issues... that they must face as Christians,” Cardijn complained, in what seemed like another shot at Suenens.  

Garrone replied reassuringly on 10 January 1962 that “you could see during our last meeting how much I share your preoccupations.” Moreover, he indicated that Glorieux was in the process of forming a “small team” that would work “somewhat privately” to improve the texts.  

Slowly, reaction was brewing.

Cardijn’s anguish

Note 11 – Reflections on three texts

But Cardijn’s anxiety continued to grow as he responded to the successive PCLA drafts. The three texts that preoccupied him in his letter to Garrone concerned lay apostolate, social action and charitable action.

The document on lay apostolate was “confused.” Instead of the lay apostolate, it was “in fact consecrated for the most part to the apostolate of the faithful.” Even the draft chapter on the family failed to win Cardijn’s approval because it failed to address the context in which people lived.

Nor was the document on social action any better. “Doesn’t it cause concern and misunderstanding to separate the presentation on social action from that on lay apostolate?” Cardijn asked again. As for charitable action, this section failed to tackle the justice dimension of the problem. “Isn’t it necessary... to organise the assistance necessary to ensure to men of all races and all continents a more human and dignified life?”

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79 Cardijn to Garrone, 29/12/1961, AC1586.  
80 Gabriel-Marie Garrone to Cardijn, 10/01/1962, AC1586.  
82 Ibid., Chap. I, № 10 – Chap. II, № 16; Chap. III & IV, № 21 to 31.  
83 Ibid., Chap. V, № 32 to 40.
The only solution, Cardijn insisted, was to preface all of this with a “text setting out what is the specific role of lay people in the apostolate of the Church.” Thus, he proposed that “the text include a solemn appeal by the Council which would commit the whole Church to promote the apostolate of the laity and the personal and collective formation of all those who must become involved by all possible means.” A small team should be formed with this objective, he suggested, offering direction to Glorieux’s efforts.

**Notes 12-15 – The essential, specific and irreplaceable apostolate of lay people**

Cardijn’s concern over the following months only grew stronger, as Notes 12-15 demonstrated. Note 12 repeated Cardijn’s overwhelming concern for recognition of the specifically lay apostolate, linking it the biblical mission set out in Genesis I, 26-31.  

“This primordial mission of man and humanity was vitiated by original sin and by actual sins that led to ignorance, error, corruption, injustice and under-development,” Cardijn wrote. Thus, the specific mission of the lay person consisted “in rediscovering the divine and proper mission of humanity and rejoining it to the mystery of the Creation and the Redemption.” This was the “*consecratio mundi*” of which Pius XII spoke so often.

“I continue to regret that there is no chapter devoted to the specific (proper) apostolate of lay people, to its necessity and its importance in the world, for the construction of a world ‘as God wills it’ and for the realisation of a truly fraternal society at the measure of the present world,” he added in Note 15.

He called again for the Council to make “AN IMPRESSIVE DECLARATION” that affirmed that the Church was “ready for a unanimous participation in the efforts necessary to make justice, charity and peace reign among all people, of all races and all opinions, would be a testimony for the whole world.”

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84 Joseph Cardijn, “Note 12, L’apostolat essentiel des laïcs,” 09/01/1962, AC1577.
85 Cardijn, “Note 12.”
86 Joseph Cardijn, “Note 15, Apostolat formellement laïc et matériellement laïc,” 09/03/1962, AC1577. (Cardijn’s emphasis.)
Nor did a new effort to distinguish between the “formally lay apostolate of lay people” and the “materially lay apostolate of lay people” allay his concerns. What mattered was not theoretical distinctions, but that lay people must “become Catholics in the full sense of the word.”

Hence the Commission should request the Council to “solemnly confirm the value that the Church gives to their formally lay apostolate and its desire to see them become more and more involved.” Moreover, a Vatican dicastery should be established to pursue this end.

Note 16 – De Apostolatu Laicorum in Communitate Ecclesia

In Note 16 criticising the draft document “De Apostolatu Laicorum in Communitate Ecclesia,” Cardijn revealed once again how different was his perspective.

For a parish to “become increasingly a mission community,” it needed to reach “the various milieux.” This was because, in the modern world, workers left the parish milieu daily “to work in a professional milieu outside and far from the parish, which is usually unknown to parish clergy.” Many parishes had become “dormitory parishes” and “weekend parishes,” the number of which continued to multiply with the development of industry and major urban centres. The organisation of the lay apostolate needed to take this into account.

This need for specialisation also applied to young people, who “have their own problems and must resolve them themselves and be the apostles of their companions,” Cardijn argued, citing François Houtart. Moreover, this applied to every professional milieu, Cardijn concluded.

87 Cardijn “Note 15.” Cardijn’s emphasis.
89 Cardijn, “Note 16.”
90 François Houtart, “Les jeunes dans un monde en devenir” in Revue nouvelle, 15/03/1962, 225-239.
The draft “Constitutio de apostolatu laicorum”

A flawed document

The final draft “Constitution on the lay apostolate” was completed in April 1962, less than eighteen months after the first full Commission meeting. Later it would be regarded as one of the best of the pre-conciliar schemas but Cardijn was not happy. As Glorieux recognised, “it was Mgr Cardijn who insisted that we determined the specific role of lay people in accomplishing the mission of the Church.” Several texts “attempted to define it, but in vain,” he noted, verifying Cardijn’s major critique.

The truth was that, from Cardijn’s perspective, the whole enterprise was compromised from the outset by the structuring of the three Sub-Commissions, which led to a very clerical, inward-looking schema, organised as follows:

a) General Introduction

b) Part I: General Notions, divided into ten chapters including “Relations of the laity with the Hierarchy,” “Lay people serving the Church in special positions” and “The family as a subject of the apostolate,” titles which clearly illuminated the thinking that still dominated the Commission.

c) Part II: The apostolate of the laity in the service of the direct promotion of the reign of Christ, drafted by the Sub-Commission in which Cardijn had participated, was divided into two “Titles” dealing with “The forms of organised apostolate” with a generally, strong “ecclesial” focus and “The different forms and domains,” including chapters on “The apostolate of the word” and “The apostolate of the family.” Nevertheless, some jocist influence was evident in references to “the apostolate of youth,” “the apostolate in one’s own professional and social milieu.”

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92 Ibid., 102.
d) **Part III: The apostolate of the laity in charitable works** presented in 36 articles “the nature and field of charitable works” without neglecting to include a chapter on “justice and charitable works.”

e) **Part IV: The apostolate of the laity in social action** was divided into two “Titles” opening with chapters on “lay action to direct and perfect the natural order” alongside the inevitable chapter on “relations of the laity with the hierarchy.” A chapter on “formation of the laity” no doubt pleased Cardijn while Title II added chapters on contemporary issues concerning the family, education, women at work and in society, economic and social life, science and art, civic life, state affairs and the international order.

Even though, according to Glorieux, the Commission had formally abandoned the distinction between “direct” and “indirect” forms of apostolate, it persisted in the structure of the document.  

Similarly, although Glorieux credited Cardijn’s insistence on the specifically lay apostolate as having inspired the schema’s “descriptive” approach to the characterisation of the lay role, this too remained trapped within the structure of a “works”-dominated conception of lay action.

**Old wineskins**

Despite its flaws, the draft Constitution was not a total wreck. The “General Introduction,” for example, immediately began to characterise the Church as “the People of God,” “a holy people” and “royal priesthood”; only in second instance did it deal with “the Sacred Hierarchy” (§2). There was a “greater awareness of the fact that the laity are the Church” (§3). Moreover, the fields that “await the apostolate of the laity” had been “immensely extended by scientific and technical progress” and the Church’s mission here was “increasingly urgent.”

Paragraph 37 extolled the “Christian dignity of work” and encouraged workers to “daily take Christ with them into their factories, fields, workshops and offices” in words closely

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94 Ibid.
reflecting the traditional JOC prayer. Thus, “economic and social structures” needed to be established to “ensure that the modes and forms of labour are compatible with the dignity of the sons of God,” another passage echoing Cardijn’s concerns. Similarly, §41 called for the faithful “to take an active part in public life,” adding in §42 that laity “cooperate in the formation of a world community” and penetrate it “with the healthful leaven of the Gospel.”

This in turn implied the need for Christian formation (§44) (based on the see-judge-act) in which:

> [l]ay people should be made aware of the circumstances of the environment in which they are living and working, that they should learn to bring a Christian judgement to bear on these circumstances and to adopt in them a worthy behaviour.\(^95\)

Glorieux, too, recognised the significance of this section drafted by Cardijn’s Sub-Commission, which contained “very clear affirmations with respect to the duty of the apostolate.” It exhorted lay people not to be “solely concerned with their own salvation” but to “understand the duty of the apostolate.” Moreover, it linked these perspectives to “the whole question of formation.”

From the beginning the PCLA also sought to clarify the meaning of the word “lay,” Glorieux wrote. Seeking to go beyond a “wholly negative definition,” it looked at the dignity of the baptised person within the people of God, the rights and duties of each person in the Church, the work of edification of the Mystical Body of Christ, in the ordinary conditions of family and social life.” Thus, it edged towards clarifying “the role that pertains more specifically to lay people in the one apostolic mission of the Church,” Glorieux noted.\(^96\) In the development of these points – baptismal basis of mission, formation, dignity of the person, people of God, specific role of lay people – Cardijn certainly played a key role.

Regarding the hot potato issue of Catholic Action, §53 listed four “marks” by which it could be identified, which, as Glorieux noted with a sense of satisfaction, survived to be included largely unchanged in the final conciliar decree.

\(^95\) Ibid.
Perhaps the best section of the draft Constitution, however, was Part IV on social action, drafted under the leadership of Hengsbach and Pavan. This acknowledged that lay people have “a greater role in building up, for Christ’s glory, the temporal order (§84),” even referring to this as “a specific task of lay people.” Here again it referred to the need for formation “through action.” Much of the content of Part IV would later be included in Schema XIII, the future Gaudium et Spes.97

In all, there were many excellent elements in the draft Constitution. Perhaps the real problem lay in the fact that, constrained by its terms of reference, the Commission struggled to contain new wine in old wineskins.

**The Central Preparatory Commission**

On 18-19 June 1962, the “1962 Schema” was finalised after review by the Central Preparatory Commission. Criticisms included “unclear” principles, an “overly negative concept of the laity,” “insufficient stress on the dependence of the (lay) apostolate on the hierarchy,” as well as the schema’s “concept of priesthood” and the “unsuitability” of mentioning charisms of the laity.98

The most significant proposed change was for the term “the apostolate of the laity” to become the “genus proximum” for all lay apostolic organisations, while Catholic Action, as well as other religious, charitable and social organisations, would be regarded as the various “species of the apostolatus officialis laicorum. Naturally, this did not please Cardijn, who continued to fight for recognition of a “specifically lay apostolate for lay people.”

From within the CPC, the most critical comments came, unsurprisingly, from the now-Cardinal Suenens,99 who expressed “regret that the schema had not adopted a renewed

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97 Ibid.
98 Klostermann, “Decree,” 274.
99 De emendatione schematis Constitutionis de apostolatu laicorum (Vatican: Typis Polyglottis Vaticaniis, 1962), 12-17.
understanding of Catholic Action.” According to Klostermann, however, Suenens’s suggestions were “unambiguously rejected” by the PCLA, which held firm.

Unimpressed, Suenens later complained in an unofficial note to the conciliar Lay Apostolate Commission that his suggestions had been approved by the CPC but not implemented. Although there is no evidence that Cardijn was responsible for this rejection, it won him no favour with his new archbishop.

Final steps

We are the Church

In public, Cardijn maintained a positive outlook. The Council will be “like a new Pentecost,” he wrote in the JOCI Bulletin, appealing to movement leaders to become even “more conscious of our own responsibility in the Church and in the world” because “we are this Church.” The JOCI too called on leaders to offer prayers, sacrifices and “the whole of jocist action” for the success of the Council. Elsewhere, Cardijn’s Belgian episcopal allies, Bishop Himmer of Tournai and Bishop Emile-Joseph De Smedt of Bruges launched participatory JOC-style enquiries regarding expectations for the Council in their own dioceses.

After consulting with Cardijn, De Smedt issued his remarkable pastoral letter dated 25 April 1961 entitled The Priesthood of the Faithful, noting that while the role of the Christian people had been “seriously re-evaluated” in recent times, “not everything had been cleared up” in relation to the principles of the lay apostolate. A year later it was published in English.

101 Klostermann, “Decree,” 274.
102 Ibid., 282.
104 Ibid.
106 Archives De Smedt, Bruges Diocese.
This was just the latest in a series of books, papers and articles by jocist-linked priests. Palémon Glorieux, soon to become Cardinal Liénart’s conciliar adviser, was preparing his *Nature et mission de l’Eglise*, published in early 1963. This was likely conceived at least partly in response to Suenens’s *Eglise en état de mission* with Glorieux emphasising the “privileged” role of the lay person acting effectively “in daily life” to transform the milieux and conditions of life, which only he or she was “capable of implementing,” acting – unlike the priest – on his or her “proper terrain.”

In Spain, the Catalan JOC founder, Alberto Bonet, also a member of the PCLA, in 1959 published his “Apostología laical. I. Los principios del apostolado seglar” followed in 1962 by the second edition of his *Manuel de Accion Catolica*, promoting Specialised Catholic Action. Meanwhile, two German JOC (CAJ) chaplains, Norbert Greinacher and Theodor Seeger published a 1959 book entitled *Die Frobotschaft Christi im Reiche der Arbeit* (The Gospel of Christ in the field of labour), including a preface by Cardijn, and featuring articles by a list of jocist-oriented writers and chaplains, including Haubtmann, Houtart, Chenu, Ancel, and Joseph Bécaud. Other books were also in the pipeline.

**Cardijn’s contribution**

Meanwhile, Cardijn continued to travel, with perhaps even more urgency than ever. He began 1962 with a tour of Germany, followed by short trips to the UK and Switzerland before a summer tour of Canada and the USA that concluded just two months before the opening of the Council.

On the eve of his eightieth birthday, he began to compile his first book, which was published in 1963 with the French title borrowed from the words of Pius XII, *Laïcs en premières lignes*.

Clearly, Cardijn and the jocist network were anticipating a battle. In this struggle, the dialectical template that he had proposed – Church, world, lay apostolate – would remain the centre of his advocacy and eventually have a decisive impact.

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Part III

Cardijn and the Jocist Network at the Council
Chapter 7 – The Council opens without Cardijn

Introduction

“[They’re] crazy! Jocism inspires and dominates the Council. Pressing call to stay and return,” an astounded Cardijn scribbled in his notebook following his meeting with Bishops José Tavora, Helder Camara and Manuel Larrain at the Domus Mariae Hotel after arriving in Rome on 18 November 1962. Having missed the first weeks of Vatican II, Cardijn had good reason to be astonished.1

Two months earlier, he had suffered a major blow when he was omitted from the list of 201 periti appointed on 24 September 1962. After his prodigious efforts in the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate and the success of Mater et Magistra, he now found himself excluded from the Council’s work.

Was it an oversight, a deliberate decision, or simply the fact that Cardijn, who had never claimed to be a theologian, was about to turn eighty? Who made the decision? Was it the Council secretariat, the Central Preparatory Commission or even Pope John? Was Suenens involved? Whatever the reason, it was a huge disappointment that emerged as the JOCI Executive Committee was about to meet in Berlin, a venue strategically chosen to make an impression on the German bishops.

As always, Cardijn endeavoured to respond positively. Together with the JOCI leaders, Bartolo Perez and Betty Villa, he wrote directly to John XXIII on 8 October assuring him that movement leaders were offering up their work – and sometimes their “lack of work” – for the success of the Council.2 In this gentlest possible way, they signalled their dismay. Three days later, as members of an official lay delegation,3 Perez and another JOC leader (probably Villa) flew to Rome for the 11 October opening of the long-awaited First Session in the presence of 2540 bishops.4 Ever the diplomat, Cardijn himself did not come.

2 JOCI to Pope John XXIII, 05/10/1963: AJ 6.3.1
3 Achille Glorieux to Streiff, 29/09/1962, Archives Streiff, St11, 464.
4 Daybook, I, 24.
When he finally arrived six weeks later ostensibly to “consult with bishops about the JOC,” it was a huge and gratifying surprise to learn from Tavora, Camara and Larrain of the extraordinary role that the jocist bishops were playing. While Cardijn was absent, Liénart, Frings, Chenu, Congar, Garrone, Guerry, Ancel, De Smedt, as well as the Latin Americans, so many bishops and theologians who had worked with him in the foundation years of the JOC, had queued up to give the Council an unmistakable jocist imprint.

First General Congregation: Liénart upends the agenda

The first business session, or First General Congregation of the Council, took place on Saturday 13 October. The opening item was the election of sixteen Council Fathers to each of the ten conciliar commissions. Before Tisserant, the session president, could begin, however, Cardinal Liénart rose to make a statement that would upend the Council’s work.

Like many others, Liénart was unhappy with most draft schemas. As he later recalled, the objective, as defined by John XXIII, was not “to formulate new doctrinal definitions, but rather to present, in a form better adapted to modern minds, all the truths already established... that [the Church] had the mission of transmitting to every generation.” This meant, Liénart believed, that the gathered bishops had to develop “une pensée commune” – “a common way of thinking” – as a basis for “the total revision of their pastoral attitudes and to engage the Church in the new way where its permanent mission called it today?”

Consequently, the choice of the “the most qualified” commission members was of the greatest importance. But how to identify them if they did not know each other, he asked:

Abruptly, I leaned towards the Cardinal president to tell him in a low voice: “Eminence, it is truly impossible to vote like this... If you allow me, I am going to take the microphone.” “I cannot give it to you,” he replied... So, I said to him, “Excuse me but I am going to speak...”.

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5 Achille Liénart, “Vatican II” in Mélanges de Science Religieuse, 33, Numéro Supplémentaire (1963):
6 Ibid., 64.
I rose... to request that a reasonable time be given so we could better inform ourselves of the best election candidates.... Cardinal Frings, archbishop of Cologne, who was sitting beside me at the presidency table, also rose to offer his support and the applause doubled.7

This forced the hand of the presidency breaching the stranglehold that the Roman Curia had exercised over the Council. Although Liénart denied that his intervention was “a coup planned ahead,” other bishops had approached him, and even provided him with draft texts for his intervention, including his compatriots Cardinal Joseph-Charles Lefebvre, Garrone and Ancel.8 Camara apparently also wanted a postponement,9 while others such as the South African Denis Hurley “knew what was brewing.”10

Rather than a “conspiracy,” this more likely flowed from a convergence of thought and action of men who had long collaborated to promote Specialised Catholic Action based on the Cardijn model. It was just the first of many examples to follow.

Message to the world

Eight days later at the Third General Congregation on 20 October, following a debate including more than forty interventions, the Council adopted its first text, a “Message to the World” entitled Nuntius ad omnes homines et nationes. Dominican MD Chenu first proposed the message in a 4 September 1962 letter to the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner. Similarly, to Cardijn’s own proposal in the PCLA for such a message, Chenu called for an “ample declaration... in the style of the Gospel” and “in the prophetic perspectives of the Old and New Testaments”:

A declaration addressed to humanity where grandeur and distress are... an aspiration for the light of the Gospel and the presence of God the Creator.... A declaration proclaiming the fraternal unity of men, beyond frontiers, races, regimes, – in a refusal of violent solutions, in love of peace, testifying the Kingdom of God.11

9 Ibid., 32.
11 Quoted by André Duval, “Le message au monde” in Fouilloux, “The Ante-Preparatory Phase,” in
In his journal, Chenu even claimed that “this initiative was inspired.” He immediately communicated it to several bishops, most of whom had close links with the SCA movements. But the draft text, which he had discussed with Congar, was regarded as based too much on “natural morality.” “[T]his was normal terrain for dialogue with non-believers, but it had no chance of being accepted by a Council,” according to Guerry. “The draft made no mention of the Saviour. It therefore had to be discarded.”

Liénart, Guerry, Garrone and Ancel thus reworked the text although not to the satisfaction of Chenu, who criticised its “division between nature and grace.” In the end, he lamented, it had been “drenched in holy water.” Congar agreed that the text was “more dogmatic” than Chenu’s and felt it suffered from shades of paternalism. At this stage of the Council, though, the priority was to find a text acceptable to the Fathers. Thus, Felici presented the revised message “as a proposal of the Council of Presidents approved by the Pope.”

“We urgently turn our thoughts to all the anxieties by which human beings are afflicted today,” the Declaration read, anticipating Gaudium et Spes in its concern for the “lowly, poor and weak.”

“Like Christ, we would have pity on the multitude weighed down with hunger, misery, and lack of knowledge,” it continued, insisting on the need to help people “achieve a way of life worthy of human beings.” It emphasised “whatever concerns the dignity of the human person, whatever contributes to a genuine community of peoples,” in a line that the Cardijn movements had championed for nearly forty years.

Despite its limits, the message “played the very important role,” as Andrea Riccardi noted, “of accentuating the Church’s expression of sympathy for the world” while several ecclesiological themes it raised “would become supremely important during the Council.”

13 Ibid., II, 117.
14 Ibid., II, 115.
16 Ibid., II, 52.
17 Ibid., II, 53.
Organising the work

Doctrinal and Lay Apostolate Commissions

Meanwhile, the postponed elections for the Conciliar Commissions took place on 16 October, with the results announced on 20 October. To the 160 elected bishops, John XXIII added nine appointed members bringing the total number in each commission to twenty-five. On 22 October, he also raised the Secretariat for Christian Unity to the status of a Commission, confirming the members of the preparatory secretariat in their new roles.\footnote{Riccardi, “The Opening Days,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 44.}

Although there was no jocist “ticket,” the results revealed a significant representation of movement-linked bishops in nearly every Commission. This was particularly so in the all-important Doctrinal Commission on Faith and Morals (Doctrinal Commission) and in the Lay Apostolate Commission (LAC), which now had the clumsy, formal title of Commission on the Apostolate of the Faithful, Press and Public Spectacles \[sic\], which each numbered at least eight such bishops.

Doctrinal Commission

**Elected**

- Gabriel-Marie Garrone, longstanding proponent of the JOC
- Joseph Schroeffler, who participated in the IYCW Rome pilgrimage in 1957
- Alfredo Scherer, a JOC supporter from Brazil
- Paul Emile Léger, a Canadian proponent of the SCA movements
- André-Marie Charue, who had links with the Belgian JOC back to 1924
- Marcos McGrath CSC, Holy Cross father and JOC patron in Panama
- Maurice Roy, pioneer JOC chaplain, cousin of Quebec JOC founder, Henri Roy

**Appointed**

- Bishop Georges Pelletier, Canadian bishop closely linked to the SCA movements
**Lay Apostolate Commission**

**Elected members**

Manuel Larrain, pioneer of Specialised Catholic Action in Chile  
Franz Hengsbach, bishop of Essen, seat of the German JOC/CAJ  
Jacques Ménager, bishop responsible for Catholic Action movements in France  
John E. Petit, an English bishop close to the YCW  
Joseph Blomjous, of Dutch origin, supporter of the SCA movements in Tanzania  
Paul Yu Pin, JOC pioneer in China before coming to Formosa (Taiwan)  
Gerardus De Vet, director of (Specialised) Catholic Action, Breda, Netherlands

**Appointed**

René Stourm, an early JOC chaplain in France

This gave the jocist bishops close to a third of the numbers in each of these commissions, with the former responsible for the future *Lumen Gentium*, and both responsible for the eventual *Gaudium et Spes*. Other members of the LAC also supported the JOC and Specialised Catholic Action to varying extents, including Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez, the Salesian archbishop of Santiago, who admired Cardijn, Emiliano Guano, a former IMCS-Pax Romana chaplain from Italy, as well as Castellano and Luigi Civardi from Italian Catholic Action. The Doctrinal Commission also included Vienna Cardinal Franz König, who had known Cardijn for decades particularly through the Pax Romana network.

A notable absentee in the LAC, however, was Cardijn’s Belgian ally, Charles-Marie Himmer, whose nomination had been opposed by Suenens, who confirmed this in a 16 October 1962 letter to Veronica O’Brien of the Legion of Mary:

> In any event, the 65 Belgian missionary bishops are behind me – which is not the case for the seven here (i.e. the seven diocesan bishops)... I felt this in De Smedt’s manoeuvres which aimed to place Himmer on the list of candidates for the Catholic Action Commission (i.e. Lay Apostolate Commission). I told him privately that I did not agree with the idea but he publicly returned to the charge for him to be included
Indeed, Suenens was “very isolated among the Belgian bishops on account of his ideas of the lay apostolate,” as Congar noted, although he remained undeterred in his campaign against the alleged “monopolisation” of Catholic Action.\(^\text{20}\)

**Other Commissions**

Promisingly, every other commission also included a jocist presence.

**Bishops and Government of Dioceses**

- Emile Guerry, another French JOC pioneer
- Pierre Veuillot, previously in the Holy See, connected to France’s Mission ouvrière

**Discipline and Sacraments**

- Alexandre Renard, Liénart protégé, involved in the Ecole Missionaire du Travail in Lille

**Discipline of the Clergy and the Christian People**

- Guillaume Van Zuylen, bishop of Liège, Belgium
- Agnelo Rossi, JUC/JIC chaplain from Brazil
- François Marty, JOC/JAC chaplain in France
- Thomas Cooray omi, Colombo, Sri Lanka

**Religious**

- Gerard Huyghe, bishop of Arras, another Liénart protégé and promoter of SCA
- Jean Janssens SJ, the Jesuit Superior General and close friend of Cardijn

**Missions**

- Guy Riobé, bishop of Orleans, JAC chaplain and promoter of JOC and ACO
- Jean Zoa, bishop of Yaoundé, Cameroon, former JOC chaplain

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Cardinal Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira, a Cardijn disciple since the 1930s

**Liturgy**
Henri Jenny, Sillon sympathiser from Lille, and auxiliary bishop to Guerry at Cambrai
Joseph Malula, JOC chaplain from Congo Kinshasa
Enrique Rau, former national chaplain of JOC Argentina
Bernardo Fey Schneider, former national chaplain of JOC Bolivia

**Seminaries, Studies and Catholic Education**
Ramon Bogarin, JOC founder in Paraguay
Denis Hurley omi, Cardijn disciple from South Africa
Emile Blanchet, participated in 1950 JOC Internationale congress, Brussels
Justin Simonds, Melbourne co-adjutor and long-time JOC supporter

**Christian Unity**
Emile-Joseph De Smedt, former JOCF chaplain and close to Cardijn

**Oriental Churches**
Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV Saigh

**Leadership**

These commissions had the massive task of working through the seventy schemas totalling 2,000 folio-sized pages produced by the preparatory commissions – more than double the quantity of texts produced by all previous councils, as Joseph Ratzinger noted. The job of charting a path through this material fell initially to two formal leadership groups:

The Council of Presidents: Tisserant, Liénart, Tappouni, Gilroy, Spellman, Frings, Ruffini, Caggiano, Alfrink, Meyer, Wyszinski and Siri;

The Coordinating Commission: Cicognani, Liénart, Spellman, Urbani,

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Here again, promoters and fellow travellers of the SCA movements were not lacking, including Liénart, Frings, Caggiano, Alfrink and Meyer in the Council of Presidents and Döpfner in the Coordinating Commission. Among the Curial cardinals, Secretary of State Cicognani, Agagianian and Tisserant had always shown themselves well-disposed to the JOC.

This left only Gilroy, who had never allowed the YCW in his Sydney archdiocese, perhaps Ruffini, and of course Suenens; who had somehow succeeded in gaining the ear of John XXIII, despite the latter’s promise to support Catholic Action even more than Popes Pius XI and Pius XII.

In addition to the above formal roles, certain natural leaders were already emerging within the assembly, beginning with Liénart and Frings. According to journalist, Henri Fesquet, the shake-up provoked by their earlier intervention had continued to spread “like concentric ripples in a lake.” Indeed, this was an apt characterisation of the jocist method of achieving influence. Among those who showed signs of “marking the Council by the influence of their personalities,” Fesquet identified: König (Vienna), Frings, Döpfner (Munich), Alfrink (Utrecht), Léger, Montini, Béa, Suenens, and Liénart. Others like Camara, Larrain, D’Souza would soon emerge.

While not exhaustive, Fesquet’s list hinted at the role that the jocist and SCA bishops would continue to play.

The bishops organise themselves

A variety of groups

Meanwhile, the conciliar bishops rapidly began to organise their own formal or informal

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22 Although Congar quotes Larrain as saying Caggiano’s conception of Catholic Action, like Civardi’s, was as “a kind of replica of Fascism”: Congar, My Journal, 37.
24 Ibid., 45.
25 Ibid., 45.
meetings and groups on a variety of geographical, thematic or ideological bases. Historian Hilari Raguer identified ten such groups, including:

- *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, a conservative group in which Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, originally from Lille, would play a key role;

- *Jésus, L’Eglise et les pauvres* group, known as the *Church of the Poor* group;

- *Central European Bloc* or *World Alliance*, a loose grouping of bishops, including Belgians, Dutch, Germans and later bishops of other regions;

- *Conference of Delegates*, another loose grouping of progressives from various national groups;

- *Zealot Faction* in the Roman Curia, mainly Curial conservatives;

- *French group*, based on the French bishops but collaborating with francophone bishops from Belgium, Switzerland, Africa, Canada, etc.

- *Latin American group*

- *Missionary bishops*, dominated by bishops from Belgium, Netherlands, France and Canada.\(^{26}\)

Other groups included the religious superiors, bishops belonging to religious congregations, and missionary bishops.

Within these groups, the influence of jocist bishops was most significant among the progressives. It was particularly dominant in the French group (at least 83 out of 138) plus at least eighteen more out of forty-odd francophone Canadian (Quebec) bishops, and Brazilians, all of whom had direct experience with the JOC and/or other SCA movements.

\(^{26}\) Hilari Raguer, “An Initial Profile of the Assembly,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 194-221.
Although jocist-oriented bishops generally comprised a much smaller proportion of the Latin American bishops, they occupied many of the leadership positions with personalities such as Larrain, Camara and Bogarin particularly prominent. Archbishop Pierre Veuillot, who worked closely with the Mission ouvrière in France, usually presided over the World Alliance group meetings, indicating a likely significant jocist influence in this group as well.  

Review of life with the Jesus, the Church and the Poor Group

However, the international group that most approximated a grouping of jocist bishops was the Church of the Poor group. This began with a meeting at the Belgian College on 26 October on the subject, “Jesus, the Church and the Poor,” which was the title of a book about to be published by Paul Gauthier, a French worker priest working with Arabic communities in Galilee, Israel.  

As indicated by a 1966 request to Cardijn to write a preface for another book, Gauthier also had links to the JOC.  

Convoked by Himmer and Bishop George Hakim of Galilee, the meeting took place under the presidency of another Cardijn ally, Cardinal Pierre-Marie Gerlier. Others with strong SCA connections included Georges Béjot (JOC), Guy Riobé (JOC/JAC), both French, and the Brazilian Antonio Fragoso (JOC) while Camara and Ancel excused themselves as did Patriarch Maximos IV.

The objective was to consider how to develop the theme of poverty within the Council. The working group that emerged thus adopted the title of Gauthier’s book becoming known as the Jesus, the Church and the Poor or the Church of the Poor group. Later it requested the patronage of Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro, who in effect replaced the ailing Gerlier, and whose intervention on 6 December 1962 also helped set the orientation of the Council.  

Of an undated list of 112 bishops and theologians who took part in this group, which
continued to meet throughout the Council, at least twenty-nine had connections with the SCA
movements. At least eight out of fifteen members of the “Animation Committee” also had a
jocist background. A list of speakers who addressed the group, including Chenu, Congar,
Houtart, Ancel and Jean Rodhain, further evidenced its jocist spirit.31

By far the most significant indicator here, however, was the fact that the group followed the
jocist practice of “review of life” in its deliberations, starting with concrete “facts” from their
own personal experience, reflecting on the Gospel and seeking to apply it to their own lives
as bishops. This led to some remarkable individual commitments.

In July 1963, Hakim reported that he had bought an ordinary car and donated the price
difference to a bank for the poor. Vietnamese Bishop Philippe Nguyen Kim Dien abandoned
his episcopal palace, Bishop Gregorios of India converted his home into a hostel, while
Larrain transformed his palace into a house for the poor and sold 180 hectares of episcopal
land at low cost to a local cooperative. This practice continued throughout the Council with
bishops committing “to make a gesture after returning home.”32

The bishops also committed themselves to community level action, including a proposal by
Camara to establish a “Bank of Providence” for the poor, while another proposed to set up a
retirement scheme for poor bishops, etc. Group members thus sought to practically
implement a concrete commitment to the poor that went far beyond the words of solidarity
that they were seeking to insert in the conciliar documents.

Moreover, their practice of seeing, judging and acting themselves helped prepare the way for
the adoption of this methodology in *Gaudium et Spes* and other conciliar documents. Little
wonder that Tavora, Camara and Larrain rejoiced at the jocist influence on the Council, an
influence they would honour with a special Mass for Cardijn during the Fourth Session.

31 Stefan Gigacz, “Participants in the Vatican II group, ‘Jésus, L’Eglise et les pauvres’.”
Key interventions by the jocist bishops

The liturgy

Amid the initial fray, it was decided to begin the formal conciliar debates on 21 October with the schema on the liturgy, *De sacra liturgia*, thought likely to be among the least controversial subjects as well as being the best schema of the seven that were distributed prior to the Council.33

Once again, it was Liénart and Frings along with Tisserant, Ruffini and Alfrink, who, at the meeting of the Council of Presidents on 15 October, voted to begin the discussion with the liturgy.35 It would prove to be a master stroke.

The preparatory schema had already gone a long way to promoting a more participatory Eucharistic celebration as the JOC and other lay movements had sought. Once the debates got under way, the jocist bishops continued to make their presence felt. “May the Council Fathers who are not involved in ministry remember that a great number of Christians only rarely over the course of their lives enter a church,” Ancel counselled. “Is it by speaking Latin that we will be able to reach them?” he asked.36 Two weeks later, on 12 November, another ex-JOC chaplain, Cardinal Feltin called for Easter to be fixed on the same date each year to facilitate the participation of the faithful, particularly those on a schedule such as students.37

According to the journalist Henri Fesquet, “the interventions that produced the greatest impression on the Fathers were those which sought the simplification of liturgical vestments,” including one by Larrain, who called for the Church to take into account “the poverty of the under-developed countries, as well as the social concerns expressed by the encyclicals” and abandon the “shocking luxury of its temples and its liturgical vestments.”38 He was backed up by yet another jocist bishop, Paul Gouyon, who appealed for “greater

36 Fesquet, Journal, 63-64.
38 Ibid., 103.
simplicity,” including the abandonment of the ostentatious “cappa magna.”

Revelation

Ottaviani presented the schema on Revelation for debate on 14 November, lauding the pastoral value of the schema since it was based on truth, which remained always and everywhere the same.\textsuperscript{39} Pushback from the Council floor was immediate, led once again by Liénart’s immediate \textit{non placet},\textsuperscript{40} supported by Alfrink, Frings, Bea, König, Suenens, Léger, Ritter and Patriarch Maximos IV.\textsuperscript{41}

As deadlock emerged, it was Ancel who proposed that Pope John might appoint additional experts from the opposing school of thought to prepare a completely new schema.\textsuperscript{42} Now another Cardijn ally took the floor, namely De Smedt, who criticised the lack of ecumenical spirit in the draft schema. In a statement that met with thunderous applause, he warned that “if the schemas prepared by the Theological Preparatory Commission are not drafted in a different manner, we shall be responsible for having crushed, through the Second Vatican Council, a great and immense hope.”\textsuperscript{43}

It was during this debate that a purported opposition between “doctors” (teachers) and “pastors” began to be articulated. This drew a swift response from the French bishops, who aware that they were regarded as favouring the pastoral approach, wanted to eliminate any misunderstanding. “The separation between doctrine and pastoral is inadmissible,” stated Archbishop Guerry in an interview with \textit{La Croix}:

\begin{quote}
It is a mistake. It weighs like an ambiguity on the Council because it risks ending up by dividing the Council Fathers into two groups: on one side, those who faithfully safeguard and defend doctrine; on the other, pastors concerned primarily with fulfilling their pastoral (mission)…”\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{39} Wiltgen, \textit{The Rhine}, 47.
\textsuperscript{40} Wenger, \textit{Chronique}, I:107.
\textsuperscript{41} Fesquet, \textit{Journal}, 108.
\textsuperscript{42} Wiltgen, \textit{The Rhine}, 49.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{44} Wenger, \textit{Chronique}, I, 112.
Or to put it in terms of the Cardijn dialectic, the point was not to oppose “truth of faith” and “truth of reality” but to identify a method to reconcile them.

**Social communications**

The discussion on the schema on social communication took place over three days from 23 November and was the least controversial topic to be discussed. Indeed, René Stourm, introducing the discussion, joked that it was introduced to provide an opportunity for relaxation! But he was completely serious in his proposals.

“There are three things that we have always kept in mind,” Stourm noted:

- a) We wanted to affirm that the Church has a duty to teach that it cannot fulfil … if does not place the press and other means of communications at its **service**;

- b) We wanted to affirm the Church has a right to **educate**, and thus the duty to encourage the press… and the duty to remind all those … concerned by these obligations of their obligations and responsibilities…

- c) We wanted to affirm that the work of the Church in this field must be **coordinated**… (Emphases added)

Such an organisation needs to be established at international, national and diocesan levels. In other words, the Church’s work in the field of social communications must serve, educate and represent (or be coordinated), Stourm proposed, explicitly following the old jocist formula.

Moreover, a major criticism of the schema, coming from those with an SCA background, such as Cardinals Tarancon and Léger was that the media was an area more suitable for lay people than priests.

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The Church as People of God: Ending triumphalism, clericalism and legalism

The final schema up for debate from 28 November – 4 December was *De Ecclesia*. Again, the jocist bishops took the lead. In fact, trouble had begun inside the Doctrinal Commission when Léger and Garrone refused to endorse the proposed schema, Léger even threatening to resign from the Commission if he were not free to criticise it in the plenary.

Inevitably, Liénart opened fire, applauding the schema for its insistence on the “mystical aspect of the Church” but criticising its overly exclusive association with the Roman Church. “Can one say that (separated Christians) are not part of the mystical Body?” he asked.

In a speech for the ages, De Smedt, after welcoming the schema’s doctrine of the Mystical Body, the episcopate and the laity, launched a fierce attack on its triumphalism, clericalism and its legalism. The schema presented its subject as a “concatenation of triumphs” by the Church Militant, De Smedt claimed, which was totally out of touch with the reality of the Church, the “little flock” of Jesus Christ. It was marked by the “pomposity and romanticism to which we are accustomed in *L’Osservatore Romano* and other Roman documents.”

Further, the schema clung to the traditional pyramid of pope, bishops and priests. “Hierarchical power is only transitory,” De Smedt continued, railing against “hierarchism,” “episcopolatry” and “papolatry.” On the other hand, “what is permanent is the People of God” who are “united with one another” and have “the same fundamental rights and duties,” De Smedt insisted.

The same day, another former JOC chaplain, Léon-Arthur Elchinger, called for an ecclesiology inspired by “pastoral concern” based on the Church “as a communion” rather than as “an institution.” “In the past, theology affirmed the value of the hierarchy,” Elchinger noted, “now, it is discovering the People of God.” Moreover, where “in the past, the theology

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50 Wenger, *Chronique*, I, 152.
of the Church considered its internal life above all; now it sees the Church turned towards the world,” he added.53

On 4 December, a day full of significant interventions, yet another jocist bishop, Gerard Huyghe of Arras, called for the Church to apply the Socratic maxim “know thyself”. “It happens that the Church, far from leading souls to Christ, turns them away from him,” Huyghe warned. “The world expects that the Church will question itself” and “discover its true face,” he continued, adding that the documents to be drafted would “commit the Church for centuries.”54

The Suenens plan

It was obvious by now that the schema on the Church needed to be completely redrafted. Here it was Suenens who responded in another speech that day, introducing his own “plan,” dividing the work into two major parts, namely “the Church in its inner life (Ecclesia ad intra) and the Church in its relations with the outside world (Ecclesia ad extra)” which would become the bases of the future Lumen Gentium and Gaudium et Spes respectively.55

According to Suenens, the origins of this proposal lay in a note that he had prepared for John XXIII following an audience in March 1962.56 He had shared this with several cardinals, including Montini and Liénart, the latter of whom replied on 14 June 1962 that “your project enchanted me.” This proposal, Suenens believed, also inspired John’s speech on 11 September 1962 in which the pope referred twice to the Council’s work as “lumen Christi, Ecclesia Christi, lumen gentium.”57

Yet Liénart himself had drafted “Un plan pour les travaux du Concile” (A plan for the work of the Council), which although undated certainly preceded that of Suenens. This plan proposed a similar albeit less developed structure to that of Suenens:

53 Wenger, Chronique, I, 153.
54 Fesquet, Journal, 135.
56 Suenens, Souvenirs et espérances, 66-80.
57 John XXIII, Radiomessage, 11/09/1962:
It involves a double effort for [The Church]: On herself
In the present world.\(^{58}\)

Liénart also shared Suenens’s plan with Guerry, who agreed fully with the \textit{ad intra – ad extra} division. Significantly, however, Guerry noted that it made no reference to “the evangelisation by the Specialised Catholic Action movements of the life milieux.”\(^{59}\) Nor was this surprising since Suenens himself had adapted his \textit{ad intra – ad extra} binomial from his book \textit{L’Eglise en état de mission}, where he used it to refer to the Church’s missionary role of preaching the Gospel (The Word) to the world, rather than to the transformation of the world in the jocist sense.\(^{60}\)

On the other hand, in Suenens’s Council plan, his use of the term \textit{ad extra} had evolved. He now referred to a series of problems to be addressed: family, economic society, civil society, international community, which were drawn from the preparatory schema. As Guerry perceived, however, this was still the old doctrinal approach of applying the Church’s message to the world, rather than starting from life. Thus, while Suenens’s plan retained the outline of the Church-world schema that Cardijn had proposed two years before, and that Liénart had adopted in his own unpublished plan, the content was different, particularly in its consideration of the Church’s relationship with the world.

Despite these limitations, Suenens’s proposal achieved a breakthrough in conceptualising the Council’s work. His speech drew quick support from Montini who backed the plan in another important address the following day.\(^{61}\) Lercaro’s address on 6 December calling for a new ecclesiology of “the Church of the poor” further helped orient the Council’s direction.\(^{62}\)

\(^{58}\) Achille Liénart, “Un plan pour les travaux du Concile,” Archives Liénart: 44.
\(^{59}\) Guerry to Liénart, 28/06/1962, Archives Liénart 161.
\(^{60}\) Suenens, \textit{L’Eglise en état de mission}, 11.
\(^{62}\) Ibid., 345.

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Cardijn in Rome

The meeting with Tavora, Camara and Larrain

Amid these debates, Cardijn visited Rome from 17-20 November, where he met Tavora, Camara and Larrain, who enthusiastically testified to the huge jocist influence already evident, as Camara recorded the same evening in a circular to his Brazilian colleagues:

Mgr Cardijn has just left. He cried with joy at everything that Dom Larrain, Dom Tavora and I told him. If God wishes, we will succeed in having him appointed as an expert on lay apostolate issues (and who surpasses him in this area?).

Tomorrow he will come to celebrate his 80th birthday with us. What a life, fully and well lived in the light of grace!63

In the same letter, Camara recalled Cardijn’s 1951 speech on “The lay apostolate and the world today” at the First World Congress on Lay Apostolate, which had made such an impression on him – “one of the greatest of my life.”

“Just about everything that we are trying to achieve, with the grace of God, is in response to the anguished call of this great apostle,” Camara added, confirming Cardijn’s impact on the conciliar actors.64

Other contacts

Immediately, after this meeting, Cardijn went to meet Suenens, whom he had informed that he was coming to Rome “to consult with various bishops concerning the JOC Internationale.”65 This was certainly true as indicated by a list of letters to various jocist-connected bishops, particularly from Asia, including Cordeiro (Karachi), Olçomendy (Singapore), D’Souza (Nagpur), Cooray (Colombo).

63 Camara, Lettres, I, 130-131.
64 Camara, Lettres, I, 130-131.
65 Cardijn to Suenens, 29/10/1962, AC1300.
Obviously, there was much more on his agenda, though, as indicated by his list which also included De Smedt, Garrone, Charrière (Geneva) as well as Camara and Montini. He did not seek a meeting with John XXIII, whom he had seen earlier in 1962, but he did visit other Vatican officials whom he wished to make aware of his forthcoming book.

He also informed Suenens of the book project during their forty-five minute meeting, which Cardijn later noted went “very well.” According to a file note, he planned to consult Suenens about the eventual establishment of an office in Rome for the JOCI for the duration of the Council, a project that never eventuated but which highlighted the importance Cardijn placed on the jocist presence there.66

Yet, there was absolutely no sign of Cardijn attempting to form a jocist lobby among the Council participants along the lines, for example, of the Coetus Internationalis Patrum. On the contrary, as we have seen, the jocist bishops preferred to contribute to the various commissions and conciliar groupings that they helped found or animate.

**The Commission on the Apostolate of the Faithful**

**A new name and a new mandate**

Naturally, Cardijn was extremely concerned with the direction of the new Lay Apostolate Commission (LAC), which was to hold a preliminary meeting on 22 November to discuss its new mandate to draft an abbreviated “Decree on the Laity” – not on “lay apostolate” – in place of the Constitution originally proposed.

This mandate was to establish “general principles” under three main headings:

a) the apostolate of the laity in the service (*actio*) of the reign of Christ;

b) the apostolate of the laity in charitable and social works;

66 Ibid.

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c) societies of the faithful, based on a schema for a “Decree on the Societies of the Faithful” which had been prepared by the Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and Faithful.

These instructions evidently maintained the structure of the original schema that had frustrated Cardijn. Worse, the change in name of the Commission from “Apostolate of the Laity” to “Apostolate of the Faithful” amounted to an unambiguous rejection of the line he had championed, although it continued to be known (in protest) as the Lay Apostolate Commission.

All this must have been evident to Camara, Larrain and other Cardijn allies in the new Commission as they gathered for the first meeting. However, although the jocist network was well represented within the LAC, there was still no certainty that their views would prevail.

**Rodhain and Liénart seek broader representation**

This was the context in which Rodhain wrote to Liénart on 4 December seeking intervention by the French bishops over the lack of balance among the *periti*. “I consider it as the most elementary loyalty to share my concern and to admit how much the designation as an expert in the Commission of a French priest resident in France and specialising in Catholic Action appears desirable to me,” he wrote.⁶⁷

Although, according to Rodhain, the experts only had a “very accessory role,” the lay leaders of Catholic Action might also “like me, end up astonished and worried,” he warned. In striking contrast with Suenens, Liénart reacted swiftly, immediately intervening to obtain the appointment in January 1963 of Mgr Jean Streiff, secretary of the French bishops’ commission on lay apostolate.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Rodhain to Liénart, 04/12/1962, Archives Streiff, St13, 588.
⁶⁸ Archives Streiff, St11, 467.
Why was Cardijn excluded?

This brings us back to the question of why Cardijn had not been appointed as a *peritus*. Was he simply too old? Was he not enough of a theologian? Was it a deliberate snub? Who made this decision? Certainly, it was not Cardinal Cento, who continued his role as president of the conciliar commission and who, according to Glorieux, “had made efforts” to obtain Cardijn’s appointment and welcomed it.69

In the light of John XXIII’s appreciation of Cardijn’s advocacy for *Mater et Magistra*, it is unlikely that the pope wished to exclude him even though he made the formal appointments. According to historian Eric Mahieu, Felici drew up the initial list of possible *periti* in February 1962 in consultation with Ottaviani.70 Thus, it may be that the initial responsibility for Cardijn’s non-appointment rests here.

On the other hand, Suenens had loudly expressed his anger over the PCLA’s failure to heed his remarks concerning Catholic Action. Did he play a role? Given his history of negativity regarding Cardijn’s work, the conflict over Catholic Action that had flared in the Central Preparatory Commission,71 and his opposition to the election of Himmer to the LAC, the question needs to be posed.

Moreover, as archbishop, Suenens had embarked on a clearing of the decks among the personnel of the diocese. Thus, another Cardijn ally, the long serving rector of the University of Louvain, Bishop Honoré Van Waeyenbergh, had been replaced in a move that left him embittered as his counterpart from the Institut catholique de Paris, Mgr Emile Blanchet recorded.72

Although Charue felt that Van Waeyenbergh had been given every opportunity to retire gracefully, it was true that Suenens had simultaneously engineered the removal of the rector of the Pontifical Belgian College and his replacement by Albert Prignon. As Claude

69 Achille Glorieux to Cardijn, 26/02/1963, AC1607.
70 Email correspondence with Eric Mahieu, 26/10/2015.
Troisfontaines wrote in his introduction to Prignon’s Council Journal:

(Prignon) thus succeeded J. Devroede whose eviction did not fail to surprise. It was no secret for anyone to see the will of L-J Suenens in this sidelining. The latter... had clashed with the incumbent rector during the reception of his cardinal’s hat.\(^{73}\)

Clearly, Suenens had no scruples in removing people whom he regarded as obstacles although there is no direct evidence of the latter’s involvement in Cardijn’s non-appointment. Meanwhile, Camara took it upon himself to act as go-between, no doubt with the aim of having Cardijn appointed to the LAC. On 7 December, three days after Rodhain’s letter to Liénart and the day before the First Session closed, he wrote to Suenens appealing for his assistance:

Taking advantage of Mgr Cardijn’s (80th birthday) jubilee, please offer the JOC Internationale a broad gesture of understanding and paternity (a letter, a visit, invitation for a dinner). This would crown a task that I have had the joy of sharing and which has met with resounding success.\(^{74}\)

Although Camara was too delicate to ask directly, Suenens cannot have failed to understand his intent. These efforts by Camara, Cento and perhaps others finally bore fruit with Cardijn’s appointment in February 1963.

**Cardijn turns 80**

Meanwhile, Cardijn, who turned eighty on 13 November, returned to Brussels, where preparations were under way for the celebration of his eightieth birthday on 2 December 1962. This began with an academic session at the Brussels Palais des Congrès, where historian Roger Aubert detailed Cardijn’s influence not only in the pastoral field but in the development of theology. Similarly, Benedictine Dom Simons outlined Cardijn’s impact in the field of participatory liturgical practice. These contributions as well as other papers, including by Gerard Philips and Jacques Leclercq, were later published in a *festschrift*


\(^{74}\) Archives Suenens, 589.
entitled simply *Monseigneur Cardijn*.

A later rally at the Palais des Sports attracted 12,000 people – a large crowd by any standard albeit a far cry from the huge gatherings of earlier times. While the JOC and the Christian Worker movement (MOC) took responsibility for the event, tellingly, Himmer’s diocese of Tournai was also highly involved, rather than Cardijn’s own archdiocese of Malines-Brussels. Although Suenens was appointed president of a Committee of Honour, there is little indication of any involvement beyond his signing of the moving letter – clearly not in Suenens’s style – sent to Cardijn by the seven Belgian bishops still in Rome.

This letter provided yet another acknowledgement of Cardijn’s influence over the Council Fathers, indicating that even in his absence, he had not been forgotten, except perhaps in his own diocese. Although Van Waeyenbergh represented the Belgian bishops, poignantly, he was outnumbered by the Brazilians, Camara and Tavora.

**The balance sheet**

Such was Cardijn’s position at the close of the First Session on 8 December. This perhaps helps explain the frustration of Camara, who, having refrained from speaking *in aula* – as he would for the entire Council – could contain himself no longer.

Delegated to celebrate Sunday Mass for journalists covering the Council, who had not been permitted to enter the Council hall, Camara lashed the meagre results of the First Session in a draft sermon, translated into six languages, as journalist Robert Kaiser later reported. The Council had “unforgivably” failed “to tackle the great world issues of the day and could hardly be proud of its balance sheet,” Camara lamented. Although he toned down his remarks at the request of Felici, who ordered all copies of the original text and translations to be destroyed, Camara’s remarks were widely published in the US.

Cardijn and the jocist bishops undoubtedly shared similar views. They may have dominated

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75 Fiévez-Meert, *Cardijn*, 219-220.
76 Belgian bishops to Cardijn, in *Un message libérateur*, 17-20.
the debate and helped mould the *pensée commune* of the Council Fathers but a mountain still remained to climb.
Chapter 8 – Suenens vs Cardijn: Lay people in the frontlines

1. Introduction

“I think I was too optimistic regarding the obtaining of the imprimatur,” Marguerite Fiévez wrote on 13 February 1963 to Jean-Pierre Delarge, the manager of Editions Universitaires, with whom Cardijn had just signed a contract to publish *Laïcs en premières lignes*. “Mgr Cardijn thinks it may be better to request the imprimatur from the Archdiocese of Paris, and not derogate from the usual rule that the process should take place in the diocese where a book is published.”¹ It was the first sign that trouble was brewing in his home archdiocese over the publication of a book he had been preparing since 1958.

Surprisingly, it was the first book Cardijn had written, except for the *Manuel de la JOC*. Although the English YCW had produced two short compilations of speeches and articles – *The Church and the young worker* published in 1948² and *Challenge to Action* in 1955,³ nothing equivalent existed in French. But the experience of the 1957 World Congress on Lay Apostolate had revealed an urgent need for a more systematic, theological presentation of Cardijn’s thought and methods.

Short of time, Cardijn requested Fiévez to prepare a selection of articles for a broadly targeted book on lay apostolate.⁴ In parallel, Cardijn began discussions with French publisher, Jean-Pierre Dumée-Dubois, who was launching a new series entitled *Chrétienté nouvelle* to be published by Editions Universitaires under Delarge’s direction. Ironically, it was the same Franco-Belgian company that, unbeknown to Cardijn, was on the verge of publishing Comblin’s controversial *Echec de l’Action catholique*?.

However, with Cardijn’s constant travels, his involvement in the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate as well as Fiévez’s own roles in the COPECIAL and ICO Conference, the draft remained incomplete until 1962. By this time, the advent of Vatican II had caused

¹ Fiévez to Delarge, 15/02/1963, AC1778.
Cardijn to switch his target audience to “the Council Fathers and their advisers in Rome (3,000) as well as priests and religious interested in the point of the Council: the lay apostolate.”

By early 1962, Delarge was pressing for the manuscript, which was finally completed in September, too late for the First Session, although Cardijn still hoped for release by year’s end. Hence, he took the manuscript with him to Rome in November 1962, hoping to obtain a preface from Montini to whom he sent the manuscript although there is no indication of any reply.

No doubt hoping to pre-empt any difficulties, he delivered a copy to Secretary of State Dell’Acqua, and another to Garrone, whom he was unable to meet. After apparently hesitating, Cardijn gave a copy of the manuscript to Suenens during a meeting that, he thought, went “very well.” Meanwhile, he sent copies to several close collaborators, who responded encouragingly.

After his emotional Rome meeting with Camara, Tavora and Larrain, the outlook appeared bright. Two months later, in February 1963, he received his nomination to the conciliar Lay Apostolate Commission. It was around this time – was there a connection? – that he became aware that Malines wanted changes to his manuscript.

_Laïcs en premières lignes_

_Lay people in the front line_

Originally entitled “_L’apostolat des laïcs à la dimension du monde,_” the final title, “Laïcs en premières lignes,” borrowed from Pius XII’s famous 1942 phrase: “[T]he faithful, and more precisely the laity, are in the front line of the life of the Church; through them the Church is the animating principle of human society.”

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5 Joseph Cardijn, “_A propos du projet d’édition d’un ouvrage sur le laïcat,_” AC1775.
7 Pius XII, _La Elevetazza_, Speech, 20/02/1946: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/es/speeches/1946/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19460220_la-elevatezza.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/es/speeches/1946/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19460220_la-elevatezza.html) (Accessed 26/02/2018)
Not long at 75,000 words, the manuscript provided a tour de force of Cardijn’s thinking on lay apostolate and Catholic Action, including several more theoretical or theological articles from the 1930s and 1950s, updated with the addition of biblical references plus several new chapters. Revisiting his classical themes, including the three truths dialectic, the see-judge-act, serve-educate-represent, and life-milieu-mass, it offered a compelling synthesis of Cardijn’s theology, philosophy and methodology – the first time he had attempted such a comprehensive task.

A new triptych: Lay apostolate, Christian dialectic and mission

Organised in the form of a triptych – lay apostolate, Christian dialectic, and mission, Cardijn’s Foreword, somewhat paradoxically entitled “The end of the road,” provides a second key to his thinking. Originally drafted in 1958 in response to a paper presented by Emilio Guano at the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate, it had never been published. Significantly, each point of Cardijn’s new triptych rebutted Suenens’ own conception of these issues as well as expounding the merits of his own conception of Specialised Catholic Action. After his previous difficulties, Cardijn must have anticipated some reaction from the cardinal.

Even so, Cardijn continued to insist on “the specifically lay apostolate of lay people,” which he regarded as both “absolutely necessary for the future of the Church” and an increasingly “universal” issue. For Cardijn, the essence of this rested on the fact that each person had “a divine destiny and a divine mission, beginning not after death, but from today, in the conditions of their everyday life, where they are the first and immediate apostles of God in their environment and among their comrades.” This affirmation formed “part of the very essence of Christianity” and applied “to the whole conception of the Christian laity.”

The second leg of Cardijn’s conciliar trilogy recapitulated his ideal-real Three Truths dialectic

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9 Cardijn, Laymen, 17-18.
as the Christian response to the Marxist dialectic.\footnote{Ibid., 18.}

Finally, he presented his conception of a universal mission and apostolate “entrusted to them [by God] from the very moment of the creation and the redemption.”\footnote{Cardijn, Laymen, 19.} This mission, “found its fullest expression in the lay apostolate” whereby people played their part in continuing God’s creative and redemptive work by building “a world according to God’s will, a fraternal humanity where the humble are loved and helped by their brothers,” and witnessing “to the presence and the life of God, for the establishment of this kingdom of peace and glory,” Cardijn wrote citing Pius XII.\footnote{Cardijn, Laymen, 20.}

Moreover, it was “through lay people that the Church is \textit{in} the world,” Cardijn added and as the formal title of \textit{Gaudium et Spes} would later express it.\footnote{Ibid.} Hence the urgency for lay people to become “conscious of, convinced of, and united for the realisation of this mission.”\footnote{Ibid., 21.} Such was the path to “justice, peace, brotherhood and the glory of God: ‘on earth as it is in heaven’,” Cardijn continued, again echoing Gratry.\footnote{Ibid., 23.}

\textbf{Cardijn’s Review of Life}

As Cardijn concluded in his “Epilogue,” \textit{Laïcs en premières lignes} was fundamentally an attempt to explain the “secret” of his priestly life, which he summarised as “the interplay of a divine, irreversible solidarity between priest and laity.” This in turn formed the foundation of “the commitment of thousands… of lay people who unhesitatingly committed their whole lives to the service of Christ.”\footnote{Ibid., 174.} In this sense, the book constituted an \textit{apologia pro sua vita}, a review of his own life as a priest, which he structured in see-judge-act format.

\textbf{See: Part One – Looking back}

Thus, Part One was essentially a retrospective, beginning in Chapter 1 with his battle to build

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Ibid., 18.}
\item \footnote{Cardijn, Laymen, 19.}
\item \footnote{Cardijn, Laymen, 20.}
\item \footnote{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{Ibid., 21.}
\item \footnote{Ibid., 23.}
\item \footnote{Ibid., 174.}
\end{itemize}

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and achieve recognition for the JOC, its conception of Catholic Action and lay apostolate, and the eventual breakthrough with Pius XI.

Chapters 2 and 3 entitled “The lay apostolate” and “The worker apostolate” were updated versions of articles published in Notes de pastorale jociste in 1935, the year when Pius XI first characterised the JOC as an authentic form of Catholic Action. Here, he updated his terminology, preferring to speak of “transformation” of the world rather than “conquest.” But the essence remained, namely that each lay person had an apostolate proper to them, which was a primary and eternal necessity of the Church, willed by God.

**Judge: Part Two – Towards a synthesis of facts, doctrine and experience**

Part Two comprised Cardijn’s reflections on the principles and problems governing this field. Thus, the newly written Chapter 4 sought to clarify “Distinctions and confusions” relating to the use of the terms “lay apostolate,” “secular,” etc.

Chapter 5, another new chapter, set out Cardijn’s vision of “The earthly mission of man and humanity,” seeking to reconcile or synthesise man’s temporal and eternal “double mission.” Chapter 6 was an updated version of Cardijn’s landmark speech to the First World Congress on Lay Apostolate in 1951 on “The world today and the lay apostolate.” Chapter 7, “Dimensions of the lay apostolate,” reprised another (ronoed) 1951 article originally entitled “The lay apostolate,” in which he again insisted that every person had a mission sharing in the creation and redemption of the world.

**Act: Parts Three and Four: Towards an authentic lay apostolate**

Part Three raised the pertinent, almost prophetic question, “Will the Church of tomorrow have an authentic lay apostolate?” In the wake of his struggles over the previous decade, this question was clearly Cardijn’s major preoccupation.

Thus Chapter 8, “Priests and laymen in the Church’s mission,” originally published in 1951, set out Cardijn’s vision of how to develop the lay apostolate within a context of a Church
understood as a lay-clerical partnership. Chapter 9, “Priests and laymen working as a team,” further developed this theme.

Finally, Chapter 10 addressed “The formation of laymen for their apostolate,” a theme which would become one of Cardijn’s main contributions to the decree on lay apostolate.

Part Four, entitled “Laymen into action,” contained only a single chapter, “The world of the future according to God’s will,” amounting to an appeal to develop the lay apostolate, understood as building the world in all its aspects: physical, economic and social, cultural, civic and political, moral and ultimately religious.

“We know that baptism and confirmation confirm on the believer an explicit mission relating to the Kingdom of God,” Cardijn stated. “How then is it there are still so few who are really committed to their own place in the providential plan?”

For Cardijn, the answer lay in his challenge to the Church to go beyond its traditional parish-based structures, beyond the boundaries of the Catholic community and to reach out to all people, Christian or not, to go “to the very centre of the masses which do not belong to the Church.” This was certainly a “superhuman task,” Cardijn recognised, but it was precisely the mission to which Jesus, the Divine Founder, had called his people.  

Hence the need for formation, support, and organisation of lay people in self-managed movements. The Church too needed to provide institutional backing by animating, encouraging and breathing life rather than stifling initiative, Cardijn concluded.

An urgent call to publish

Even to those who had known Cardijn for decades, it was a sparkling, inspiring text, as those with whom he shared the roneoed text confirmed. Now assisting Liénart as his conciliar adviser, Palémon Glorieux, recommended its publication “without the slightest hesitation,”

Cardijn, Laymen, 171.
calling for it to appear “before the Second Session of the Council.” Dondeyne agreed, describing it as “excellent” and “incontestably deserving publication.” Larraín’s secretary signalled the “great service” that the book would provide for the drafting work of the LAC, while Brazilian Bishop Eugenio Araujo Sales communicated his “complete agreement with your point of view.” French and Belgian JOC chaplains Georges Guérin, Maurice Zinty and Ernest Michel were similarly bullish, with the latter eager for its publication “as quickly as possible.”

Garrone was even more exuberant, suggesting as a sub-title “The secret of your life.” “I owe everything to the JOC,” he added, “through which the Church has re-presented its eternal message to us in the language of reality.” Cardijn was no less appreciative. “You know perhaps better than anyone that I attach so much importance to the Council, above all regarding the lay apostolate,” he replied on 20 December. “The Council could change the face of the earth if the clergy is unanimous and lay people are encouraged!”

Conspicuously, Suenens had not offered any written feedback, although his meeting in Rome with Cardijn gave no hint of difficulty. Thus, Cardijn signed a contract with *Editions Universitaires* for French and worldwide distribution while *Editions Ouvrières*, the Belgian jocist publishing house, prepared a local edition.

**Imprimatur delayed**

**Suenens’s shock “remarks”**

The first sign that something was amiss came in Fiévez’s letter to Delarge asking him to consider obtaining an imprimatur in Paris. There is no record of Delarge’s reply to this suggestion, which was not implemented. But, obviously, Cardijn knew something was afoot.

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18 Palémon Glorieux to Cardijn, 28/10/1962, AC1777.
19 Dondeyne to Fiévez, 15/11/1962, AC1777.
20 Huidobro to Cardijn, 10/03/1963, AC1608.
21 Araujo Sales to Cardijn, 01/02/1963, AC1783.
22 Garrone to Cardijn, 02/12/1962, AC1777.
23 Cardijn to Garrone, 20/12/1962, AC1777.
24 Fiévez to Delarge, 15/02/1963, AC1778.
Meanwhile, composition of the book was already under way while Delarge prepared an advertising campaign, including an interview with French Catholic television and a corresponding vinyl record. First proofs were out by early March. A month later, Delarge was pressing for return of the corrections.

The shock arrived on 15 March, not in a letter from Suenens, but in a three-paragraph series of “Remarks by His Eminence,” circuitously transmitted to Cardijn by the diocesan censor, Mgr Ceuppens, via Cardijn’s assistant chaplain, Marcel Uylenbroeck. According to Fiévez, Ceuppens felt that Cardijn would be more disposed to accept the proposed changes from Uylenbroeck. But “above all, it would not implicate” (mettre en cause) Suenens.25

“Regarding the terminology used,” the note read, “the Council, the bishops, the diocesan authorities consider that General Catholic Action is equally valid as Specialised Catholic Action and do not accept that it be said that CA is essentially specialised CA.”26 This was an extraordinary claim considering that discussion on this issue had not gone beyond the Coordinating Commission of the Council of which Liénart was also a member.

The second point read:

Instead of saying that the proper role of the lay person is formally the christianisation of the temporal, he (His Eminence) affirms that the proper and formal role of the lay person is double: on one hand, it belongs to the [lay person] to take an active part in the work of evangelisation, by preparing, supporting and prolonging sacerdotal action; on the other hand, it belongs properly – but under his or her exclusive responsibility here – to christianise the temporal.27

Again, it was the old spiritual-temporal dualism that Cardijn rejected. This reduced “the proper role of the laity” to a secondary position, while prioritising the role of the laity in “prolonging sacerdotal action” in his view. Moreover, it seemed to imply that the work of evangelisation belonged primarily to the latter category, a very clerical conception.

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27 Ibid.
Suenens’s third point added that rather than evangelising action passing first through temporal action, there was “a connection and an independent relation between the two actions.” Citing the cardinal’s own comments in *L’Eglise en état de mission*, the statement confirmed once again that Suenens still regarded the Cardijn method as “humanising before christianising,” the longstanding critique of Montuclard’s *Jeunesse d’Eglise* movement.

**Turmoil**

According to an amazingly restrained but personal note added to Cardijn’s archives by Fiévez, Cardijn “was very sharply surprised and saddened, both by the cardinal’s desire for changes which affected his [Cardijn’s] own conception of Catholic Action, as well as by the procedure used, which appeared to deflect responsibility.” However, since he was leaving the same day for Germany, Cardijn decided not “to act without reflecting.”

However, the first two points on a contemporaneous handwritten note illustrated the depth of his shock:

1) Suffering: First time
2) The apostolate of my whole life.

As Fiévez explained, again with great understatement, this was the first time in his life that Cardijn found himself “in complete disagreement” with his hierarchical superiors on “the essentials of his thought.” In effect, Suenens was asking him “to deny something that he had always affirmed and in which he had been unconditionally supported by the popes and numerous bishops and theologians.” He thus “did not see any possibility of changing anything essential in his text.”

Yet even Cardijn’s personal note failed to express the extent of “the turmoil that took hold of him,” Fiévez added in her note, clearly appalled by Suenens’s behaviour. According to a later note by Cardijn, it was a “very painful trip” despite “the welcome received, the enthusiasm

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28 Fiévez, “File note.”
29 Joseph Cardijn, “Note,” AC1777.

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stirred up” by a German JOC experiencing its own golden age. Indeed, the contrast between his experience with Suenens and “the declaration of the [German] bishops” simply rendered “my personal suffering even more intense.”

“I spent several sleepless nights,” Cardijn’s note concluded. Back in Brussels, he immediately wrote to Suenens on 2 April seeking a meeting. Expressing his dismay over the “misunderstanding” caused by his manuscript, he noted that he had “hoped for an imprimatur from Your Eminence ‘ex toto corde’, signalling our complete agreement on the fundamentals and passing over reconcilable nuances.”

“The principle that has guided my whole life and will remain until the end: faithful and complete submission to Authority,” Cardijn wrote, expressing his hope that an audience would “clear up the misunderstandings and avoid unfortunate consequences.” In an accompanying note, he highlighted the fact that most articles had been previously published and translated into different languages. Although Cardijn was too diplomatic to say it, this meant that the articles had necessarily previously received an imprimatur according to prevailing Church practice.

Secondly, he cited the positive feedback he had received from bishops and theologians who “all pressed me to publish” the book. Thirdly, he noted that a contract had already been signed with the publisher involving financial consequences. Nor did Cardijn fail to mention the plans for a television interview and the record.

“Won’t significant modifications have consequences regarding the commitments made?” Cardijn asked. “Above all, won’t they cause regrettable commentary that will do more harm than good and out of all proportion to the nuances of the proposed corrections?”

“The publishers are seeking urgent clarification,” he concluded.

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31 Cardijn to Suenens, 08/04/1963, AC1777.
Evangelising action

Meanwhile, ever mindful of his “complete submission to authority” and retaining his “confidence” in a positive outcome, Cardijn set out to respond to Suenens’s critique and to formulate several changes and additions to the text in the hope of satisfying the demands of Ceuppens and Suenens.

He regretted but accepted the suppression of several short passages relating to Catholic Action. Importantly, he seemed to feel that the essentials of his thought remained clearly expressed elsewhere. Significantly, although he does not mention it specifically, there were no demands to include passages that contradicted his thought.

Hence, he remained free to compose his own clarifying texts, although in a sign of his continuing turmoil, he asked himself whether it would be better to delay the book until after the Council and rewrite it completely, or whether a new preface would suffice to overcome any “untoward interpretations.” Ultimately, he chose to write several new paragraphs that he hoped would resolve the issue.

As he pointed out in another private note, his overriding concern was always “to bring religion back into life, the milieux and problems of life.” People’s whole life “must become an apostolate” and therefore needed to be united “to Christ and his Church.”

“There can be no question of humanising before christianising, nor of first changing temporal structures, but only of transforming souls,” Cardijn added, noting that many sections of the book insisted on this point. And he added more in another particularly significant paragraph in which he now began to define the work of the JOC as “evangelising action”:

> It is not a matter of temporal action but of spiritual evangelising action in life, the milieux of life and the issues that it raises. This action requires union with the Hierarchy and the priesthood whose action it extends. This concern for the apostolate in the life of lay people does not exclude other concerns, quite the contrary. A concrete book on the JOC would show it very clearly. The number of priestly, religious (even contemplative) and missionary vocations is an

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32 Joseph Cardijn, “Strictement confidentielle.”
eloquent testimony to this.33

Although JOC chaplains, particularly from France, had often used the word “evangelisation” in relation to the JOC, Cardijn had generally avoided the term – as he did with most other technical or theological terms. Now, however, he was confronted with accusations that the JOC was failing in its duty to evangelise.

Thus, just as forty years earlier Cardijn had begun to articulate the movement’s work in terms of Catholic Action in response to early critiques of the JOC, he now began to explain it in terms of evangelisation, as illustrated by several new sentences that eventually appeared in the book:

The lay apostolate is not primarily a temporal action; it is essentially an evangelising action working through the environments and problems of life. This evangelising action must be united with the hierarchy and the priesthood, whose own form of apostolate it prepares and continues.34

Although Cardijn himself would not live long enough to witness the fruits of this new formulation, it would have a great impact five years later when the Latin American bishops meeting in Medellin, Colombia in 1968 adopted the jocist method as the basis of their proposed “new evangelisation.” But none of this was foreseeable as Cardijn prepared to meet Suenens.

Imprimatur

The audience took place on 8 April and once again it was Fiévez who movingly recorded its impact on Cardijn in her own notes: “Cardijn travelled to Malines... where he was hit [heurté] once again by the apparently very cordial and fraternal welcome offered to him by the cardinal, who took him in his arms, denying that there was ‘anything’ between them.”

Cardijn’s sense of betrayal was palpable. So too was the contrast between Suenens’s backroom modus operandi and that of his predecessor, Cardinal Mercier, who had always had

33 Ibid.
34 Cardijn, Laymen, 32.
the merit of being upfront. While there appears to be no written record of the meeting between the two men, the outcome was swift. The next day, 9 April 1963, the vicar general, Mgr P. Theeuws, gave his imprimatur, accepting the modifications that Cardijn had made to his text.

Did Suenens blink? Fiévez and Meert certainly thought so, writing in their biography of Cardijn that he “stood firm” despite the pressures that were placed on him “to change his emphasis.”\(^\text{35}\) Moreover, while remaining rigidly faithful to his vow of obedience, Cardijn had forced Suenens to face up to his own responsibilities.

The whole episode left a bitter taste in the mouths of Fiévez and other close collaborators of Cardijn who were in the know.\(^\text{36}\) Cardijn was deeply affected, even though he sought to avoid embarrassing Suenens, going as far as asking Fiévez to recover the initial proofs from the typesetter to ensure that these were not circulated.\(^\text{37}\) All things considered, Cardijn’s attitude demonstrated almost heroic forbearance.

### Publication

This finally cleared the way for publication with printing completed on 20 May and the book on sale by June. By the end of the year, a second French edition was out and six contracts were signed for translation into English, German, Dutch, Italian, Catalan and Spanish, with a Portuguese translation to come later. Given the earlier pressures on Cardijn, it is significant that the Dutch-language edition (imprimatur 6 March 1964, again by Theeuws) included a copy of the newly elected Pope Paul VI’s autograph letter addressed “to our dear son Joseph Cardijn” dated 4 November 1963 in lieu of a preface.\(^\text{38}\)

Similarly, the German edition published in early 1964 opened with a preface by the newly appointed Bishop Julius Angerhausen of Essen, himself a former national JOC chaplain. In an

\(^{35}\) Fiévez-Meert, *Cardijn*, 223.


\(^{37}\) Fiévez to Souchier, 20/05/1963, AC1778.

indication that Angerhausen was aware of the problems with Suenens, he recalled the difficulties with Church authorities that Cardijn had experienced over many years in his bid to give more responsibility to lay people.\textsuperscript{39} But the fact that several young people formed in Cardijn’s movement became official auditors at the Council was impressive evidence of the effectiveness of his methods. Finally, Angerhausen exhorted readers to “read these pages carefully” and to “note what is written between the lines.”

The Spanish edition appeared in 1965, published in Barcelona with the imprimatur of Archbishop Gregorio Modrego y Casaus, perhaps to avoid potential problems in Madrid under the conservative Archbishop Casimiro Morcillo Gonzalez.

Meanwhile, the English edition \textit{Laymen into Action} was published in mid-1964 by Geoffrey Chapman with a preface by the translator, Edward Mitchinson, an English YCW chaplain, who noted that Cardijn’s achievements in the lay apostolate field made him “a precursor of Pope John’s aggiornamento.”\textsuperscript{40}

“It is not difficult to see his influence on all the most profound stirrings in the Church of the last forty years, and in the changes which Vatican II is bringing about,” Mitchinson observed. Moreover, “a course of Cardijn’s dialectic would be the best remedy for the fears and hesitations with which some of the Council’s changes have been received.”

Good and desirable change was “the fruit of a dialectic between reality and faith, between how things really are and how God wants them to be,” he continued. Therefore, the Church’s life needed to be “a continued incarnation, a Christian transformation of reality, a Christian revolution of hearts and lives” as proposed by Pope John, in \textit{Mater et Magistra},” he stressed.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{40} Edward Mitchinson, “Preface,” in Cardijn, \textit{Laymen}, xi-xii.
\textsuperscript{41} Mitchinson, in Cardijn, \textit{Laymen}, xiii.
Publication

By Cardijn’s death in 1967, nearly 5000 French-language copies had been sold mainly in France and Belgium, which was significant although well below Delarge’s expectations. The English edition was more successful with nearly 8000 sold by 1968, mostly in the USA. For the German edition, the figure was 5000, for Italian 1800, Dutch 1800, Spanish 1700, and Catalan 600 with no figures available at that time for Portuguese, most of which sales likely occurred during the Council.

With respect to Vatican II, however, the most important matter was that Cardijn’s book reached its target, namely the Council Fathers and periti. Thus Cardijn, Fiévez and the JOCI sent copies to nearly thirty cardinals plus another one hundred bishops, including all the Belgians, as well as half a dozen nuncios and apostolic delegates. These periti included Congar, Philips, Haubtmann, Dondeyne, Houtart as well as Chenu, whose only official role was as adviser to Bishop Claude Rolland of Antsirabé, Madagascar.42 LAC periti included Bonnet, Rodhain, Bonet, Klostermann, the German Jesuit Johannes Hirschmann, as well as Pavan and Tucci, who would soon propose a new plan of work for the schema on lay apostolate that corresponded in many respects to Cardijn’s own desires. Lay leaders featured prominently on the list, including philosopher Jean Guitton, the Pax Romana leaders, Veronese, Sugranyes de Franch and de Habicht, the ex-jocist Auguste Vanistendael, as well as Henri Rollet, all future lay auditors.

In France, Guérin ensured that key personalities received a copy. When he enquired into the apparent delay in publication, Fiévez confidentially informed him of the “difficult palabres” with Malines in relation to the imprimatur.43 Thus alerted, Guérin “spoke to several bishops.”44 Immediately, he launched a personal campaign to distribute the book to the French bishops and their advisers. Similar campaigns in other countries enabled the book to rapidly reach its target audience.

Despite Cardijn’s own discretion concerning his dispute with Suenens, Fiévez felt much less

42 Chenu and Duquesne, Un théologien en liberté, 173.
43 Fiévez to Guérin, 06/05/1963, AC1782.
44 Guérin to Fiévez, 10/05/1963, AC1782.
compunction about divulging the events, at least among Cardijn’s closest collaborators. As Angerhausen’s preface to the German edition showed, word was clearly spreading. Whatever Suenens’s motives had been, his campaign now risked backfiring.

Reception

Opportune

The enthusiastic, often very personal replies that Cardijn received from more than a dozen cardinals, over twenty bishops and a range of theologians and officials, offer some insight in the impact of the book. Several directly acknowledged its importance for the ongoing work of the Council.

From the Vatican, Pizzardo offered his congratulations while Tisserant acknowledged that no-one was more qualified than Cardijn to speak on laity. Other cardinals to personally reply included Montini, Frings, König, Richaud and Lefebvre (France), Silva Henriquez (Santiago), McIntyre (Los Angeles), Doi (Tokyo) and Gracias (Bombay).

Among the first to write on 3 June 1963, the day of John XXIII’s death, was Brussels Dean L. Boone, who expressed the prophetic desire: “May the successor of Pope John XXIII, a Cardinal Montini help you, help us, in the promotion of the laity.” Meanwhile, on 19 June, Suenens’s secretary replied to Cardijn that the cardinal, who was about to leave for the conclave, had read “important passages” of Cardijn’s book and proposed to reply further later, although there is no indication that he did.

Confirming the gap between Suenens and his Belgian episcopal brothers, Charue wrote that it was “good to have your testimony in black and white” for Council deliberations. He added that “we have drafted, I think, a good doctrinal text on the subject” for the schema of *Lumen Gentium*, but that Cardijn’s book would be important for “the practical implementation of this apostolate,” i.e. in the draft schema on laity.45 Similarly, Van Zuylen from Liège noted that the book was “doubly opportune for the Council” while his auxiliary, Joseph Heuschen, signalled

45 Charue to Cardijn, 13/06/1963, AC1782.
the book’s importance in highlighting “the baptismal mission” of each person.46

The French commitment

Characterising Cardijn’s book as of “very great weight,” Palémon Glorieux underlined its importance with respect to the “baptismal character” of the lay apostolate. This was just one of a series of warm responses from French bishops, including Maziers, Théas, Rougé and Puech, who remembered Cardijn’s famous speech at the national seminary of Issy les Moulineaux in 1929.

Recalling “with emotion” the “apostolic earthquake” Cardijn had caused him at their first meeting in 1928, Chenu expressed his “communion of thought” and his hope that the book would shed a “decisive light” on “the Church-in-Council.” Congar replied that Cardijn had guessed correctly that “lay people have a key part in my faith and my love.”

In an extensive reply, Guerry testified to the profound influence Cardijn continued to exercise among French bishops and theologians. “Since the prophetic insight that the Holy Spirit caused to shine in your soul some fifty years ago,” he wrote, “you have been able to verify by your long experience the urgent and profound needs to which it responds.”

Insisting on the theological importance of Cardijn’s work, Guerry noted that “you have posed to the Church and the world an issue… that has provoked much fruitful research, as well as bringing about deep transformations in the Church, even in its structures, regarding its mission in the midst of the world.” Moreover, adopting Cardijn’s own Gratry-inspired terminology, Guerry explicitly endorsed his conception of lay apostolate: “You have caused the mission of lay people in the Church and the world to be discovered beginning from their double temporal and supernatural destiny, from the Creation and the Redemption.” This too was a clear rejection of the Suenens line.

46 Heuschen to Cardijn, 01/06/1963, AC1782.
47 Chenu to Cardijn, 22/08/1963, AC1782.
48 Congar to Cardijn, 23/09/1963, AC1782.
49 Guerry to Cardijn, 26/08/1963, Archives Guerry.
50 Ibid.
In addition, the book had arrived at “the precise moment when the Council will address the problem of the laity,” Guerry noted. “I have no doubt that it will exercise its influence. Believe me that we will do everything in our power that this be so,” he concluded.  

Encouraged by this, Cardijn took the opportunity to send him the JOCI reflections on lay apostolate prompting the latter to respond that he was in “complete communion of thought.”

“We, the French bishops,” Guerry continued, “are deeply committed to the need to illuminate the apostolate of lay people in general and Specialised Catholic Action in particular at this time of great problems of underdevelopment and evangelisation of the worker world in every country and at international level.”

Without mentioning Suenens, Guerry warned that “at present there is a whole current of opposition to Catholic Action and perhaps Specialised Catholic Action in particular.” Citing an article in the Dominican journal Lumière et vie, he noted that the editors seemed “to imagine that since Pius XI we have only understood the lay apostolate as an extension and complement of the sacerdotal apostolate.” Hence, the importance of Cardijn’s affirmation of the human as well as the baptismal and confirmational basis of mission.

**Worldwide welcome**

From Germany, Hengsbach expressed the hope that John XXIII’s death would not put a brake on “efforts to give the right shape to the lay apostolate in the modern world.” Jaeger and Angerhausen were both convinced of the book’s importance for Council deliberations. From Austria, König congratulated Cardijn on a book “long awaited by his friends” and looked forward to the German edition, while Klostermann enthusiastically described it as “beautiful.” Even the Italian Castellano characterised it as “very interesting.”

Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV looked forward to “increasingly happy results.” From East Asia, Cardinal Doi called for “broad circulation.” Similarly, Bishop Cheng of Taipei noted the book’s importance in having “described so well the need to situate the Church in its place

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51 Guerry to Cardijn, 26/08/1963.  
52 Guerry to Cardijn, 02/09/1963, Archives Guerry.  
53 Hengsbach to Cardijn 20/06/1963, AC1782.
in the midst of the world and within the reach of all,” which would be achieved by “the participation of the laity in the mission of the Church.” Writing from Dakar, Senegal, the Internuncio, Jean-Marie Maury expressed the hope that “all Council Fathers read these pages,” while US labour priest, Msgr George Higgins, described the book as “extremely well done.”

In a clear confirmation that Cardijn had succeeded in his objective, CELAM secretary-general Mgr Julien Mendoza Guerrero indicated that the book would “enable us to draw orientations and lines of conduct for our own apostolate,” the fruit of which would become clear at the CELAM meeting in Medellin in 1968.

**A Council manual**

This was an extremely positive response. Apart from Suenens, the Belgian episcopate was favourable to Cardijn. Even more importantly, so too were the French and German bishops as well as many leading bishops on every continent.

The English, German and Dutch editions of *Laïcs en premières lignes* appeared before the vital Third Session in 1964, which adopted *Lumen Gentium*, and discussed the schemas on lay apostolate and *Gaudium et Spes*, even if the Spanish and other editions were only available for the last session in 1965.

With Cardijn’s manual for the Council, the bishops now had the best tool imaginable for understanding the jocist conception of lay apostolate.

**John XXIII to Paul VI**

Amid all this came the death of John XXIII. Cardijn certainly felt the loss, recalling how freely John had spoken of a new Pentecost and his commitment to dialogue, to “person to
person contact, simple, open, straight, whatever our opinion, ideology or the religion of our
interlocutor.”

Yet, he must have wondered how the pope, who had promised to support the JOC even more
ardently than Pius XI and Pius XII, had become so close to his nemesis, Suenens. How did
this happen? Was John XXIII aware of Suenens’s attitude? Certainly not from Cardijn, who
had not met with John XXIII in private audience since Suenens’s nomination as archbishop of
Malines-Brussels.

However, it is possible, perhaps likely, that Camara backgrounded the pope during the First
Session of the Council on the context of Cardijn’s nomination to the LAC. Indeed, Camara
proposed that John XXIII make Cardijn a cardinal – “not for you, but as a sign for the
working class,” a promotion, as Camara well knew, that would have removed Cardijn from
under Suenens’s authority and placed him on an equal footing. But John’s health was failing
and he did not hold another consistory.

Nevertheless, as Camara informed Cardijn in a 12 July 1963 letter, he planned to take up the
matter once more with the newly elected Paul VI. Indeed, with Montini as pontiff, many
things would change for the founder of the JOC.

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58 Cardijn, “John XXIII and the New Pentecost.”
59 Camara to Cardijn, 12/07/1963, AC927.
60 Ibid.
Chapter 9 – The Cardijn dialectic in *Gaudium et Spes*

**A new schema**

“With respect to each question, we begin with facts (previously “signs of the times”); we judge them; and we derive various pastoral orientations. This method was explicitly desired by the competent bodies; it manifestly corresponds to the will of the overwhelming majority of the Fathers.”¹ Thus did Pierre Haubtmann, the chief redactor of the final drafts of *Schema XIII*, explain the adoption of the see-judge-act method for the drafting of Part II of the eventual *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today*.

Moreover, this was far from the full extent of Cardijn’s influence on the document. As this chapter will show, *Gaudium et Spes* began its life under the auspices of Cardinal Suenens as a traditional exposition of Church doctrine on social issues meant to be followed by a series of “directives” for pastoral action. By the time of its adoption at the Fourth Session of Vatican II, however, it had been radically transformed into a document structured in the form of Cardijn’s Proudhanian Three Truths dialectic. This also explained the choice of Haubtmann, an experienced JOC and ACO chaplain, who had just completed his monumental doctoral thesis on *La philosophie sociale de Proudhon*.

In reality, the Suenens plan was superseded by a plan based on Cardijn’s dialectic, which he had explicitly summarised in the foreword of *Laïcs en premières lignes*. This occurred despite Cardijn having no personal involvement in the drafting, after being effectively sidelined again by Suenens. Despite this – and perhaps in reaction to it – the drafting of *Gaudium et Spes* was dominated by the jocist-formed bishops and periti at the Council, building on the work of their predecessors.

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Origins of Schema XVII

Genesis

From a Cardijn perspective, the Church’s struggle to come to grips with the “modern” world was rooted in the industrial and democratic revolutions of the preceding centuries. Here, Cardijn identified himself with the pioneering efforts of Lamennais, Ozanam, the Sillon and others, who endeavoured to “reconcile” the Church with the positive values of the emerging new reality while combating its evils, and who were often marginalised as a result.

In his account of the origins of Gaudium et Spes, Louvain theologian and peritus, Charles Moeller, offered a more recent perspective. This began with the social encyclicals of Leo XIII, the liturgical movement under Pius X, the “missionary encyclicals” of Benedict XV and “the initiatives of Pius XI in Catholic Action.” Later factors cited by Moeller included the “planetisation” of the Catholic apostolate under Pius XII, the emergence of the ecumenical and biblical movements, the “patristic renewal” as well as the “impact of Christian humanism.”

As we have seen, Cardijn and the JOC chaplains played key roles in several of these areas. Indeed, for Moeller, “one major fact dominates the immediate post war world: the discovery of [the JOC chaplains] Fathers Godin and Daniel of France, country of mission,” while another jocist chaplain, Emile Mersch, had provided “the initial theological synthesis” of these experiences. Similarly, Moeller credited Cardijn with introducing “not only the social, but also the scientific and technological dimension into Catholic thought.”

Jocist chaplains also featured prominently in other developments Moeller identified, including the ecumenical movement (Congar), the emergence of Christian humanism (Masure, Chenu), in patristics (Paul Dabin), medieval studies (Chenu, Palémon Glorieux) and liturgy. Finally, he pointed to the impact of John XXIII’s encyclicals, Mater et Magistra and Pacem in Terris, with their adoption of the see-judge-act and signs of the times.

3 Ibid., 25.
Nor can we forget the role of Cardijn and the Specialised Catholic Action movements at the Lay Apostolate Congresses of the 1950s, which raised many of the issues that *Gaudium et Spes* would tackle at the Council.

**Conciliar origins**

Nevertheless, the “immediate” inspiration on the Council floor for Schema XVII came from Suenens’s 4 December 1962 intervention, backed by Montini and Lercaro, foreshadowing a division of the Council’s work into *ad intra* (church) and *ad extra* (world) components. Moreover, as we have seen, Cardijn had previously proposed just such a division in a Note for the PCLA while Liénart also made a similar suggestion.

Here, many of those involved at the earliest stages of the process adamantly insisted on the primordial role of the members of the Lay Apostolate Commission (LAC). Achille Glorieux, for example, underlined the roles in mid-November 1962 of Dutch Bishop Gerard De Vet who “emphasised the need to confront the part of the schema prepared by this Commission with several parallel schemas prepared by the Doctrinal Commission” and German Bishop Franz Hengsbach, who had written to Cardinal Cento “making the same suggestion.”

Roberto Tucci also pointed to a 25 November report by Hengsbach observing the need to combine the PCLA material on social action with that prepared by the Preparatory Theological Commission. Moeller too highlighted the importance of this latter document as a fundamental source of the themes of human dignity and man as the image of God. According to Santo Quadri, this led to the idea of a schema unifying the material in “a treatise based on principles but taking root in modern reality.”

These testimonies reinforce the link with Cardijn’s own proposal that the Council should organise its work around the themes of Church and world. Tucci also noted the importance of

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4 Haubtmann, “Le Schéma.”
5 Moeller, Schéma XIII, 4-5.
the conciliar *Message to the world* initially drafted by Chenu and Congar, observing that, while Schema XIII was almost the natural outcome of the Council as envisaged by John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra* formed a second point of origin together with Pope John’s Apostolic Constitution *Humanae Salutis* convoking the Council, in which the pope first proposed “making our own Jesus’s recommendation that we learn to discern ‘the signs of the times’ (Mt 16:4).”

Moeller also underscored the role of another jocist chaplain, namely “a bishop from Latin America who in fact gave the impulse which led to the decision to produce a schema on the Church in the world,” i.e. Helder Camara, who had been inspired by Cardijn’s 1951 Lay Apostolate Congress speech. Citing the work of François Houtart in Latin America, Moeller also identified a more general French and Latin American – particularly Brazilian – influence, in emphasising “the importance of the Council in a world which had changed” since World War II. In addition, both Moeller and Tucci highlighted the influence of the jocist-oriented Church of the Poor group. Moreover, many of these people, including Houtart and Chenu, were involved in a 29 November 1962 meeting of thirty bishops, including Suenens, to create a Vatican “secretariat” on justice and development issues.

The influence of Cardijn and the jocist network thus clearly extended into the very conception of Schema XVII, adding to the irony of Suenens providing the catalyst for the schema.

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7 John XXIII, *Humanae Salutis*, Apostolic Constitution:
http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/la/apost_constitutions/1961/documents/hf_j-xxiii_apc_19611225_humanae-salutis.html

8 Tucci, *Introduction historique*, 34.


10 Ibid., 2.

11 Ibid., 11.

Preparing the Rome Draft\textsuperscript{13}

The Mixed Commission

Hengsbach and De Vet further developed their proposal for collaboration between the conciliar Doctrinal Commission (DC) and the LAC at meetings of the latter body in December 1962 and January 1963.\textsuperscript{14} From this emerged Hengsbach’s proposal to draw up a joint schema based on material from the schemas of the preparatory commissions.

The new conciliar Coordination Commission (CC) adopted this proposal at its first meeting on 21-27 January 1963. To implement it, Suenens suggested the creation of a Mixed Commission drawn from the members of the DC and LAC, a proposal which was also accepted. Cardinal Cicognani, president of the CC, wrote immediately (30 January) to Ottaviani and Cento, respective presidents of the DC and the LAC, requesting them to launch the work under the banner of the new “Mixed Commission” (MC).\textsuperscript{15}

In turn, the CC charged Suenens with compiling reports on the three “social” schemas drafted by the preparatory Theological Commission that dealt with the “moral order,” the “social order” and “the community of nations” respectively, tasks which Suenens delegated to the French Jesuit Jean-Yves Calvez and François Houtart.\textsuperscript{16} Meanwhile, Italian Cardinal Giovanni Urbani proposed to utilise parts of the section of the preparatory schema on lay apostolate dealing with social issues.\textsuperscript{17}

However, from a jocist point of view as well as for the eventual orientation of the new Schema XVII, the most important proposal was undoubtedly that of Liénart, who presented a

\textsuperscript{13} Commentators have classified the various drafts of \textit{Gaudium et Spes} in a variety of ways. Here we will refer to four major drafts: The first 1963 draft or Rome Draft compiled by a mainly “Roman” team; a second Malines (or Louvain) compiled by a team organised by Suenens; a third 1964 draft or Zurich draft considered at a meeting in the Swiss city; a fourth 1965 draft or Ariccia Draft considered at Ariccia, Italy, and the Fourth Session drafts.

\textsuperscript{14} Jan Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 413.


\textsuperscript{16} Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 413.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., II, 415.
report criticising the preparatory schema on the Deposit of Faith, which had focused on condemning errors.\textsuperscript{18}

**Man in the image of God**

Rejecting this approach, Liénart insisted that the schema should be a pastoral document as John XXIII had proposed, presenting a “positive doctrine,” explaining the “meaning of life and the world.” It should therefore focus on man, the “dignity of man,” “child of God,” created in “the image of God,” called to participate in the divine nature. It should explain his “origin and destiny,” his vocation to grow, multiply and master the earth in the light of his ultimate “supernatural vocation.” Hence, it should also emphasise man’s freedom, “his right to freedom of thought, expression and action,” his “right to work in order to earn his living, his “right to a liveable habitat,” as well as his responsibility in all these fields. Moreover, the schema should also be drafted in a manner attentive to “the petitions of our contemporaries, as well as their anguishes, their exaltations and their despair.”\textsuperscript{19}

Likely drafted with the assistance of his adviser, Palémon Glorieux, it is hard to miss the echoes here of Cardijn’s own doctrine. Moreover, Glorieux already possessed the manuscript of *Laïcs en premières lignes* and had specifically congratulated Cardijn for recalling “the great truths that no-one should ignore nor lose sight of in pastoral matters.”\textsuperscript{20}

The CC immediately approved Liénart’s proposal, which was henceforth destined to be incorporated, not in a schema on the deposit of faith, but in Schema XVII.\textsuperscript{21}

**A decisive contribution**

Moeller’s commentary here was particularly significant. “It seems to me,” he wrote in 1966, “that the introduction of the theme of the image of God in connection with the presence of the Church in the world is just as important as the adoption of the themes of collegiality and the


\textsuperscript{19} Liénart, “Rapport,” 90-92.

\textsuperscript{20} Palémon Glorieux to Cardijn, 28/10/1962, AC1777.

\textsuperscript{21} Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 415.
“How exactly did the theme of man as the image of God find its way into the texts of Vatican II?” Moeller asked. It did so “precisely in the perspective of man’s dominion over the world, which is expressly connected with the divine image which irradiates his countenance,” he answered. As noted, Moeller identified the source of this as the preparatory schema, “De ordine morali christiano” published in September 1962 by the preparatory Theological Commission, which had worked closely with the PCLA with respect to the theology of the lay apostolate. According to Moeller, it was Chapter V §23 of this schema that first “expressly” linked “human dignity with the fact that man is made in the image of God.” And as he also noted, this chapter was “distinguished by a very different tone” from earlier chapters.

All of this coincided with Cardijn’s own insistence on the theme of man as the image of God, particularly in his January 1962 note for the PCLA on “L’apostolat essentiel, propre et irremplaçable de laïcs”:

However, in the apostolate of the Church, lay people have a specific, essential and irreplaceable mission that was given to the whole of humanity by the Creator at the very moment of Creation: that of procreating, taking possession of the earth, using it and developing it (Genesis I, 26-31).

Did this influence make its way into the preparatory schema, “De ordine morali christiano” and hence into the new schema? In any event, the same notion had also been put forward by Liénart’s text, which was very likely influenced by Cardijn’s forthcoming book.

Thus, the notion of man created in the image of God, with a divine dignity and vocation rapidly became a defining characteristic of the future Gaudium et Spes, as Moeller noted:

Two facts nevertheless stand out. The theme of man made to the image of God appears in the very first version of a document that was not in fact accepted as it stood, but whose very substance was preserved during the preparation of the second text. The theme of human dignity which was to be the focus of the last
three chapters of the second part of the final schema is already contained in this preliminary draft…

“Principles and action of the Church for the good of society”: A preliminary compilation

Meanwhile, Suenens had proposed to the CC a six-chapter outline for the new Schema XVII to be divided into two sections:

a) a doctrinal section, setting out fundamental principles, and
b) a pastoral section, indicating “the directives to be followed in these matters.”

Title: Principles and action of the Church for the good of society

Part I
i. The admirable vocation of man according to God;
ii. The human person in society;

Part II
iii. Matrimony, family and the demographic problem;
iv. Human culture;
v. The economic order and social justice;
vi. The international community and peace.

This was obviously based on a top-down doctrinal approach, paying little more than lip service to Liénart’s proposal for a more existential method. Moreover, Achille Glorieux clearly resented Suenens’s efforts to take control of the new schema. This was exactly what the latter had done with the schema on the Church, replacing an earlier schema prepared under the supervision of the conservative Dutch Jesuit Sebastian Tromp with an alternative drafted by Gerard Philips.

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24 Moeller, Schéma XIII, 5.
The drafting begins

At Ottaviani’s suggestion, Pavan, Ferrari Toniolo, Sigmond and de Riedmatten were co-opted to begin the initial draft compilation with Achille Glorieux, who remained secretary of the LAC, as well as with the Franciscan Lio and Tromp, the secretary of the DC. They presented their initial text to the first meeting of the MC on 13 February.

To better manage the work – and perhaps to sidestep Suenens – the MC now decided to create a “Restricted Mixed Commission” comprising eight bishops, the majority of whom were close to the Specialised Catholic Action movements. These were König (president), Griffiths, Pelletier and McGrath from the DC plus Hengsbach, Guano, Blomjous and Kominek from the LAC. 28

A list dated 10 February 1963 identified the periti involved as Pavan, Ferrari Toniolo, Quadri, Klostermann, Ramselaar, Prignon, Ligutti, Haubtmann, Sigmond, de Riedmatten, Hirschmann, Daniélou, Lio, Tucci and Medina (Chile). 29 Although Italian-dominated, the presence of the Mater et Magistra drafting team was significant. So was the presence of Haubtmann, who would keep Liénart closely informed of the schema’s development.

An immediate consequence was the choice of a new name for the schema, “De Ecclesiae praesentia et actione in mundo hodierno” (The presence and action of the Church in the world today). 30 This became the first step in a long process of moving away from an exclusively doctrinal approach. Meanwhile, the drafters produced four successive revisions between February and April. 31

Discontent with Suenens re-surfaced on 4 April 1963, when Achille Glorieux wrote to Tromp insisting that Suenens’s comments on the schema were to be understood as “observations” and not as “directives,” implying that the latter had (again) overreached his mandate. 32

29 “Document 17,” 10/02/1963, Archives Achille Glorieux. Although hand-dated 10 February, Glorieux’s handwritten note in Italian indicates that the date appeared to be later.

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Although not related to Palémon, Achille Glorieux was also from Lille, and he echoed a growing French frustration with the Belgian cardinal.

The impact of *Pacem in Terris*

Amid all this, John XXIII published his second social encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, on 11 April 1963. Although this is reputed to have introduced the concept of the “signs of the times” into formal papal social teaching, the Latin version actually made no reference to the term.\(^{33}\) Richard Schenk observes that the phrase first appeared in *L’Osservatore Romano* and in *La Civilta Cattolica* (of which Tucci was the editor), and henceforth in the Italian version, where it was used four times as a heading but not in the text, strongly implying that it was added later.\(^{34}\) Nevertheless, as noted, John XIII had previously used the term in *Humani salutis* convoking the Council, recalling Jesus’ injunction to “interpret ‘the signs of the times’,” including the “painful causes of anxiety” evident in “the tragic situation” of the world.\(^{35}\)

In the context of Schema XVII, however, it had become important to reassert the need to begin from existential reality. Thus, the added reference to “signs of the times” in *Pacem in Terris* appeared to be a bid to provide a biblical foundation for taking “the description of concrete situations as its starting point” in the development of an encyclical – and thus in a conciliar schema.\(^{36}\) Indeed, this was exactly the manner that defenders of an existential Schema XVII sought to make use of it.

A consultation with laity

Efforts had also begun to involve lay people. According to Glorieux, Ottaviani insisted from

\(^{33}\) John XXIII, *Pacem in terris*, §126.


\(^{35}\) John XXIII, *Humani Salutis*.


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the beginning that lay people be consulted as the CC also requested. On 18 March, Glorieux met with Tromp to compile a list of twenty lay people to be invited to a consultation in Rome from 25-27 April.  

Participants included Jean-Pierre Dubois-Dumée, the publisher of Cardijn’s book, Joseph Folliet, a Sillon sympathiser from Lyon, Ramon Sugranyes, Veronese, Rosemary Goldie and Mieczyslaw de Habicht (all Pax Romana) and the unionist, Auguste Vanistendael. However, there was no one currently involved in any Specialised Catholic Action movements, although Vanistendael was a former jocist leader from Belgium, who had become an adviser to Cardinal Frings. This absence was particularly ironic in view of Cardijn’s earlier requests for lay involvement.

This suggests that there was resistance to the involvement of leaders of the SCA movements, and perhaps also of Cardijn himself. Where would such resistance have come from? Tromp was certainly cool to Cardijn and the JOC. Was Suenens also involved? In any event, in so far as Suenens wished to maintain a doctrinal approach for the new schema, there was no reason to involve Cardijn or the Specialised Catholic Action movements.

**The shock of Schema XVII**

Astonishingly, Cardijn had still not been informed of the new schema or the lay consultation, despite his participation in the March LAC meeting. Achille Glorieux, who became secretary of the Mixed Commission, only learned of Cardijn’s appointment to the LAC on 25 February so was unable to provide Cardijn with any information about the new schema.  

This blissful ignorance was finally shattered by a letter from Glorieux dated 9 May 1963 explaining why the section on social action in the revised schema on lay apostolate had been radically shortened. “It is because a whole section of what we had prepared earlier has been transferred to a new Schema “De praessentia et actione Ecclesiae in mundo hodierno,” which was under preparation by a Mixed Commission, Glorieux wrote.  

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37 Stefan Gigacz, *Vatican II Bishops and Periti.*  
38 Achille Glorieux to Cardijn, 26/02/1963, AC1607.  
39 Achille Glorieux to Cardijn, 09/05/1963, AC1607.  

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Stunned, Cardijn waited nearly two weeks before replying on 24 May. “I must say that I almost turned a somersault when I learned that two schemas were being prepared,” he wrote. “Lay people are evidently not the only ones to act in and on the world,” he continued, “but the apostolate of lay people is exercised in and on the world.”  

“How, then, to separate the two schemas? Doesn’t this by its very nature underestimate the importance of the apostolate of lay people in the world?” he asked. “I would be happy, if possible, to receive a copy immediately of the draft of this new schema in order to be able to discuss it with the bishops.”

“Alternatively, could you indicate from whom I could request it,” Cardijn continued. “It would be such a shame if, by separating the two issues, the Council gave the impression of under-estimating the lay apostolate for the rechristianisation of the world of today and the future.”

Embarrassed, Glorieux replied on 27 May. “It is clear that the role of lay people is essential, and that will be clearly stated, insisting on that which is irreplaceable,” he wrote, echoing Cardijn’s familiar refrain. “But the ensemble of chapters planned goes beyond the perspective of lay people alone; and that is why there is a new separate schema.”

“For the moment, the texts are only provisional and need to be presented to the Coordination Commission on 4 June. You know that Cardinal Suenens is a member of that (commission); evidently he will be better placed to inform you about the schema,” Glorieux concluded, telegraphing to Cardijn the source of his difficulties.

Given Suenens’s opposition to Cardijn’s conception of the “irreplaceable” role of the laity, there was no chance of the latter perspective winning out while Suenens remained in charge of the schema.

40 Cardijn to Glorieux, 24/05/1963, AC1607.
The French seize the initiative

Suenens’s failure to inform Cardijn of the new schema contrasted sharply with Bishop Jacques Ménager, secretary-general for Catholic Action for the French bishops and a member of the LAC, who informed French peritus, Jean Streiff, on 18 April of the work that was about to begin. Streiff replied on 22 April stating that he had already been learned of Schema XVII from Glorieux, a month before the latter had informed Cardijn, helping explain Glorieux’s embarrassment at not having done so earlier.

Ménager’s reaction also foreshadowed the increasingly active role of the French bishops. Hence, Haubtmann, also obviously aware of the schema, wrote to Liénart on 29 May signalling that it had “badly tackled contemporary issues” and needed to better situate “the spiritual mission of the Church with respect to the issues raised.” Moreover, Rodhain had alerted Liénart over the lack of representation from the SCA movements among the drafters of the lay apostolate schema, explaining Liénart’s desire to redress the balance.

A new title: “The effective presence of the Church in the world”

Meanwhile, the drafting of Schema XVII continued without Cardijn’s involvement even if his influence had been felt via Liénart, Palémon Glorieux and others. Although the chapters on the human person and the human vocation would have pleased the JOC chaplain, the text was still far from perfect. Congar, for example, sent his own critique (style too abstract, lack of Gospel spirit) of the draft to several cardinals and bishops including Suenens, Cento, Léger and Garrone.

The much-revised Rome Draft was finally presented to the full Mixed Commission, including all bishops from both the DC and LAC, at a series of meetings from 20-25 May 1963. Here

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41 Ménager to Streiff, 18/04/1963, Archives Streiff St11, 470.
42 Streiff to Ménager, 22/04/1963, Archives Streiff St11, 471.
43 Haubtmann to Liénart, 29/05/1963, Archives Haubtmann, Ha27, 899.
44 Rodhain to Liénart, 26/12/1962, Archives Streiff, St11 465.
45 Achille Glorieux, “Historia praesertim.”
there was general agreement that the doctrinal section was progressing with its “doctrine of man” based on “the biblical truth” of man as “the image of God,” as Liénart had proposed. But there was uncertainty as to how to deal with the various concrete issues involved: marriage and family, culture, economics and social justice, the world community and peace.

According to Tucci, several participants at the MC meeting expressed doubts that it was opportune for the Council to pronounce itself on such contingent issues. Other no doubt more jocist-inspired voices, however, insisted that “the world expected concrete responses from the Church to the most anguishing social and moral problems.”

This jocist influence also emerged in the updated title of the schema, which now read “The effective presence of the Church in the world of today.”

**The July 1963 text**

The newly revised plan, later described by Haubtmann as founded upon a notion of “Christian animation of the temporal sphere,” maintained the original two doctrinal and pastoral parts and six chapters (the names of which had also been slightly altered) under the title: “The effective presence of the Church in the world of today.”

Before any further progress could be made, however, John XXIII died on 3 June 1963, leading to the suspension of the Council until the installation of Paul VI on 30 June. During this inter-regnum, Cardijn’s long delayed *Laïcs en premières lignes* finally made its appearance.

Once the new pope confirmed that the Council would proceed, the Rome Draft (*primum* according to Glorieux’s classification) of Schema XVII was submitted to the CC on 4 July 1963 where further criticisms were made. The critics included Suenens, who remained rapporteur on behalf of the CC. “In my opinion, the proposed text is certainly better than the earlier draft and it contains excellent paragraphs; however, it is not yet apt to be presented to

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48 Moeller, Vorgrimler, Vol. 5, 16.
49 Tucci, “Introduction historique,” 44.
50 Pierre Haubtmann, “Le Schéma.”
52 Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 421-422.
the Council,” Suenens opined.53

Among his reasons, he noted that “the Council… should be careful not to confuse the data of sociological experience, changing over the course of time, with the principles of faith and the natural law.” This was obviously a shot at the members of the MC and drafting team who wanted an inductive schema founded on lived experience.

No doubt responding to the growing influence of these jocist forces, Suenens again attempted to take over the drafting process, obtaining a mandate from the CC to prepare a new draft. This was to be prepared by a new special commission that would set out the “general principles” based on “biblical and patristic doctrine,” which would form the “theological and dogmatic preface” to the schema. Only “principles for solution” would be offered and not “recipes” to solve problems. The preface was to be based on Chapter I on the human vocation of the person from Part I of the Rome Draft.54

With respect to the “specific issues” that formed Part II, these were each to be studied by a special commission that would work together with chosen clerics and laity. Since in Suenens’s view these were contingent and therefore non-conciliar matters, the Council would then simply approve the conclusions of each special commission in forma globali and publish them as “instructions.”55

The Louvain/Malines Draft

The plan

Armed with this mandate, Suenens invited a number of experts to a meeting in Malines from 6-8 September 1963. All clergy, these experts included Cerfaux, Prignon, Philips, Thils, Moeller, Dondeyne, and Delhaye, all from Louvain, although Delhaye also taught in Lille and in Canada, as well as Congar, Rahner, Rigaux and Tucci, all of whom were theologians.

54 Ibid., 50.
55 Ibid.
Although he was from Louvain, Houtart, a sociologist, did not take part, nor did Calvez, presumably not invited. Similarly, Chenu, already well known as a partisan of the “signs of the times” approach, was “excluded,” to use the term of the historian Giovanni Turbanti, even though – or perhaps because – Chenu had recently sent Suenens, whom he clearly regarded as an ally, a copy of an article that he had written on *Pacem in Terris* and the signs of the times.\(^{56}\) Also absent was De Riedmatten, the ICO chaplain, who had warned Congar that there would be “immense disappointment” if the schema limited itself to “principles and generalities” and failed to indicate “concrete solutions.”\(^ {57}\) Evidently, Cardijn was not invited.

Suenens’s aims were also clear from the fact that he asked Philips to preside at the Malines meeting. Here, Philips explained that the new schema, which became known as the Louvain or Malines Draft, would be divided into two sections:

- **Part I:** A theological exposé on the presence of the Church in the world and its dogmatic significance, which would be presented to a vote in aula for adoption as a conciliar text.

- **Part II:** This would address specific issues examined in Part I with some eventual proposals on which the Council would offer its views without formally pronouncing, while a post-conciliar commission would take charge of their definitive formulation.

Just as they had done in preparing the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate in 1957, Suenens and Philips now sought to ensure that Schema XVII would follow the doctrinal approach. Moreover, since Suenens claimed to have a mandate from the CC, the plan was not subject to debate.\(^ {58}\)

**The content**

The content of Part I was pure Suenens and divided into three sections:


\(^{57}\) Ibid., 264.

\(^{58}\) François Houtart and Charles Moeller, “Par délà le schéma 13,” 25, Archives Houtart, 0844.
I: *De Ecclesiae propria missione*: The proper mission of the Church (i.e. not of the laity) considered above all “under its aspect of evangelisation of the world”;

II: *De mundo aedificando*: This section considered the autonomy of the world “based on the principle of the distinction between the world of temporal realities, created by God and regulated by his laws, and the Church”;

III: *De officiis Ecclesiae erga mundum*: This developed the task of the Church under three headings: witness, charitable service, and communion.59

Simply put, this was Suenens’s book, *Eglise en état de mission*, in conciliar clothing. Predictably, the meeting concluded by mandating Philips to prepare a new draft based on this outline, which was re-discussed on 17 September and finalised on 22 September.

**Reaction**

Nevertheless, the Suenens-Philips project did not meet with unanimous approval, even among the handpicked participants. “The task had been clearly established from the beginning by Mgr Philips, who presided,” wrote Tucci in his account, delicately dissociating himself from it.60

During the meeting, Dondeyne argued for a “less theological” perspective “more resolutely turned to the problems of the world,”61 as expressed in his book *La foi écoute le monde*, or “Faith listens to the world,” which would appear several months later.62 Indeed, both Dondeyne and Rahner criticised the “ecclesio-centric” orientation of Philips’s text.63 It is thus noteworthy that Dondeyne was “empêché” or “unavailable” (deliberately?) along with Rahner, for the final meeting of the Malines group on 17-18 September.64

60 Ibid., 51.

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Surprisingly, Congar seems not to have reacted, although he agreed that the Council needed to be aware of the “real situation in the world.”\textsuperscript{65} In fact, in his journal, Congar noted that Dondeyne “did not quite see that we are dealing with a dogmatic constitution.”\textsuperscript{66}

Achille Glorieux’s evaluation of the Malines initiative was also instructive. Writing to the Dominican Bernard Lambert in 1984, he noted:

> You say correctly… that the Louvain Schema was “much less known, even among the members of the (Mixed) Commission.” I question to which “competent organs” Cardinal Suenens presented his text: the co-presidents of the Mixed Commission? But Cardinal Cento did not send me anything. To the Coordination Commission, which, according to him, had mandated him to prepare a new text?\textsuperscript{67}

Glorieux thus dismissed the project as a personal initiative by Suenens that he had illegitimately sought to cover with the authority of the Coordinating Commission. This was similar to the way that Suenens had recruited Philips to produce a new draft of the schema on the Church. However, whereas Philips’s schema was accepted as the basis of \textit{Lumen Gentium}, Suenens’s attempt to do the same for Schema XVII was doomed to failure. Glorieux’s contempt for Suenens’s manipulations was evident from the fact that his chronology of drafts of the schema failed to mention the Louvain Draft.\textsuperscript{68}

Later, McGrath would offer the most incisive critique of the Malines Draft. “Even the theologians regarded as progressive, who were actively at work to brilliantly renew the definition of the Church in the Dogmatic Constitution \textit{Lumen Gentium} rebelled against anything that might resemble an empirical analysis of the world,” he wrote in 1966. “They forcefully affirmed that a Council needed to proceed by the surest theological means, i.e. starting from the principles of revelation, from which one draws the norms of faith and morals, including for the temporal order.”\textsuperscript{69} But no-one admitted this publicly in 1964.

\textsuperscript{65} Turbanti, \textit{Un concilio}, 264.
\textsuperscript{66} Congar, \textit{My Journal}, 314.
\textsuperscript{67} Achille Glorieux to Bernard Lambert, 02/12/1984, Archives Achille Glorieux.
\textsuperscript{68} Glorieux, “Historia praesertim.”
\textsuperscript{69} Marcos McGrath, “Présentation de la Constitution” in \textit{L’Eglise dans le monde}, Congar-Peuchmaurd, ed., 18.
Meanwhile, Suenens’s initiative “aroused the wrath” of Garrone, who would play a major role in the further development of Schema XVII, and whose disputes with Suenens stretched back to the World Congress of 1957. Suenens’s plan to take control of the schema was about to completely backfire.

**Cardijn reacts**

**The bishops**

Although shocked to learn of Schema XVII in May, there is no indication Cardijn contacted Suenens as Achille Glorieux had suggested. After the experience with his book, there was no point. Moreover, given Suenens’s role as metropolitan archbishop, it would have compromised other Belgian bishops to involve them. Instead, Cardijn began to seek support from the jocist Council Fathers (including by promoting his book!).

Thus, on 1 July he wrote to Camara suggesting that he contact Paul VI to discuss Camara’s plans for CELAM in Latin America. But he also wanted to meet Camara to re-emphasise the importance of the lay apostolate. “The world expects a clear and firm declaration,” Cardijn wrote, underlining the words. “And lay people are ready to respond to the call of the Council, provided that call is clear and that means are set out to give the lay apostolate its whole importance and its whole effectiveness.” In reply, as noted, Camara signalled his intention to request John XXIII for a red hat for Cardijn, emphasising that “our JOC will be supported decisively and totally.”

Similarly, Cardijn contacted the French JOC chaplain, Adrien Dewitte, and Palémon Glorieux at Lille in an unsuccessful effort to meet with Liénart, who was in Rome. Not to be thwarted, Cardijn wrote an unusually emphatic and long letter expressing his concerns to Glorieux, whose own book *Nature et mission de l’Eglise* had just appeared.

“May the Council proclaim… the apostolic and missionary value and mission of each person,

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71 Cardijn to Camara, 01/07/1963, AC927.
in his earthly life, for all his human and earthly needs and for the transformation of the world
and humanity according to the plan of creation and redemption,” Cardijn wrote.

“May the apostolic and missionary value and mission of each person inspire in the Church an
apostolic and missionary spirit that is expressed in the whole catechesis, liturgy, pastoral
activity in order that all members of the Church – priests, religious and lay people –
understand their proper role in view of this apostolate,” he continued.  

“May all priests be formed for this apostolate,” Cardijn continued. “May the state of lay life
in all its aspects appear and be transformed into an apostolate… May this apostolic
transformation of the state of life be realised in specialised movements directed by lay
people, assisted by priests, and mandated by the Hierarchy,” Cardijn wrote.

“We ardently desire that the Council Fathers clearly express their desire to see realised this
double aspect of the lay apostolate: the proper aspect and the aspect of coordination, from the
grassroots up to the summit.”

It was vintage Cardijn and a powerful appeal – an alarm – that even without mentioning
Suenens, cannot have failed to move both Palémon Glorieux and Liénart, who remained
president of the French Assemblée des cardinaux et des archevêques and now enjoyed the
extra authority conferred by his First Session intervention.

The movements mobilise

Meanwhile, the JOCI continued to follow the work of the Council. President, Bartolo Perez
from Brazil had strong ties with Latin American bishops while other leaders, and especially
chaplains, were well connected via the network of jocist and SCA bishops. In February 1963
the movement published a document entitled “Some proposals concerning the lay apostolate
solicited by several bishops,” which basically summarised Laïcs en premières lignes and
concretised several proposals, including the establishment of a Vatican secretariat for the lay
apostolate.

Cardijn to Palémon Glorieux, 10/07/1963, AC1580.
Following the success of its Executive Meeting in Germany in 1962, the JOCI organised its next meeting in Montreal – the heart of the jocist stronghold of francophone Canada. This took place in September 1963, just weeks before the opening of the Second Session providing an excellent opportunity to lobby the Canadian Council Fathers.

Further collaboration developed with the JOCI’s movements leading in August 1963 to the publication of a document “Specialised Catholic Action among Youth” produced by the JOCI, the JECI (International Young Christian Students) and the MIJARC (International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth).

Yet, in a further sign that these movements remained on the outer, Vanistendael remained the only person with a Specialised Catholic Action movement background among the first (all male) group of eleven lay auditors invited to attend the Second Session.73

**Cardijn as peritus**

More positively, when this Session opened on 29 September 1963, Cardijn was finally present as a peritus. Having just returned from Montreal, he arrived in Rome on 28 September and remained until 15 October. Typically, he arranged for fourteen movement lay leaders and chaplains to join him in Rome from 6-13 October 1963.74

A document prepared for the visit entitled “La JOC Internationale en 1963” outlined the movement’s work, particularly its campaigns on Work and Big Cities, its concern for international solidarity and its continental training programs. Once again, it was classic Cardijn delivering his message through the example of the JOC.75

By now, well over one hundred bishops and many periti had received copies of *Laïcs en premières lignes*, including many who were directly involved with the schemas on the Church and the world. It is thus inconceivable that Schema XVII did not figure in the discussions and meetings of his fortnight at the Second Session, as shown by the fact that Cardijn now

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73 Council Daybook, I, 140.
74 AC1300.
75 Ibid.
possessed an early draft of the document.

Renewing the partnership with Paul VI

Having known Montini for thirty years, Cardijn immediately sought a papal audience which took place on 10 October 1963. It was nearly ten years since Paul VI had left the Secretariat of State for Milan. Yet “the affection of the Holy Father was moving,” Cardijn wrote to Guérin, as was his “desire to restore intimate collaboration.”

Nevertheless, the pope was “ignorant of the movement today” and did not “understand either its extent or its activity,” Cardijn noted. Rather, he was “preoccupied with the problems of the Church, the Hierarchy and ecumenism.” Therefore, he needed updating on the issues facing young workers as well as the movement’s activities and concerns.

Cardijn also made sure to obtain an autograph letter that was issued on 4 November. The JOC was “the providential instrument” of the Church enabling young workers to become “conscious of their marvellous destiny,” “teaching them to live in accordance with their dignity as children of God,” Paul VI wrote. This “great educative and apostolic movement” assisted young workers “to discover and implement themselves the Christian and human solution to the problems of their lives,” the pope continued. Likely based on suggestions by Cardijn, it provided a vital new papal endorsement of the JOC and its methods.

Church, world and lay apostolate

Meanwhile, Cardijn had obtained an early version of the Rome Draft of Schema XVII, as indicated by a note he wrote entitled “Présence et action de l’église dans le monde d’aujourd’hui,” the early working title of the schema. Filed in Cardijn’s Archives in a folder entitled “Pour le Saint Père – Secrétairerie d’Etat,” it was also marked in Fiévez’s handwriting “attendre”: “wait.” Thus, it is not clear whether Cardijn sent this note to Paul VI.

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76 Cardijn to Guérin, 16/12/1963, AC1300.
It was an important reflection. “Several people are astonished and others are worried by the announcement of two separate schemas to be presented to the next session of the Ecumenical Council,” Cardijn wrote, “the first schema dealing with the Apostolate of the Laity, the second with the Presence and action of the Church in the world of today.” 78

How was it possible to separate the two schemas? “Isn’t the presence and action of the Church in the world,” Cardijn asked, “primordially the presence and action of the personal and organised apostolate of lay people in the world?” Did not such a separation imply that the Council was going “to restrict the notion and the zone of the lay apostolate, even while highlighting the presence and action of the Church in the world?” 79

Certainly, Cardijn understood the counter-arguments, as listed by Suenens himself, i.e. that “[l]ay people alone do not represent the whole Church in the world… it is the whole Church which acts in the world, influences and transform it.” Moreover, the lay apostolate was not “limited to its presence and action in the world” with each person having “an apostolic role in the Church itself and every field.”

Nevertheless, this did not deter him from his own fundamental concern for the Council “to insist on the importance of the apostolate proper to the laity in the world.” (Cardijn’s emphasis) Hence the need for the Council to express this in a “clear, solemn, striking fashion” and for “the two schemas to be intimately linked in exposing the absolute necessity of the apostolate proper to the laity and the apostolate of the whole Church in the world of today and tomorrow.” 80

Once again, this was Cardijn’s conciliar triptych: Church, world, and lay apostolate. It also constituted his critique of Schema XVII. But he had no direct channel for introducing this reflection into its preparation.

78 Cardijn, “Présence et action.”
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
**Inter Mirifica: The first Council to adopt the see-judge-act**

In parallel with all this, the Council moved ahead towards the adoption of its first documents, namely the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and the Decree on the Media of Social Communications, *Inter Mirifica*, both of which were promulgated on 4 December 1963.

Regarding the latter, we recall that during the First Session French Archbishop René Stourm, rapporteur for the schema on the Media of Social Communications, had adopted Cardijn’s educate-serve-represent trilogy in his presentation of the schema, which was prepared by a sub-commission of the Lay Apostolate Commission.

It is therefore significant that the final decree also became the first to introduce the see-judge-act into a conciliar document. Thus, §4 insisted that in order to make “proper use” of social communication media, media workers – many of whom were laity – needed to “be acquainted with the norms of morality and conscientiously put them into practice.” To achieve this, however, they needed to follow a three-step process, which emerges most clearly in the Latin version of the document. Thus, media workers needed first to look at the “nature of what is being communicated;” secondly, they needed to consider “the entire situation or circumstances,” which may affect its “propriety” or “integrity” (Latin: *honestas*); in order, thirdly, to decide upon the proper mode of acting (Latin: *modus agendi*).

Overall, however, the decree retained a more traditional “doctrinal” structure, comprising an Introduction, followed by a first chapter expounding Church teaching and a second chapter on its pastoral application. Intriguingly, however, the Introduction also pointedly opened with an exposition of the “wonderful technological discoveries” of the “present era” that had led to the development of the media (§1).

In effect, this transformed the structure of *Inter Mirifica* into a see-judge-act format with the Introduction providing the “see,” Chapter I on Church doctrine, the “judge,” and Chapter II on pastoral applications, the “act.” This precisely foreshadowed a similar evolution in the successive schemas that finally emerged as *Gaudium et Spes*.  

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Towards the Zurich Draft

The Central Sub-Commission

Meanwhile, since the Second Session was also busy with the schemas on the Church, the episcopate and ecumenism, the Mixed Commission did not meet again until 29 November. However, there were now two competing texts to consider, the May 1963 Rome Draft and the Malines Draft.

However, the Malines text had not been widely distributed, upsetting members of the MC, who had been by-passed by Suenens’s initiative. Even among those who were aware of it, like Garrone, there was considerable discontent, particularly from those of a jocist orientation, who criticised it for being too exclusively “theological” or doctrinal.

Several members called for a text closer in spirit and methodology to *Mater et Magistra* (see-judge-act) and the more recent *Pacem in Terris* (signs of the times). According to Tucci, certain participants felt that the Malines text, “leaving aside any allusion to the gravest problems of humanity today, had lost its bite and failed to respond to the expectations of our time.”81 Nevertheless, it was noted that the Suenens text had improved on the May text with a greater focus on the human vocation and in broadening the theological vision of the links between the Church and the world.

In response, the idea emerged for a new, more concrete and more pastoral text synthesising the earlier texts. To achieve this, Canadian Bishop Georges Pelletier, another ex-jocist chaplain, proposed the creation of a new “Restricted Commission,” which became known as the “Central Sub-Commission” (CSC), to be elected by secret ballot from the members of the DC and the LAC.

Elected were Ancel, McGrath, Schröffer, Guano, Hengsbach and Ménager, all of whom except Guano, an ex-Pax Romana student chaplain, had direct links with the jocist

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movements. Perhaps in a gesture of even-handedness, Guano was elected by the Sub-Commission as president and two further members co-opted, Blomjous, a Dutch bishop also sympathetic to the JOC, and the American John Wright. Thus, while Suenens remained nominally in charge of the schema, the Cardijn bishops gained control over the drafting.

By the same token, there was no certainty that the schema would gain the approval of the required conciliar majority. Thus, regardless of the difficulties, Suenens’s active or at least tacit support for the schema, of which he remained rapporteur, remained critical. Despite their clear desire for a schema starting from lived experience, the CSC members therefore proceeded cautiously.

**Ménager’s proposal: Signs of the times and the see-judge-act**

Significant too were a series of letters and notes by Ménager in December 1963 where the issue was not whether to use the see-judge-act method but how to apply it. Commenting on the Malines draft, Ménager immediately signalled his disagreement with Suenens on the “question of method.”

Although the doctrinal elements were “interesting” and the practical applications “numerous and well chosen,” the plan was “too ‘scholastic’ and theoretical,” Ménager warned. “It starts from the Church which magisterially sets out its doctrine without considering the problems that anguish the world, except in a few more or less timeless principles and a few over-generalised examples,” he warned.\(^\text{82}\)

What was required was a “dynamic” method that “took people where they are (their problems, their questions)” so as to “lead them progressively towards a discovery” rather than an exposition that was “static” or limited to “abstract principles.” Nor did this amount to “situational theology,” Ménager argued, anticipating criticism.

Rather, “an authentic presentation of the revealed message starting from Revelation, in response to the questions asked by people today,” was needed. Hence, Ménager proposed,

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there was “not the least theological difficulty” in setting out:

1. The questions posed by the world today (as the problematic)

2. The theological principles that form the basis of a theological response to these questions

3. The concrete application of these principles to the questions raised.\(^\text{83}\)

Ménager developed the same see-judge-act argumentation in a second note dated 15 December 1963 in which he insisted, again in unmistakably jocist terms, on the need to progressively bring people towards the discovery of:

a) a true understanding of their lives as people and the practical consequences

b) their total vocation in God’s plan (divine vocation).\(^\text{84}\)

Thus, the main theological argument of the schema should focus on “Christ as Lord and Servant, Creator Word and Incarnated Word Redeemer,” Ménager suggested. Since Christ was a living person, this was more accessible to people than the more “Platonic” theme of the image of God deformed and restored.\(^\text{85}\)

Haubtmann also received a copy of Ménager’s notes, proposing a slightly modified formulation, developing *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris*, and beginning from “the situation of the world (signs of the times) and the call of the people who await a response from the Church (Freedom and personal dignity. World hunger. Peace and friendship.)”\(^\text{86}\)

In another note, however, dated 22 December 1963, Ménager questioned whether even such an approach, which remained “deductive” in its manner of applying “theological principles,” was adequate. It might be “more easily accepted… by the bishops,” but “would it be accepted by non-believers?” he asked.\(^\text{87}\)

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\(^\text{83}\) Ibid.  
\(^\text{85}\) Ibid.  
\(^\text{87}\) Ménager, “Nouvelles remarques.”
Thus, he proposed a new outline emphasising the personal and the human. Thus, the “signs of the times” to be observed included “the concrete calls of the people, their “desire for liberty and personal dignity through education…,” their “need for responsibility and participation…” as well as for “peace and friendship among people....”

Similarly, the new “judge” section accentuated “the nature of man” and “authentic human progress” and the need for Christians and all people of good will to place themselves at the service of this humanity.” Hence, “properly Christian perspectives” for action would need to be founded on “human dignity,” as well as God’s “plan of creation” and “plan of Redemption and Resurrection.”

Yet he did not “dare to insist” on such an outline because of his “fear that the Theological Commission would have difficulty accepting it and this may block the project.”

Ancel’s proposal: Dialogue and dialectic

In a similar vein, Ancel wrote to Guano on 19 December with a detailed proposal for a revised schema that also bore a clear jocist imprint. Indeed, Ancel’s proposal abounded with expressions very likely borrowed from Cardijn’s *Laïcs en premières lignes*: God’s plan, the meaning of earthly life, the continuity between the orders of creation and redemption, not opposing the spiritual and the temporal, the role “proper” to lay people as lay people, who must “become conscious of their apostolic responsibilities.”

While praising the “excellent project of Cardinal Suenens,” which could be used for “its scriptural sources” and “general orientations,” Ancel, like Ménager, rejected its narrow focus on “evangelisation”:

> In fact, Cardinal Suenens speaks of evangelisation of the world in his draft… Unless we receive precise instructions asking us to deal with everything concerning the dialogue of the Church and the world, we should, it seems to me, content ourselves with studying that which is properly our task, namely

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88 Ibid.
the Church with respect to the great problems of our time.\footnote{Ancel to Guano, 19/12/1963, Archives Haubtmann, Ha31, 1230.}

Moreover, since the schema should be addressed to “all men” and should have “a dialogue character,” it should be drafted as follows:

A prooemium would set out in a general manner what the world expects from the Church, what the response of the Church will be and how that response will be situated with respect to the questions posed.

Next, five chapters corresponding roughly to the May 1963 draft would present the main problems of the world and the response that the Church makes to them.

Finally, a conclusion would present the supreme request of the world. The world would like the Church to show itself increasingly under the aspect of Christ, i.e. poor, servant and totally independent, in order that it could more easily give to people the doctrine of Christ.\footnote{Ibid.}

Drawing on Paul VI’s speech opening the Second Session, Ancel’s letter, thus proposed to structure the schema as a “dialogue” between “the great problems of our time,” and the “response of the Church.” In effect, Ancel was re-framing Cardijn’s three truths dialectic, in which the contradiction would be resolved by developing a more authentically Christ-like poorer, independent, and servant Church.

**Towards a “dialogue” schema**

Ten days later, on 30 December, representatives of the Sub-Commission met with the German Redemptorist Bernard Häring, as well as Sigmond and Tucci in order to plan the work based on suggestions and observations from Hengsbach, Schröffer, Ménager, Renard, Hien and Ancel.

Here it was decided that the basis of the new draft would not be “a mere doctrinal instruction” but should look at and promote “dialogue with the world of today.” This implied both “listening to the Word of God revealed in Christ” as well as to “the real conditions of the world of today, its anguishes and the positive possibilities of all men.” It also implied
“dialogue with all men,” including “separated brethren” and “men of all cultures.”

While the CSC rejected a “purely doctrinal” schema, it also sought to avoid a purely “sociological” document, making no mention of the see-judge-act or even “signs of the times.” As Ancel had proposed, the emphasis was placed on “dialogue” between the truths of reality and the truth of the Gospel message.

Despite hesitating over the use of the see-judge-act in a conciliar document, the new drafting guidelines immediately adopted other jocist themes and concerns: the Church in the world, the new role of lay people in a pluralist society, in a world tending towards unity, the centrality of the dignity of the human person, international solidarity, hunger, etc., as well as the existing aspects of family, culture, social order, peace, etc., which were to be developed in a series of “Annexes.”

Following this meeting, various participants organised study sessions in their home countries during January 1964. Thus, Hengsbach met with Schröffer, Höffner and Hirschmann in Germany, while Camara gathered a group in Brazil. In France, Ménager and Ancel organised study groups in which several JOC and ACO chaplains took part. As Haubtmann’s archives show, leaders of the adult SCA movements were systematically consulted by the French bishops and periti.

Meanwhile, the Rome-based Commission members, including Häring, met in January to draft a preliminary text, now with the provisional title “The active participation of the Church in the construction of the world” and with the following outline:

Introduction: Solidarity of the Council with humanity; Progress and failures of humanity; Questions about the human race; Aim of the schema; The Church at the service of the world.

Chapter I: The integral vocation of the human person

Chapter II: The Church at the service of God and Man

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Chapter III: Participation in the construction of the world

Chapter IV: The most urgent tasks: Hunger (physical and spiritual) and human development; economic well-being and culture; the family; peace.

Chapter V: An appeal to separated brethren and men of goodwill.

Annexes: These would deal with the subjects of Chapter IV in more detail.

A rough draft along these lines was completed for consideration at the next full meeting of the CSC set for Zurich from 1-3 February 1964.

The Zurich meeting

All members of the CSC except for Blomjous took part in the Zurich meeting as well as Glorieux, Tucci, Sigmond, Hirschmann, Glorieux, De Riedmatten, Medina and Moeller as did two lay people, the Pax Romana men, Sugranyes and De Habicht. The desire to make a clean break with Suenens’s plan was evident in the fact that only Tucci and Moeller remained from the Malines meeting.

As Tucci noted, it was established that the issue of evangelisation in the sense of the Malines Draft was no longer to be considered. Secondly, rather than offering a “theology of earthly realities,” the objective was to offer “a theological interpretation of the real situation of the modern world and the tasks that this implied for Christians.”

Several other redactional principles were also agreed, as summarised by historian Evangelista Vilanova:

1. The idea of dialogue with the modern world;
2. Solidarity of the Church with the whole human race;
3. The principle of the “signs of the times;”

93 Ibid., III, 404.
94 Grootaers notes that all Suenens’s regular advisers except Moeller were “excluded” from the preparation of the Zurich schema. Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 428.
These guidelines were expanded in three important notes:

a) “Suggestions for the drafting of the Pastoral Instruction on the CHURCH IN THE WORLD”: This insisted on the importance of characterising “the signs of the times,” citing *Pacem in Terris*, and offered a biblical foundation for the need to analyse “the conditions of life.”

b) “Note of the Sub-Commission on the nature of the schema and the norms used in developing it”: This sought to distinguish “speculative theology,” which provided a basis for interpreting the “reality of the present time,” and “practical theology,” which provided “the norms for action of Christians” with respect to a particular situation.

c) “The history, character, method and spirituality of SCHEMA XVII”. This explanatory document, reputedly written by Häring, contrasted the Ménager and Ancel proposals, emphasising that the schema should respond concretely to various issues, and be imbued with “spirituality” of a “combination of opposites” that were in “harmonious tension.”

Given the involvement of so many jocist-formed bishops in this process, these are clear echoes of Cardijn’s Proudhonian dialectic, as the subsequent evolution of the schema would show.

**Schema XIII**

Following the Zurich meeting, the draft was further revised in February for presentation to the Mixed Commission in Rome in March, which endorsed its overall direction. After further revision, the CSC met on 3 June in Rome, followed the next day by the full MC meeting. During this meeting Philips and Rahner criticised what they regarded as a “confusion” in the schema of “the natural and supernatural orders in the world.” Nevertheless, the MC approved the schema by a large majority, and submitted it to the CC, who approved it for submission to the Council, now renumbered as Schema XIII. On 3 July 1964, Paul VI himself

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issued instructions to distribute the schema, entitled “The Church in the world today,” to the Council Fathers.

The work of the jocist network

Visits to Rome

Meanwhile, Cardijn continued to make his presence felt, travelling to Argentina, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and Germany in following months. The German and Dutch editions of Laïcs en premières lignes also appeared. The same year, the JOCI held its ExCo meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and organised a major “Euro Rally” at Strasbourg in August 1964, which was notable for a recorded address by Paul VI.97

Cardijn continued to participate in the Lay Apostolate Commission meetings, visiting Rome from 1-14 March 1964, where he planned to meet with Ménager, Veronese and (if possible) with Liénart.98 He was thus in Rome throughout the period of the Mixed Commission meetings. He returned to Rome from 31 May to 7 June, corresponding with the dates of the June CSC and MC meetings. Given his longstanding links with many members of these commissions – and the jocist orientation that the schema had now taken – it is impossible to believe that he did not discuss the progress of Schema XIII with these bishops and periti.

On his second visit, he had another audience with Paul VI where he suggested an encyclical on youth, an issue that had been largely ignored by the Council. According to Cardijn’s notes, this would focus particularly on “the education of youth,” which was to take place “in the world of today,” a phrase that Cardijn evidently wanted the Pope to make his own. The proposed encyclical would also address “the future of humanity,” “the world of work,” “opportunities and dangers,” “missionary aid,” etc., all themes on which Cardijn hoped to rally the pope to the jocist cause and method and by implication to Schema XIII.

This proposal failed, however, as Paul VI was preparing his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*, for which he also sought input from Cardijn, who requested Fiévez to gather notes. The outcome was a ten-page reflection sent to Archbishop Dell’Acqua on 30 July 1964, together with forty pages of philosophical and theological quotations illustrating the remarkable breadth of his (and Fiévez’s!) reading: Dondeyne, Zundel, Congar, Kung, Visser t’Hooft, Suensens, Folliet, Patriarch Athenagoras, John Meyendorff, Guitton, Pax Christi, Mounier’s magazine *Esprit*...

The central point was that dialogue should start, not from the summit, but from the people, from reality, from “[l]ife, as it happens at the grassroots,” which is where “dialogue is incarnated, as the Spirit of Christ leads it every day at the heart of humanity.” “The whole jocist movement – its method, its action, the formation that it gives, its extension and its international unity – are all based on dialogue,” Cardijn argued.

“The most elementary and most concrete form of dialogue” was that which took place “around the circumstances of the life of the young worker,” and which led him gradually “towards the deepest internal dialogue” revealing “the value of his life, his vocation and his divine destiny.” The see-judge-act was itself “an education in dialogue” that produced “tangible fruit,” which could never be achieved through “teaching passively received from on high.”

Although it was too late for Cardijn’s note to seriously impact on the encyclical, which was published on 6 August, Dell’Acqua thanked him, adding that the pope was familiar with his notes and, importantly, wanted to see “a serious and positive dialogue between the Church and the world today.” Thus, the encyclical insisted in §96 that dialogue was based on “seeing the concrete situation very clearly” while §78 proposed dialogue as “a method of

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101 Dell’Acqua to Cardijn, 13/08/1964, AC1631.
approach” in a clear pontifical endorsement of the dialogue approach now embodied in Schema XIII.102

Moreover, Ecclesiam Suam also cited the phrase “in the world” precisely in the sense proposed by Cardijn and by the Schema thirteen times. In Härting’s view, the encyclical had a “decisive impact,” a view also supported by Archbishop Marcos McGrath and Tucci.103

The jocist lobby

Meanwhile, the jocist bishops and periti continued their efforts. In early 1964, Camara drafted a 9,000-word essay entitled L’Eglise, Lumen Gentium, comprising his “suggestions for the reformulation of Schema XVII.” This was a detailed see-judge-act reflection, in French, which was divided as follows:

I. The signs of the times
II. The Church confronts the world
III. The Church, leaven of the world.104

In Canada, Maurice Roy chaired a Comité de consultation for the Canadian bishops, which concluded that Schema XVII should begin from the “situation today,” and show a Church “existentially involved” in the world, showing that it “understood better than anybody what was in store for the world in the year 2000.” Hence the need “to situate itself concretely with respect to global modern reality.”105

In France, priests linked to the Mission Ouvrière, the JOC and the ACO continued to meet to develop reflections which they submitted to the French bishops. Chenu wrote his famous article Les signes des temps, which appeared in January 1965 in the Belgian journal, Nouvelle Revue Théologique, in a clear shot at Suenens and Philips.106 Also in Belgium, Dondeyne’s

102 Paul VI, Ecclesiam Suam, §78.
103 Vilanova, “The Intersession,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, III, 413.
book *La foi écoute le monde* appeared while Houtart published *L’Eglise et le monde, A propos du schema 17*. The efforts of the jocist network were slowly coalescing into an overwhelming force.

**The Third Session**

**A packed agenda**

When the Third Session opened on 14 September 1964, twenty-one lay auditors were present, including Patrick Keegan and Bartolo Perez, Auguste Vanistendael – all with a jocist background – plus Marie Louise Monnet from the MIAMS, quadrupling the number of auditors from the SCA movements in another sign of Paul VI’s favour – and Cardijn’s influence.

The packed agenda included finalising the schema on the Church, which became *Lumen Gentium*, as well as the decrees on ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, and on the Eastern Churches, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*. Many other schemas were also listed for debate, including those on religious liberty and lay apostolate.

Cardijn arrived in Rome on 13 September and stayed until 13 October, the last day of debate on the lay apostolate schema. He therefore missed the debate on Schema XIII, which took place from 20 October until 5 November. Nor was he in Rome during the important preparatory meeting of the CSC held from 10-12 September. Nevertheless, prior to his arrival, he did send an 8 September note to Bishop Van Zuylen of Liège entitled “De Juventute” lamenting the lack of reference to youth in Schema XIII and calling for greater attention to this issue.¹⁰⁷

This time he did not have an audience with Paul VI. However, he did meet Dell’Acqua on 12 October to discuss the pope’s forthcoming December trip to Bombay for the Eucharistic Congress,¹⁰⁸ and where he would also open the Joseph Cardijn Technical School in the

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Preparing the debate

The September CSC meeting decided also to invite the presidents and vice-presidents of the sub-commissions working on the annexes, a decision which further reinforced the jocist ascendancy at the meeting whose participants now included:

Bishops: Cardinal König, Bishops Ancel, Blomjous, Charue, Dearden, Garrone, Guano, Hengsbach, McGrath, Ménager, Roy, Schröffer, Wright.
Lay auditors: Habicht, Larnaud, Manzini, Sugranyes de Franch, Vanistendael.

Inevitably the meeting further criticised the Zurich draft, considering it a step backwards from Pacem et Terris and Ecclesiam Suam, as well as too “moralistic,” sometimes “triumphalist,” as well as imprecise in its references to “the world.” Moreover, it was too “occidental,” its theology of earthly realities weak, etc.\footnote{110}

In a bid to remedy these shortcomings, the CSC created two new Sub-Commissions, namely:

a) A Theological Sub-Commission (TSC) to clarify the doctrinal issues, including the theological significance of the “world,” the relationship between the Creation and the Redemption, as well as the “value” of the “signs of the times.”

b) An innovative “Signs of the Times” Sub-Commission (STSC) to study world realities within a broader perspective than that of the original particular subjects (family, culture, economics, etc.).

\footnote{109} Fesquet, Le journal, 597.
\footnote{110} Tucci, “Introduction historique,” 73-74.
It also adopted further drafting guidelines aiming to clarify these issues. Meanwhile, Council Fathers began to challenge the status of the annexes. On 1 October, Felici announced that the text of these was “a purely private document” and therefore not for discussion *in aula.* This drew immediate opposition from Glorieux leading Felici to clarify that, while the annexes were not “merely private,” they would not have conciliar status.\(^{111}\)

Yet, while Felici’s hostility to the schema was clear, even the Central Commission was divided over whether the schema should go ahead. Although there was opposition from conservative quarters, historian Norman Tanner notes that others who were nominally progressive also wanted to drop the schema and leave its content for a later papal encyclical.\(^{112}\)

Perhaps providentially, this caused a delay that meant that the schema on lay apostolate was debated first. This enabled several Fathers to provide context for Schema XIII. On behalf of the Dutch bishops, De Vet emphasised that “the world is the proper place for the laity to work in because they are of it.”\(^{113}\) Larrain insisted that there must be “a real incarnation in the world,” emphasising the role of lay people in bringing world problems to the Church and taking the Gospel to the world.\(^{114}\) De Smedt explicitly endorsed the see-judge-act as the best method of formation, albeit for young people.\(^{115}\)

Finally, on 13 October, Patrick Keegan, who was close to Montini, became the first lay person to address a Council in session, noting that lay people “anxiously await the debate on the Church and the world,” which would have “immense implications for the responsible activity of the laity” in both spiritual and temporal fields.\(^{116}\)

Despite this support for Schema XIII from the Council floor, several members of the CC still wanted it dropped, eventually requiring the personal intervention of Paul VI, who greenlighted further discussion.\(^{117}\)

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112 Ibid., IV, 277.
113 Daybook, III, 116.
114 Daybook, III, 127.
116 Daybook, IV, 132.
The conciliar debate

After a balanced introduction to the schema by Cento, who spoke on behalf of Ottaviani as joint presidents of the MC, Guano presented a second report emphasising the “anguishing problems” facing people, including starvation and war, that were also uppermost in the minds of many Fathers, particularly from the developing world. The originality of the schema lay in the fact that it “did not seek to proclaim what the Church thinks of Divine Revelation, but to enable a closer dialogue with people, taking account of their concrete conditions of life and their mentalities,” Guano explained.118 Hence, the need for a new “style” of schema.

The objective was to build dialogue with all people in order to understand the conditions and problems of the world (see), to explain the Church’s thought regarding these issues (judge), and to show how the Church planned to participate in the process of finding a solution to these issues (act). Naturally, this would always be inspired by the Church’s mission to announce Christ and its contribution would always be in the light of the Gospel, he added to please Suenens.119

Predictably, Liénart took the floor for the first intervention on the schema, welcoming it as “unique in the history of ecumenical councils,” although he was critical of the text, which needed to express more clearly its “esteem for the natural order.”120 Seven more cardinals spoke, all of whom backed the schema, except Ruffini, who pointedly noted that it required the faithful “to show proof of understanding and prudence in order to enlighten their consciences,” which smacked of “situational morality.”

Suenens also supported the schema provided that it offered an “ecclesial response” founded on its own proper mission and “in the field of its competency.” It could only base itself in part on “the wavelength of the world” although it needed to “respect the autonomy of the world.” Moreover, while it was right to “make the world more human,” it was necessary to heed Pius XI’s warning that “the Church civilises by evangelising and does not evangelise by

118 Fesquet, Le journal, 611.
120 Daybook, III, 164.

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civilising.” Once again, Suenens summarised his arguments against the Cardijn method, albeit seemingly resigned to the fact that he had lost this battle. More positively, he proposed that several “excellent” aspects of the annexes should be included in the schema itself.

Among the other bishops, rising star and young Polish archbishop, Karol Wojtyla, a phenomenological philosopher close to Cardijn, criticised the document for its “authoritarian” tone, emphasising that it should not try “to teach non-believers” but should aim “to search together along with the world.” Another jocist archbishop, Arthur Elchinger of Strasbourg, structured his speech in a see-judge-act format concluding with shades of Ollé-Laprune that the Church’s mission was to “fight to save human life in the world today, to save what is human in man.” These problems needed to be dealt with not with “the reasoning of a teacher but the breath of a prophet.” In another important intervention, Ancel noted that “a grave lacuna” of the schema was that it failed “to show how the Church’s interest in temporal affairs stemmed from its total mission which is evangelisation.”

Of the bishops close to Cardijn, very few opposed the schema. Heenan of Westminster was one, characterising the schema as “unworthy of a Council.” Without the annexes, it would be “noxious,” he said. The document should instead be handed over to a new commission including married couples, doctors, economists and scientists as well as priests with pastoral experience, Heenan proposed. Hurley of Durban joined him, criticising the schema as “too theoretical” for problems that were “extremely delicate in practice.” In other words, the schema did not go far enough in their estimation.

No doubt to the drafters’ relief, the reception in aula was positive overall. The document had clearly piqued the interest of the Fathers who submitted 800 typewritten pages of observations and suggestions. Concluding the debate, Guano welcomed the idea that the

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124 Fesquet, Le journal, 639.
125 Daybook, III, 171.
126 Daybook, III, 172.
schema should begin with a description of the world today, confirming the direction that the schema would take.\textsuperscript{128}

The Signs of the Times Sub-Commission

Meanwhile, the STSC met regularly to implement its mission of studying world realities, recording its deliberations in a 90-page report.\textsuperscript{129} An initial discussion clarified its understanding of “signs of the times” as “the phenomena which, by their generalisation and great frequency, characterise an epoch and by which the needs and aspirations of humanity are made known.”\textsuperscript{130}

The objective of the work then was to “discover these trends, through the present realities of humanity in the diversity of its situations,” which was done through a series of exposés from the various continents. Subjects covered included: changes in humanity, Latin America, the socialist and communist worlds, India, black Africa, the Muslim world and international institutions, although the Commission recognised that this was “not a complete inventory.” Sub-groups were created to study each area.

Among the various signs, Lebret noted the desire of the African to become “more human, freer, more responsible.” He was also “conscious of his potentialities,” he added, echoing the Sillon definition of democracy. Another jocist archbishop, Eugene D’Souza of India emphasised the role of the Church in promoting women, in the slow disappearance of polygamy, raising awareness of the “dignity of the citizen” and a certain form of democracy. Regarding Latin America, McGrath warned that many were “despairing of obtaining justice” and were looking towards violence. While Catholics refused violence, they did not always propose alternatives, he lamented.

The document distinguished three stages among the signs that it observed:

1. The brute facts that are observed sociologically and phenomenologically.

\textsuperscript{128} Tanner, “The Church in the World,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 326.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
2. The voice of God in history as evidenced in “historic facts” that in themselves bore testimony.

3. Situating those facts within the history of salvation, particularly by noting frequent and generalised phenomena.


Although the STSC was keenly aware of its limitations, including the lack of representation from outside Europe, the final document displayed a remarkable familiarity with the issues of the time as well as a breadth of view that would later be reflected in the introduction to Schema XIII.

**The Schema XIII Sub-Commissions**

Fortified in their mission, the Mixed Commission met again on 16 November mandating the CSC to continue with eight additional members appointed from the DC and LAC:

**DC:** Garrone, Seper, Poma, and the Benedictine Abbot Butler

**LAC:** Morris, Larrain, St Laszlo, Fernandez-Conde.132

Also invited to collaborate although they were not members of either the DC or LAC were: Fernandez (India), Satoshi Nagae (Japan), Zoa (Cameroon), Gonzalez-Moralejo (Spain), Wojtyla (Poland), Edelby (Syria) and Quadri.

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132 Tucci, “Introduction historique,” 82. The names of those known to be close to the jocist movements are in bold.
Once again, these new participants reinforced the jocist stranglehold over the schema. Garrone, who was made president of the TSC, had effectively neutralised Suenens’s control over the doctrinal orientation, although Philips, the new secretary fresh from his triumph in the drafting of *Lumen Gentium*, was no doubt appointed to keep him onside.

**Theology (TSC)**

Bishops: **Garrone** (president), Poma, **Wojtyla**, Gonzalez-Moralejo

Periti: **Philips** (secretary), **Glorieux**, Ferrari Toniolo, Moeller, Benoit, **Congar**, **Daniélou**, Rigaux, K. Rahner

Lay auditor: Sugranyes de Franch.

In the STSC, at least eight out of the eleven bishops had jocist experience, as did many of the periti.

**Signs of the Times (STSC)**

Bishops: **McGrath** (president), Blomjous, **Zoa** (Africa), D’Souza (India), Nagae (Japan), Ayoub (Syria), **Camara** (Brazil), Wright (USA), **Wojtyla** (Poland), Ancel, **Ménager** (France).

Periti: Delhaye, **Daniélou**, Gagnebet, Lebret, Tucci, Ligutti, **Houtart**, de Riedmatten, Joblin, Lebret, Caramu, Gregory (Brazil), Galiléa, Medina (Chile), Dingemans, Gagnebet, Greco, Martelet, Neuner et Putz.

Lay auditors: de Habicht, Norris, Ruszkowski, Smitskowski, Sugranyes de Franch.

Secretaries: Delhaye, **Houtart**.

Finally, the thematic sub-commissions working on the annexes also all included a majority of jocist-linked bishops:

**De persona humana in societate**

**Roy, Garrone**, Wright, **Araujo Sales**, Laszlo
Little more than a year after Suenens’s Malines meeting, it was a breathtaking turnaround wrought by men who were deeply familiar with the jocist system, which had almost become second nature to them, a point of deep significance for the final drafts of Schema XIII.

**Principles for redrafting: The see-judge-act**

Next, the MC and the CSC met on 17, 19 and 20 November to settle the principles for the final drafts with the new text based on both the Zurich Draft (dialogue approach) AND conciliar discussion. Orientations from other conciliar documents were also to be considered, including on ecumenism, religious freedom, lay apostolate and attention to non-Christians. The whole was to be “as homogeneous as possible” requiring “EDITORIAL UNITY.”

Secondly, the role of the various sub-commissions was clarified. The STSC was tasked with preparing a completely new “*conspectus generalis mundi hodierni,*” i.e. “a general appreciation of the world today,” which would comprise the introduction to the schema. The TSC was given responsibility for both the specifically theological chapters and the overall doctrinal orientation of the document.

Third, the “other sub-commissions” were mandated to redraft their specific chapters, while

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the annexes were to be maintained (although their status was not defined).

Fourth, each sub-commission was to carry out its work based “as far as possible” on the see-judge-act method, expressed as follows:

- Start from the facts;

- Offer a Christian judgement in the light of the Gospel and the Catholic tradition, from the Fathers of the Church to the contemporary magisterium;

- Indicate concrete action orientations (pastoral aspect).\(^{134}\)

Finally, a drafting team was appointed comprising Hirschmann, Moeller, Tucci and Haubtmann, who was team leader and editor (rédacteur) while Häring and Philips were named as collaborators.

This set the stage for several months of intense work on a tight schedule to be ready for the final session in 1965.

Towards the Ariccia Draft

Pierre Haubtmann

In his first book, *Marx et Proudhon*, published in 1947, Pierre Haubtmann had already noted that unlike Hegel’s dialectic, Proudhon’s dialectical movement was based on the “distinction between good and evil.”\(^{135}\) Most often, [the Proudhonian dialectic] expressed itself in the antagonism of the thesis and antithesis,” both of which existed “simultaneously” and were “indestructible,” Haubtmann explained. The object was therefore to bring them into “balance,” which was “the proper function of man.” Significantly, the Proudhonian movement also “started from below whereas with Hegel it began from above – which led


Proudhon to say, wrongly or rightly, that the Hegelian dialectic necessarily leads to statism or absolutism.”

Hence the need to start from reality rather than doctrine and work to reconcile them, as Cardijn, Haubtmann and the jocist network interpreted Proudhon.

With his long experience of the jocist method and his scholarly understanding of its theoretical foundations, Haubtmann thus emerged as the ideal person to shepherd the schema to completion.

**The task ahead**

The Third Session closed on 21 November, one day after the CSC had finished its meeting, coinciding with the momentous “Black Week” when Pope Paul intervened on various issues and postponed the vote on the schema on religious liberty. In his closing address, Paul VI also announced that the Fourth Session would certainly be the last one, adding to the pressure. Yet, he also clearly intimated the need for the Church “to radiate attractive light on the secular world,” another signal that he wanted Schema XIII to come to fruition.

Nevertheless, challenges remained. On 30 December, the CC moved forward the date for submission of the revised text, further ramping up the pressure. On the positive side, however, it allowed more time during the Fourth Session to debate the new text and agreed that the revised draft could include the material from the annexes.

Members of the drafting team also met together formally and informally during December 1964 and January 1965 to clarify several recurring questions. “Should the document be based on theology, natural law, philosophy or description of facts?” as Moeller put it. “Who was speaking? The hierarchy? Christians? The People of God? And who is being addressed?”

But Philips remained negative about the agreed method of work. “Regarding the description of the world, he emphasised that there is no such thing as an objective, factual description.

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136 Ibid.
137 Daybook, III, 303-304.
138 Moeller, in Vorgrimler, 5, 46.
There is always a criterion, a fundamental interpretation,” Moeller quoted him as saying. On the other hand, he agreed that the Church was not “in face of” the world but genuinely in the world, a key point.

By January, though, it was concluded that the Church should be presented as the People of God. Christians needed to be treated as adults, requiring an emphasis on human dignity, respect, freedom, autonomy and the participation of all. Thus, the schema was to be drafted as “Christians speaking to the world,” i.e. as actors and participants, and not “about the world” as external observers. In relation to the signs of the times, Council Fathers wanted facts to be mentioned although (some) theologians were reserved. An overly “sociological” outlook needed to be avoided so facts needed to be presented in relation to “ethical demands and moral discovery.”

**Haubtmann’s text**

On this basis, Haubtmann set to work to prepare a new draft (in French), which would include the former annexes as Part II, while Part I would be based on the work of the Doctrinal and Signs of the Times Commissions plus the conciliar discussion, with each part drafted as far as possible in a tripartite see-judge-act format. The outcome was a new plan:

**Part I**

**Introduction**

**Chapter I – General overview:** Highlighting “several aspects that... seemed to more profoundly affect our epoch and announce the future”

**Chapter II – Man in the universe:** “Enlighten(ing) this situation in the light of the Revelation”: What is God’s plan for the universe? What is man’s role in his situation? How to develop the human personality in an increasingly socialised society?

**Chapter III – Man in society:** Answering how the Church intervened in all these problems.

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139 Ibid, 47.
140 Moeller, in Vorgrimler, 5, 47.
Part II: The aim of which was “to attract the attention of the faithful and any others willing to listen to the Church on several very concrete, current issues”:

Chapter I – Human dignity
Chapter II – Marriage and the family
Chapter III – The development of culture
Chapter IV – Socio-economic life
Chapter V – Political and international life
Chapter VI – The very peace of the world

Although Philips advised that the new Part I should be based on the Zurich Draft, Haubtmann concluded that this was impossible given the number of amendments. Thus, drawing on the material, including especially the report compiled by the STSC, he compiled a completely new 9,000-word first draft. Far from perfect, it was a breath of fresh air compared to the earlier drafts, which now seemed lugubrious, albeit perhaps still very French in its outlook.

Haubtmann’s long experience of working with lay leaders of various ages and milieux from local to national level shone through. The biblical quotes, mostly from the New Testament, seemed perfectly appropriate and effortlessly chosen, as indeed they probably were for a priest who had spent decades with grassroots study groups. So too were the references to dignity, freedom, participation, etc.

Particularly characteristic of Haubtmann’s Proudhonian style was the introduction, drafted jointly with Moeller, with its multiple dialectical references: joys and sadness, hopes and anguish, individual and collective, Catholics and non-believers, Church and world, Creation and Resurrection (Redemption).

Strikingly, the text stated that it was “desirable for lay people, even more than in the past, to take part even in developing the orientations and opportune directives” for the implementation of the “Church’s teaching on social issues.” a formula that Haubtmann

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(and Chenu) preferred to that of “Church (or Catholic) social teaching.”

Another audacious paragraph stated that it was necessary “to tend to develop among all people, each one according to his state and means, a greater sense of their responsibilities,” which the Haubtmann text explicitly linked to “the modern aspiration to democratic forms of life,” in an overt attempt to incorporate the Sillon definition of democracy in the schema. Although the explicit reference to “democracy” was dropped, multiple references to the sillonist conscience/responsabilité binomial survived to the point that conscience/consciousness and responsibility, as well as participation, would become key terms in Gaudium et Spes.

Congar praised the Haubtmann text as clearly better than the Zurich Draft. “IT HAS FOUND THE RIGHT TONE, and that is half the battle,” he wrote. Nevertheless, he felt Haubtmann’s work was a “little light” and over-influenced by his ACO background.

However, Congar was correct that Haubtmann’s text did not follow a strict see-judge-act format. Rather it was organised as a dialectical reflection between, on one hand, the reality as revealed in the General Overview in Chapter I, and, on the other hand, the “truths” and “principles” of the “Church’s teaching on social issues” as interpreted in Chapters II and III. On the other hand, the thematic chapters comprising Part II of the document did explicitly follow the see-judge-act format. Simply put, in Haubtmann’s schema, Cardijn’s “truth of method” in Part II resolved the contradiction between the “truth of reality” in Chapter I and the “truth of faith” in Chapters II and III.

This gave the new draft its overall “framework,” which, as Garrone later recalled, survived the “rude treatment” and the “severe layering” that it later received.

The Ariccia meeting

Meanwhile, the number of participants for the next CSC meeting in Ariccia, Italy, had

146 Congar, My Journal, 710.
147 Ibid, 724.
swelled to more than one hundred bishops, periti and auditors, including Keegan and his close collaborator, Mgr Derek Worlock, Houtart, Dondeyne, plus the lay auditors Vanistendael, Monnet and others, who were close to the JOC and SCA movements. Like Congar, the meeting agreed that “the style of the document under examination was at last just what was needed.” Nevertheless, multiple changes were proposed.

One significant structural change came from the Theological Sub-Commission, which proposed to insert a new first “doctrinal” chapter on human activity in the world, and to reverse the order of the chapters on Man in the universe and Man in society. As Moeller explained, this meant that a total view would progressively be obtained: man, society, world. This also had the effect of restoring the Liénart- (and Cardijn-) inspired reflection on “the dignity of man,” which became the first chapter in Part I.

Secondly, Wojtyla, on behalf of the Polish bishops, proposed another completely new draft that heavily emphasised the role of the Church. This was ruled out of order although Garrone, who chaired the meeting, sought to accommodate Wojtyla’s proposals within the Haubtmann framework.

This, and other criticisms, resulted in the addition of a fourth chapter in Part I on the role of the Church in the world. In turn, this opened the way for a final direct reference to the fact that “secular duties and activities belong properly although not exclusively to lay people” (Gaudium et Spes §43) although it was again balanced by the need to be “witnesses to Christ in all things.”

The upshot was that Part I now followed a logical sequence:

- Chapter I: Anthropological
- Chapter II: Sociological
- Chapter III: Cosmological
- Chapter IV: Ecclesiological

Further meetings of the drafting and editorial committees continued in Rome throughout

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149 Moeller, Vorgrimler, 5, 50.
150 Burigana and Turbanti, “Preparing the Conclusion,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 526.
151 Moeller in Vorgrimler, 5, 51.
152 Burigana and Turbanti, “Preparing the Conclusion,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 526.
February and March, with a draft ready to be printed on 24 March for presentation to the MC at its meeting from 29 March – 8 April 1965 with the title “Schema XIII: Constitutio pastoralis De Ecclesia in mundo huius temporis,” the formal title by which it would finally be adopted.

**Philips’ revision**

As Moeller noted, the March-April MC meeting was “completely dominated by the personality of Philips” in a last-ditch effort defending the Suenens line. Although it had been determined that the schema would open with a presentation of the situation of the world, Philips sought to downplay its significance. He proposed to characterise the description of the world as an “Introductory statement” rather than a formal chapter. This was because “of course the Council cannot commit its authority in the description of facts which in twenty or thirty years may be quite different.”

As always, it was the “ecclesiological” viewpoint that prevailed for Philips. Here it is instructive to compare the way the Haubtmann text was revised in light of the Ariccia meeting and the Philips revision. On one hand, the Haubtmann-Ariccia text (§54) opened with a description of the role of the Church as “the messianic People of God,” which was “actively present in the world” through “those lay people, who taking seriously their earthly tasks, endeavour to accomplish them in intimate union with Christ and his Church.” On the other hand, the Philips’ revised text started from a much more Church-centred point of view, emphasising “witness to the mystery of the death and resurrection of the Lord in the face of the world,” albeit recognising that this occurs in “different manners for lay people and pastors.”

Similarly, Haubtmann-Ariccia noted that where various solutions were “equally compatible with Christian faith and morals are available,” lay people “guided by Christian prudence”

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153 Moeller in Vorgrimler, 5, 55.
154 Ibid., 56.
156 Schéma de la Constitution Pastorale L’Eglise dans le monde de ce temps, Typographie Polyglotte Vaticane, End June 1965, Archives Haubtmann, Ha39, 1681.
would “act according to the judgement of their consciences, formed in advance,” in a clear reference to the see-judge-act method. In contrast, the Philips’ revision dropped this reference, substituting the need for “mediation by Christian consciences, formed in advance, that the priest has not to direct and dictate in these fields, but to enlighten and animate.”

Thus, while both versions recognised the need for lay people to act on their own initiative without engaging the authority of the Church, the Philips’ text centred more on the role of the priest as animator.

Although Paul VI had offered several assurances to Haubtmann, opposition to the schema continued from several quarters in the Doctrinal Commission, particularly those linked to the Holy Office. Rumours abounded that the schema might be cancelled, downgraded from a Pastoral Constitution, or left to a post-conciliar commission. Felici remained critical and had written to Paul VI outlining his objections. Plus, there was growing unease about the schema among the German bishops. Within the MC, controversy continued to rage regarding the positions to adopt on atheism, contraception (birth control), the arms race, etc.

In these circumstances, the support of Philips – and Suenens – was perceived as indispensable to the passage of Schema XIII. And there was no denying the skill and dedication that Philips brought to the task, including his mastery of Latin, which was greatly appreciated by an overworked Haubtmann. The truth was that both men, from their respective points of view and sometimes perhaps even against their personal views, were endeavouring to achieve a schema acceptable to the Council Fathers. The outcome was that on 29 April Haubtmann visited Suenens to ensure his backing at the forthcoming Central Commission meeting on 11 May, where it was agreed that the text could be sent to the Fathers in both French and Latin in preparation for the Fourth Session.

On 20 May, however, Paul VI asked Haubtmann to delay sending the French version to make clear that it had no official value, an act that some supporters of Schema XIII interpreted as a weakening of the pope’s resolve. Meanwhile, Guano had fallen ill with hepatitis, which

158 Schéma de la Constitution Pastorale L’Eglise dans le monde de ce temps.
159 Moeller in Vorgrimler, 5, 58.
160 Burigana and Turbanti, “Preparing the Conclusion,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 527.
161 Burigana and Turbanti, “Preparing the Conclusion,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 531.
would force him to step down as president of the CSC, adding further uncertainty.

**Congar contacts Cardijn**

This was the context in which Cardijn, who received his red hat on 22 February 1965, finally entered the Schema XIII scene in his new role. Although no one said it openly, it was clear that one reason for Cardijn’s elevation was to place him on equal footing with Suenens – to free him from the latter’s hierarchical authority and to add authority to the jocist line in the conciliar schemas. Indeed, Cardijn had told Congar that he intended to make good use of his new position.

On July 11, as concerns over Schema XIII and the schema on religious liberty began to rise, Congar took him up on this, suggesting that Cardijn should prepare interventions for the Fourth Session on religious liberty and on Schema XIII. “I ask myself,” Congar wrote concerning the latter, “whether in the presentation of the meaning of the world with respect to Christ and eschatology, and in the chapter on culture, enough space has been given to workers, to the immense enterprise of production by the hands and spirit of man.”

By this time, Cardijn had received a copy of Part I of the post-Ariccia text from Glorieux. But he had not been appointed to any conciliar commission. Indeed, he had found himself in a no-man’s land, no longer a peritus, nor really a part of the Belgian bishops’ group, and thus, paradoxically, more marginalised than ever from the mechanics of the Council, even though he had just returned from another audience with Paul VI.

Cardijn jumped at Congar’s proposal, travelling to Voirons, Switzerland from 1-3 August for a working weekend with Congar and his Dominican colleague, Henri-Marie Féret, where the three men discussed the contents of Cardijn’s proposed interventions. As Congar noted, Cardijn’s preoccupation, as always, was “to start with the real, the concrete.” Hence, “you must take people as they are,” Cardijn told him, criticising the schemas on lay apostolate,

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162 Congar to Cardijn, 11/07/1965, AC1579.
163 Cardijn to Achille Glorieux, 28/04/1965, AC1607.

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missions, and Schema XIII for their failures in this regard.¹⁶⁵

Over the following days, working from Cardijn’s notes, Congar prepared a Latin draft of a text on religious liberty while Féret drafted a “hard-hitting” paper on Schema XIII. In addition, Cardijn sought the views of Dondeyne and De Smedt, particularly on religious liberty.

The Fourth Session

Preparing for the discussion on Schema XIII

The Fourth Session opened on 14 September with Cardijn present as a Council Father but still on the outer. “He knew nothing, had seen nobody, had not been involved in anything,” Congar lamented after meeting him.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, his interventions were ready “to deliver a few good punches.”¹⁶⁷ Meanwhile, critical events were unfolding in relation to Schema XIII, which had been translated into English, German, Spanish and Italian in addition to the “original” French and the “official” Latin.

Replacing Guano, Garrone was now appointed as rapporteur “according to the express wish of Paul VI.”¹⁶⁸ Given Garrone’s history of conflict with Suenens, this was far from an innocuous decision by the Pope, again telegraphing his support for the Haubtmann line.

This pontifical backing for Garrone was undoubtedly an important factor in a special meeting organised by Elchinger to resolve the tensions between French and German bishops over Schema XIII. Here, the Germans (Volk, Reuss and Hengsbach) reiterated many of their objections to Part I of the schema, including over its doctrines on man and the world, sin, man’s historical and temporal character, as well as “naturalism, optimism and oversimplification of some problems,” “insufficient distinction between principles and practical prescriptions,” etc.¹⁶⁹ They also expressed “grave doubts” as to whether it was

¹⁶⁵ Congar, My Journal, 770.
¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 775.
¹⁶⁷ Ibid.
¹⁶⁹ Moeller in Vorgrimler, 5, 59.
“opportune” to give the schema the title of “Pastoral Constitution.”

In reply, the French and Belgian bishops present (Ancel, Garrone, Elchinger and Musty) defended the schema in jocist terms. According to Garrone, the aim was “to apply a doctrine of man to the problems of the world,” so that “the light of faith may become effective for the study of certain very serious problems.” Haubtmann highlighted the excellent reception it had received from lay people and the fact that 70 percent of the Fathers had called for a text that started from “truths common to all, not the natural order… but the biblical presentation of those truths common to all, so that gradually they could move forward to the more profoundly Christian truths.”

Perhaps decisively, Philips too defended the schema, recalling what a “novel” venture it was and warning of the danger of being left empty-handed if it was not accepted at least as a working document. It was “extremely difficult… to speak the language of the Church yet in such a way that those who heard could understand and feel that the Church understands their problems,” he noted.

Moreover, “the method” was “pedagogical,” Philips explained in a clear reference to the schema’s jocist basis. This was a major concession by the Belgian, the significance of which cannot have escaped Hengsbach, particularly, who had lived through the debates of the Second World Congress on Lay Apostolate.

Here the jocist background of the French bishops proved critical in bringing around their German colleagues, who, while they systematically promoted Specialised Catholic Action throughout their dioceses, mostly lacked personal experience of the Cardijn method.

**Synthesising the See-judge-act and Three Truths approaches**

The upshot was that agreement was reached “to accept the text as a basis for discussion but to improve it.” Moreover, the theologians most critical of the text were to be added to the sub-

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170 Ibid.
171 Ibid.
commissions that were about to be named.  

This, according to Moeller, “helped balance the two main tendencies which had stood confronted since the beginning of work on Schema 13: one a concrete outlook marked by a certain fundamental optimism, the other a dialectical attitude insisting on the polyvalency of the world in which the Church lives.” Clearly, the former outlook applied to the partisans of the see-judge-act approach. Was the latter also a reference to those, who, like Philips, favoured a top-down dialectic? In fact, Moeller seemed to provide the answer in characterising the changes in Schema XIII that would emerge during the Fourth Session:

In consequence [of the synthesising of the two tendencies], the final text no doubt lost a little of its homogeneity, its continuous forward movement, in favour of a presentation which multiplied contrasts. But it gained in wealth of content and complexity. In short, it acquired a more dialectical character, which the Malines Schema had possessed but which had practically disappeared from later versions.

Although he had never been a JOC chaplain, Moeller, as a Belgian involved in the local Catholic intellectual movement, Pax Romana, where Cardijn was a member of the national executive, was certainly familiar with the see-judge-act and three truths frameworks. Philips too understood both these approaches, which had already been in competition during the World Congresses on Lay Apostolate. And, of course, no one understood both the theory and the practice of these better than Pierre Haubtmann.

The conciliar debate opens

Garrone presented his report on the schema on 21 September, highlighting the “stronger universal representation” among the members of the MC and various sub-commissions as well as the collaboration of “several prominent laymen, both men and women.” This increased participation explained the many changes and the greater length of the new text.

172 Moeller in Vorgimler, 5, 59.
173 Ibid., 60.
174 Ibid., 61.
175 Daybook, II, 40.
This was divided simply into two parts plus a “descriptive introduction.” However, its subject matter was “dangerously complex” and the fact that the document was addressed to various categories of people only added to this complexity. The “heart” of the schema concerned “man and man’s condition,” Garrone explained. Thus, Part I intended to explain “what the Spirit says to the Church on the condition of man and on where man’s salvation will come from.” Part II comprised the previous annexes. In considering the schema, however, it was vital to recall the words of Paul VI in *Ecclesiam Suam* on “the necessities and conditions of dialogue.” “These words are our law,” Garrone concluded.

The debate *in aula* began on 21 September. Spellman spoke first, approving the schema. Others too were favourable, but critical. Silva Henriquez called for the removal of the adjective “pastoral” in the title, while Jaeger said it was still too optimistic. Bea complained that the Latin was “incomprehensible” but was also supportive.

Ruffini was far more negative. “Too long, obscure… no allusion to immense mass of sins, to the corruption of morals and to all the abominable evils of the modern world,” he intoned. The schema displayed “a Church on its knees asking pardon for its sins.” “Not a word about relativism, indifferentism, or laicism,” added Siri.

König spoke positively while Döpfner grudgingly admitted it had improved although still failed to distinguish sufficiently between natural and supernatural orders. For the Austrian, Rusch, it remained too philosophical and insufficiently theological and biblical. 176

According to Sigaud the schema had “abandoned scholasticism,” while its “phenomenological” method had “the appearance of Marxist philosophy.” Yet, the next day, Morcillo of Spain and Kominek of Poland claimed the schema had “a whiff of capitalism.” “Not the view of several bosses,” joked Haubtmann from the sidelines. 177

The overall tone was positive and the first three days of debate on the schema as a whole ended in “an almost unanimous standing vote” in favour of the document. 178 Henceforth, the

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178 Daybook, III, 49.
structure of the schema was no longer in doubt.

**Cardijn enters the fray**

Meanwhile, Cardijn, who had defended the see-judge-act approach in his earlier intervention on religious freedom, launched the discussion on the Prooemium and the Introductory Statement. This “Pastoral Constitution” is “worthy of the greatest praise,” he began. Since the schema aimed “to bring light to all people of our time,” it must consider those people “not just generally but as they live concretely in the world today.” Hence, the need to add three sections to the schema dealing specifically with young people, workers and the peoples of the Third World.

The Council must not “abandon” young people. Rather it should address a special message to them, expressing its confidence and encouraging them “to become conscious of their responsibilities with respect to our era and that of the future in their various milieux.” Similarly, the Church must do everything for the “young peoples” of the Third World. While “deeply respecting their own character,” the “faithful of the old Christian nations must… help relieve the suffering, the present misery and anguish of the Third World.”

“What these young nations require more than anything is fraternal education that will enable them to take in hand themselves the cause of their human and divine development,” Cardijn argued.

Although he was “heartily applauded,” the reaction of observers was mitigated. Deaf, he exceeded his time limit after failing to hear the warning bell. Congar too was disappointed with Cardijn’s “tribune”-like delivery. “People were sympathetic but it did not work,” he noted. “It had no impact and people were gently critical.” Even de Lubac joked about Cardijn’s Latin neologisms, including “juvenes abandonnati” or abandoned youth. French bishop Georges Béjot thought Cardijn’s style did not suit the audience. Thus “his

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interventions had no effect when he warned them, in his own way, against the dechristianisation of these young workers.”

In any event, the final Constitution did contain more than a dozen references to young people, albeit not to young workers, giving Cardijn at least a partial victory.

Meanwhile, undaunted, Cardijn followed up on 5 October in the discussion on Part II, Chapter III on Economic and Social Life, with a second intervention focusing on “the subhuman situation of the majority of the working world.” Wages were often “derisory,” “truly human work non-existent,” trade unions prohibited. “All that is contrary to the social teaching of the Church on human work should be considered as a grave sin by Christian communities,” Cardijn decried. Nor must the Church offer paternalistic solutions. Rather: “The Church… must be convinced that workers are and must be their own liberators,” he insisted.

Having characterised Cardijn’s earlier speech on religious liberty as a Latin “disaster,” Camara felt that this time he had “succeeded.” But Congar remained disappointed. “Contrary to what I expected, people give him little credit,” he concluded. If nothing else, Cardijn’s speeches illustrated the vast gulf between his own starting point in the human condition of the world’s poorest and the theological concerns expressed by Ruffini, Siri, and even the allegedly more progressive German bishops.

**The Church reviews its life**

It was Elchinger who sought to bridge this gulf in his own intervention, revealingly entitled “The Church makes its ‘review of life’ in relation to the world.” People of today were more responsive to acts than words, he said. Therefore, the Council needed to go beyond “general affirmations.” The schema needed to explain “how the Church intended to reform itself in its relations with the world.” The way to do this was to be Christ’s witnesses “not just in spreading his Message, but in adopting his new way of loving people and assisting them.

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184 Camara, *Lettres*, II, 817 and 878.
concretely,” Elchinger suggested.

This did not mean trying to offer “precise responses to every problem.” In a new world context where people were seeking greater freedom, bishops and priests needed to “loyally begin the search” with the people, helping indicate “the direction” in which they needed to look. Schema XIII did not aim to provide complete answers but to illustrate the way, the method by which the Church – the People of God – could work together with the world in a “new relationship.”

Nothing could be clearer. Whatever the limitations of Cardijn’s speeches, Schema XIII was proposing the adoption of his method understood in its varying forms as see-judge-act, three truths dialectic, or review of life.

**The final revision of the schema**

**Dealing with the amendments**

All told there were 160 speeches on Schema XIII while the proposed changes totalled 470 closely-spaced pages. The latter were first considered in the expanded sub-commissions then by the CSC before being passed to the overburdened editorial committee. Philips took on the role of general rapporteur but the work exhausted him and he was forced to abandon the task on 25 October. Meanwhile, the MC met in sixteen sessions to review progress. Everyone was under huge pressure, leading to many typing and printing errors, including “serious blunders” of Latin.

Despite last minute opposition from the Roman theologians, E. Lio and Marie-Rosaire Gagnebet, backed by Ottaviani, Paul VI allowed the chapters of the newly revised schema to go to the vote on 15-17 November. Introducing this, Garrone again presented a general report, McGrath wrote another on the Introductory statement and Hengsbach a third report.

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187 Tucci, “Introduction historique,” 107

188 Ibid., 109.
explaining Part II. To the surprise of some, every part of the schema achieved the required
two-thirds majority vote.189 But further modi were accepted for submission resulting in
another 200 pages of proposed amendments. More controversy arose over whether to
explicitly condemn communism, which was not done, over birth control, and over the
possession of nuclear weapons, which was not specifically condemned.190

Cardijn’s amendments

Cardijn too submitted several modi, developing the themes of his speeches although it is
almost impossible to determine their influence amid so many others. Nevertheless, the final
text of Gaudium et Spes did refer in ten places to young people, albeit not always in terms
Cardijn would have liked, e.g. “the young ought to listen gladly” (§52). On the other hand,
references to workers being “reduced to the level of being slaves” and the need for “the
defence of workers’ rights” (§67) were more positive. Similarly, the final text made nine
references to “developing nations,” fulfilling Cardijn’s desire on this point. Moreover, Ralph
Wiltgen credited Cardijn, along with Hengsbach, as having influenced the final messages of
the Council which were read out on 8 December.191

In addition, Cardijn signed an amendment to §42 of the schema (§44 in the final text)
proposed by Wojtyla.192 This paragraph concerned “the aid which the Church receives from
the world today.” Wojtyla’s concern was to give more emphasis to the fundamental
importance of “cultural development,” and thus to highlight the fact that man’s relationship
with the affairs of the world depends on the full development of his personality.193 Although
backed by Journet and others, even this amendment did not make the final cut of the future
Gaudium et Spes.

Cardijn also put his name to another more successful amendment to §30 (§29 in final version)

189 Luis Antonio G. Tagle, “The Black Week of Vatican II (November 14-21, 1964),” in Alberigo-
Komomnchak, V, 406.
190 Tagle, “The Black Week,” V, 408-422.
191 Ralph Wiltgen, The Rhine, 284.
192 Francisco Gil Hellin, Concilio Vaticani II Synopsis, In ordinem redigens schemata cum relationibus
necon patrum orationes atque animadversiones, Constittutio Pastoralis De Ecclesia in Mundo Temporis (Citta
del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticano, 2003), 1583-1584.
193 Ibid.

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on the “essential equality of all people” and §71 (§73) on “the life of the political community.” Here, the objective was to emphasise protection of minority rights including language, an item of particular interest to the Flemish Cardijn. But these were minor matters.

By now, Cardijn had abandoned his bid to link the schema more closely to the lay apostolate beyond the reference in §43 although a theology of work had been added at Ariccia on “Man’s activity in the world.” More importantly, *Lumen Gentium* and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* had been adopted and promulgated, meaning that *Gaudium et Spes* was to be read in the light of the theology of the lay apostolate they both expressed.

**The final voting**

Work on the final amendments, of which there were 20,000, continued feverishly until 29 November, the deadline for printing the compiled final text together with explanatory that was to be voted on. The Council approved each section of 411-page document in a series of votes on 4 December. Two days later, the Council voted on the schema as a whole, approving it by a vote of 2111 placet, 251 non placet, and 11 null votes, representing 2373 voters.

There was still one final step whereby the definitive schema was submitted for approval by the Council Fathers on 7 December. This time 2309 voted in favour with 75 against and 7 null votes out of 2391 voters. The same day Paul VI promulgated it as *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the world of this time, Gaudium et Spes*, the final document of Vatican II.

As Tucci rightly pointed out, the Council “in no way intended to finish the search but rather to preview and stimulate it, fixing the point of departure for a fruitful dialogue.” Moreover, it was a “positive fact” that the Church accepted to content itself with imperfection, or in other words, “to trust in the future with humble confidence in God and in man, his image.” Cardijn could hardly have put it better himself.

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194 Ibid., 1584-1586. The author of this amendment is not named.
197 Ibid., 125.
198 Ibid.
Conclusion

The Cardijn dialectic

Despite the many conflicts and huge number of amendments, the structure of Schema XIII proposed at Ariccia and slightly modified by Philips had emerged intact.

**Preface:** The joys and hopes, the griefs and sorrows.

**Intro:** The situation of people in the world, based on the *conspectus* prepared by the Signs of the Times Sub-Commission (STSC)

**Part I:** The Church and the human vocation, based on the Zurich Draft (TSC)

**Part II:** Five see-judge-act chapters, based on the Annexes (Thematic Sub-Comms)

As we have seen, the drafters, since Ancel at least, had clearly envisaged the schema in terms of a dialectic or dialogue between the world situation (Introduction) and the Catholic understanding of the human vocation and destiny (Part I), as the eventual opening phrases of the schema elegantly illustrate: “The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the men of this age…” In addition, the third section (Part II) offered practical see-judge-act reflections on five key areas of modern life.

In jocist terms, *Gaudium et Spes* thus emerged with the structure of Cardijn’s Proudhonian dialectic:

**Truth of Reality (Antithesis):** The situation of people in the world

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Truth of Faith (Thesis): The Church and the human vocation and destiny

Truth of Method (Synthesis): See-judge-act reflections on family, culture, economic and social life, political life, peace and international life

As Haubtmann had indicated, it began “bottom up” with the antithesis to emphasise the existential dimension of the world “situation” and the “call” that it evoked before setting out the thesis proposed by the Church with which it needed to be reconciled. Finally, the see-judge-act chapters in Part II illustrated the method for resolving the dialectical tension that is a permanent feature of the human condition.

Nor is there any doubt that the architects of the schema, including Ancel, Ménager, Garrone, Haubtmann, Philips and even Suenens were perfectly aware of this. Just as he had transformed the Sillon’s method of democratic education into the see-judge-act, so he had transformed Proudhon’s serial dialectic into his own “Christian dialectic”: The Truth of Reality of the human condition, the Truth of Faith of the dignity of man created in the image of God, and the Truth of Method understood as the see-judge-act.

Despite his absence from the drafting process, the jocist bishops and periti – writing straight with crooked lines, in a sense – had caused Cardijn’s dialectic to emerge as the foundation of the Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes.

Deepening the furrow

Of those who participated in the drafting, perhaps the best appreciation of Gaudium et Spes from a jocist viewpoint came from Marcos McGrath who noted that the first “exceptional” aspect of Gaudium et Spes was that it was addressed to “the whole of humanity,” something no other Council and only one encyclical, John XXIII’s Pacem in Terris, had ever done. Indeed, a similarly audacious “appeal to all the heterodox” had provided one of the reasons

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200 Joseph Cardijn, “The Three Truths.”
for Pius X’s “condemnation” of the Sillon.201

Secondly, the formal title of Gaudium et Spes, De Ecclesia in mundo hujus temporis, was incorrectly translated as “Church in the modern world” as if the document sought to address a specific historical period. Rather, the correct translation was The Church in the world of today, reflecting “the currency” (actualité) or “existential dimension of the document’s approach,” McGrath emphasised – or the biblical theme of kairos, the opportune moment, as Moeller also put it.202

Even more fundamental, according to McGrath, was the way Gaudium et Spes expressed itself systematically on “the directly temporal aspects of Christian life” – despite the objections of “traditionalists” and even “progressive theologians” like Philips. Yet this clash between “an exclusively doctrinal” approach and one that “started from the problems of the world” had ultimately proved fruitful, McGrath noted, leading to the “invention of a new method” that slowly developed during the Council.203

Although this “simultaneously empirical and theological” method was only imperfectly applied in Part II of the Constitution, this did not matter because it “had made a good start,” modestly opening up “this new form of dialogue.”204 Henceforth, concluded McGrath, whose Holy Cross Fathers (CSC) congregation had once worked closely with Marc Sangnier’s movement, it was up to “the faithful of whole world, guided by their pastors, to deepen the furrow” – or, in his allusive French phrase, “creuser le sillon.”205

201 Pius X, Our Apostolic Mandate, 25/08/1910.
202 Moeller in Vorgrimler, 5, 82.
203 McGrath, “Présentation de la Constitution,” 18.
204 Ibid.,” 27.
205 Ibid., 30.
Chapter 10 – The apostolate proper to lay people

Introduction

“Forty years ago, it was suspect to speak of the lay apostolate in many Church circles. It had the scent of modernism,” marvelled a French bishop as the Third Session of the Council discussed a schema on that controversial subject for the first time in history.¹

Indeed, the 1913 *Catholic Encyclopaedia* only contained two references to the term, both in relation to disciples of Frédéric Ozanam, one of whom was Léon Ollé-Laprune.² Sillon counsellor, Louis Cousin, was perhaps the first modern writer to attempt a theology of lay apostolate. As late as the 1930s, it was still uncommon in French Catholic literature to find mention of “lay apostolate,” which combined two terms that hitherto appeared incompatible in a Church “built on the foundation of the apostles.”³

Although Cardijn developed his own theology of lay apostolate during the 1930s and the World Congresses on Lay Apostolate mainstreamed the term, he struggled to make an impact on this point in the Preparatory Commission on Lay Apostolate (PCLA). By the end of the Council, however, three key conciliar documents had adopted his conception of a specifically lay apostolate “proper” to lay people. This occurred first in *Lumen Gentium* §31 in Chapter IV on the role of the laity. The opening sentence of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* §1, drafted by the Lay Apostolate Commission of which he was a member, repeated the point in terms even closer to Cardijn’s own insistence on “the proper and irreplaceable (lay) apostolate.” Similarly, *Gaudium et Spes* §43 acknowledged that secular activity belonged “properly” albeit not exclusively to lay people.

This chapter therefore endeavours to trace how this evolution occurred. It begins with a brief overview of a key JOCI document drafted by Cardijn in February 1963 setting out the jocist

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vision of lay apostolate. Secondly, it examines the contribution of the jocist bishops and periti to the drafting process for *Lumen Gentium*, with its path-breaking chapters on the People of God (Chapter II) and the Laity (Chapter IV).

Thirdly, it considers the development of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* in which Cardijn had a much greater personal involvement both as *peritus* and as Council Father. It concludes with a brief examination of Cardijn’s role as a cardinal at the Fourth Session, where he presented two written interventions on lay apostolate and the role of the priest in promoting it.

A. The JOC vision of lay apostolate

Although *Laïcs en premières lignes* had a wider reach when published in June 1963, Cardijn, Marguerite Fiévez and the JOCI also compiled another highly significant document for their conciliar advocacy. Entitled “*Quelques propositions concernant l’apostolat des laïcs,*” its 31 roneoed pages were divided into six short chapters, organised in point form for the convenience of readers. Published in February 1963, it was translated into several languages, including into English as *Some proposals concerning the lay apostolate solicited by several bishops.*

While the bishops who requested it are unnamed, Larraín, Camara and Tavora, who had met Cardijn during the First Session, were likely among the instigators. At this time, Cardijn had still not been appointed to the LAC. Hence, the urgent need for a document outlining his positions. Indeed, Cardijn’s own copy of the document is marked as having been sent to Larraín and de Araujo Sales of Natal, Brazil, both of whom were already members of the new LAC.

Alongside this, Cardijn’s archives contain a list of over 100 “évêques amis” (bishop friends) dated 19 December 1962 to whom an earlier JOCI document had been sent. These included Schröffer and Hengsbach from Germany, de Araujo Sales and Larraín as well as Cardinal Léger from Montreal, Canada, all of whom would be actively involved in the commissions

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4 JOCI, “*Quelques propositions concernant l’apostolat des laïcs,*” 02/1962, AC.1628.
drafting the schemas on the Church and on the lay apostolate. Members of the LAC also likely received the document as indicated by a copy in the archives of another member, French bishop Jacques Ménager. Ever respectful of episcopal authority, Cardijn ensured that his own bishop, namely Suenens, received a copy, despite the latter’s antagonism.

The proposals

Although presented as a collective proposal of the JOCI, it is easy to identify those sections that were primarily or exclusively drafted by Cardijn, particularly those on lay apostolate, Catholic Action, and the relationship between priests and laity.

Chapter I: The lay apostolate in general

This first and most important group of proposals bear Cardijn’s imprint. These called for a systematic effort by the whole Church to make understood “the necessity and importance of the lay apostolate for a Christian solution to the most urgent problems facing the world,” which was to be backed up by a “solemn declaration” of the Council confirming this.

Proposals 3 and 4 encapsulated the essentials of Cardijn’s conception of lay apostolate:

That the Council urgently invite all the laity to work for the Kingdom of God in their daily life, as a requirement of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation which they have received; and that the Church give them the explicit mission to "construct a world such as God wants," according to the words of Pius XII.

That these solemn declarations specify the exact content of the lay apostolate, for which the lay people are indispensable and irreplaceable in the Church, that is, in their daily temporal life, in the human milieu in which they are providentially placed – family, profession, civic life, cultural institutions, etc.

Emphasising these points, the document added that “in religion – as in the Church – the

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5 AC1628.
6 Archives Ménager, 518.
7 Archives Suenens, 1187.
8 JOCI, “Quelques propositions.” Cardijn’s emphasis in all quotes.
worship, the sacraments, the liturgy, the interior life and the ethics are inseparable from the apostolic mission of the whole Church, of all its members and of all men.” Moreover, the lay person “**must have a vision of the mission of the Church**, in which the whole apostolic mission, personal and collective, is profoundly inserted,” the document added. This clarified the layperson’s relationship with the Church and was based on “**two essential poles**” recognisable as the sillonist conscience-responsibility binomial:

a) the responsibility proper to the lay man in his earthly mission, in the solution of human problems;

b) his filial dependence, free and conscious, on the authority of the Church, as a Christian charged with an apostolic mission.⁹

The final proposal called for the establishment of a new “Roman dicastery” to be “responsible for instigating this conception and this expansion of the lay apostolate in the Church” and for “**actively promoting the formation that is indispensable to the laity if it is to carry out its mission and its own apostolate** in temporal life.”

**Chapter II: Catholic Action**

Although the document did not discuss whether the term “Catholic Action” was still appropriate, it stridently defended the jocist concept of (Specialised) Catholic Action, which had a mission to fulfil “in the formation of a laity which will bear witness and exercise an influence, not only amongst persons but also in the heart of milieux, structures and institutions.” It proposed:

That the value and the privileged place of Catholic Action be recognised in the whole Church, in all dioceses and that the whole of the clergy sincerely seek to promote it as a leaven which must penetrate and transform every aspect of today’s world.

This was partly a response to Suenens, who continued to campaign against the

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⁹ JOCI, “Quelques propositions.”

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“monopolisation” of Catholic Action. Moreover, it was necessary to reiterate that the jocist concept of Catholic Action differed fundamentally from the Italian Catholic Action model, which remained the reference in many quarters.

Chapter III: The lay apostolate in the worker milieu

The intent of this chapter was well summarised in its third proposal as: “That in every diocese and in working class parishes priority be given to the development of Catholic Action movements and organisations which are specialised for this milieu.”

Chapter IV: The priest and the laity

Again, these proposals were classic Cardijn, emphasising the need for priests to give priority to the formation of laity and to developing a partnership model of work based on “the respective missions of the priest and the laity.” Moreover, formation was also vital for the priests themselves in “their own role as animators and educators of the laity” and not only in their seminary training but also later when “engaged in the ministry.”

Chapter V: The laity and under-development

The proposals in this section were generally more relevant to Schema XIII. Indeed, the document’s emphasis on “civic, social and religious formation” for lay people was eventually reflected in various paragraphs of Gaudium et Spes, namely §75 (civic and political formation), §68 (economic and social formation), §87 (religious formation).

Also highly significant was the proposal to organise “in the different neighbourhoods of the parish… small communities which would consist of action groups in order to resolve problems and take apostolic action,” a clear reference to the small or basic Christian or ecclesial communities that would blossom after the Council.

10 JOCI, “Quelques propositions.”
Chapter VI: The parish and religious life

This last section was also classic Cardijn, emphasising the role of the parish itself in missionary outreach to local communities:

That a generalised effort be undertaken, amongst new communities of Christians as well as old, to revitalise the parish and adjust it to the most urgent needs of today’s world, in a kind of “aggiornamento,” clear and positive, thanks to the active collaboration of the laity.

That this reform be made, particularly, on the following points:

– Religious instruction

– that religious instruction not be confined to an exercise of knowledge of Christian doctrine; sticking to the letter of elementary catechism, but that it be an education for Christian life according to the requirements of the Gospel. Consequently, there must be a place for the Social Doctrine of the Church.

– that this religious instruction be, above all, an apprenticeship starting from life.¹¹

Ménager’s reaction

Many of the above proposals were indeed followed to a greater or less extent in both Lumen Gentium and Apostolicam Actuositatem, although sometimes not without considerable struggle.

One of the more surprising reactions, however, came from French Bishop Jacques Ménager, who had been secretary-general for Catholic Action in France from 1958-61, and played an important role in Schema XIII. Overall, Ménager was highly sympathetic to Cardijn, the JOC, and the see-judge-act method although most of his personal experience came from the Action Catholique Générale de Femmes (Women’s General Action Catholic) movement rather than the specialised movements.

Yet in handwritten, signed comments on his copy of the JOCI document, Ménager

¹¹ JOCI, “Quelques propositions.”
commented that “the notion of the apostolate underlying these texts on [Catholic Action] is gravely incomplete.” Everything was “oriented towards the transformation of the temporal order” whereas there was also “and more fundamentally the participation in the proper mission of the Church, ‘evangelisation.’ Traditio fidei, Conformio fidei,” he wrote.\footnote{Jacques Ménager, Handwritten note on his copy of “Quelques propositions,” 02/1963, Archives Ménager, 518.}

He made these comments despite several explicit references in the JOCI document, stating clearly that Specialised Catholic Action should be developed “within an overall policy of long-term evangelisation” (Chapter II). Indeed, it said that “top priority” should be given to the “worker milieu” within the Church’s overall “policy of evangelisation, using all the adapted means of carrying out a living penetration by the missionary Church” (Chapter III).

It also called for “constant collaboration” between hierarchy and lay leaders “in a search for the best means of evangelising the temporal world in which the laity must ensure the presence of the Church.” It warned that the social doctrine of the Church would never be spread if “the clergy in general do not evangelise [parishioners] in a concrete and practical fashion” (All in Chapter IV), that “religious formation outside of life does not encourage evangelisation” (Chapter V) and called for religious instruction based on “an authentic theology and a solid evangelical spirituality” (Chapter VI).

The fact that Ménager, a JOC sympathiser, still had difficulty with the jocist approach, illustrated the challenges that lay ahead in the drafting of the schemas on the Church and on lay apostolate.

**B. The drafting of *Lumen Gentium***

**The jocist influence in the Doctrinal Commission**

As we have seen, the Doctrinal Commission on Faith and Morals (the Doctrinal Commission/DC), which succeeded the Preparatory Theological Commission, included a particularly strong representation of bishops close to Cardijn and the movements, beginning with
Garrone, McGrath, the Canadians Roy, Léger and George Pelletier, the German Schröffer, the Brazilian Alfredo Scherer as well as the Belgian Charue.

Nor can the decisive roles of the periti be overlooked. As noted previously, Gerard Philips had – at Suenens’s instigation – prepared a new alternative draft for the preparatory schema on the Church, which was widely circulated during the First Session.\(^\text{13}\)

Once the Doctrinal Commission began its work, however, it quickly appointed a sub-commission of seven members comprising Cardinal Browne (representing Ottaviani) and Archbishop Pietro Parente, who were the only “conservatives,” as well as Léger, König, Charue, Garrone and Schröffer, all close to Cardijn and the jocist line. Moreover, Charue had chosen Philips as his advisor, while Garrone had Daniélou then later Congar, and Schröffer called upon Thils then Moeller.

**The Philips text**

It was the Group of Seven, as the Doctrinal Commission was known, that chose Philips’s text as the basis for the new draft of the Schema. As historian Jan Grootaers observed, this text was itself the result of collaboration between a group of theologians that included Congar, Rahner and McGrath.\(^\text{14}\)

Nor was this text, also known as the Belgian schema, the only alternative schema. Parente had drafted one. So too had Schröffer with a group of German theologians, several groups of French bishops, including one led by Jean de Cambourg, another promoter of Catholic Action,\(^\text{15}\) another by Elchinger, a third by Feltin and the Paris region bishops, plus a Chilean-led schema under Silva Henriquez, McGrath and no doubt Larrain. Once again the jocist influence here was prominent.

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\(^\text{13}\) Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 392-397.

\(^\text{14}\) Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 400.

\(^\text{15}\) Dominique-Marie Dauzet and Frédéric Le Moigne, *Dictionnaire ses évêques de France au XXe siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), 118-119.
The chapter on the laity

In any event, the Philips text already included a chapter on the laity (Chapter III), which as Grootaers noted, was the only one that corresponded almost completely to the equivalent chapter in the preparatory schema (Chapter VI, De laicis) drafted by the preparatory Theological Commission.

This comprised seven sections as follows:

1. Principles
2. The universal priesthood and the ministerial priesthood
3. Who are the laity
4. Rights and duties of lay people
5. The objects of their apostolate
6. The forms of their apostolate
7. Laicity and laicism

If light of Cardijn’s difficulties in the PCLA, it is striking to find that the Philips text already referred both to lay people “assuming their own (proper) responsibilities” as well as to the action of Catholics “in life and in civil society” for the “consecration of the world,” although he had reservations about the latter expression.\footnote{\textit{Schema Constitutionis De Ecclesia propositum a Commissione Theologica, Pars Prima, Caput VI, De Laicis}, §5 (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1962) Archives Philips 0189.} Overall, Philips was thus close to Cardijn on this issue, a major factor in enabling the battle to be won.

Restructuring the schema

In April 1963 Philips and Congar further revised this draft chapter. No doubt, the greatest change regarding De laicis, however, emerged at the CC meeting in July 1963 when Suenens proposed to split the contents of the Philips chapter on the laity. According to this proposal, part of the original content was to be incorporated into a new Chapter II on “The People of God in General” while the remainder would be included into a revamped Chapter IV on “The Laity in Particular.”\footnote{Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 411.}
The proposed new structure of the schema (at that stage) was as follows:

Chapter I: The Mystery of the Church  
Chapter II: The People of God in General  
Chapter III: The Hierarchical Constitution of the Church  
Chapter IV: The Laity in Particular  
Chapter V: The Call to Holiness in the Church

As Grootaers pointed out, the idea for such a division was “in the air” at the Council and had also been proposed by bishops from Germany, Holland, France and Canada, with the episcopates of the latter two countries dominated by jocist-formed bishops. Nevertheless, Grootaers credited Belgian College rector, Mgr Albert Prignon, with suggesting it to Suenens. The outcome was that the restructured schema resulted in “a fundamental reorientation of the ecclesiology that would put an end to the pyramidal vision of the Church.”

Typically, Suenens had bypassed the Doctrinal Commission with his new proposal, just as he was attempting to do with his proposed new draft for Schema XIII. Naturally, the Doctrinal Commission, including Garrone, reacted cautiously if not negatively to Suenens’s proposal. The question was: if Suenens was trying to impose his “doctrinal” approach on the drafting of Schema XIII, what was he trying to achieve with respect to the schema on the Church?

Significantly, Suenens also introduced his new proposal just weeks after the publication of Cardijn’s *Laïcs en premières lignes*, the orientation of which he had also sought to undermine. It is not clear what impact, if any, this had in the sequence of events. What is certain, though, is that Cardijn’s own ecclesiology implied a wholesale inversion of the ecclesiastical pyramid, in effect placing lay people at the top (front) with the hierarchy in their service. In this light, Suenens’s proposal to place the chapter on the People of God ahead of the chapters on hierarchy and laity can be viewed as a compromise that largely preserved the ecclesiastical pyramid within the People of God.

Nevertheless, it was also a victory for the jocist forces who, as we have seen, had long advocated such a vision of the Church. Whatever Suenens’s motivations, the Doctrinal

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18 Ibid.
Commission insisted on making its own examination of his proposal.\textsuperscript{19}

**The Second Session**

**The schema on the Church**

Paul VI opened the Second Session of the Council on 29 September 1963 with a long speech emphasising that the Church needed to look “towards the workers, toward the dignity of their person and their labours” as well as “to the mission which may be recognised as theirs – if it is good, it is Christian – to create a new world of free men and brothers.”\textsuperscript{20} Although he did not use the terms “laity” or “lay apostolate,” this by implication endorsed what Cardijn, who was now present as a peritus, called the “proper” and specifically “lay apostolate.”

Debate on the draft schema *De Ecclesia* began on 30 September 1963. As usual, the jocist bishops were at the forefront. Cardinal Jaime de Barros Camara of Rio de Janeiro called for a declaration of solidarity “with the great masses of the poor and suffering people throughout the world.”\textsuperscript{21} Gerlier made a similar declaration backed by Himmer.\textsuperscript{22} In another significant early contribution, Cardinal Henriquez Silva, on behalf of 44 Latin American bishops, endorsed the plan to split the existing chapter on the laity into two chapters along the lines of the Suenens proposal.\textsuperscript{23}

**The chapter on the laity**

**The state of the schema**

Discussion on the draft Chapter III on the laity began on 17 October 1963. As the Catholic News Service (CNS) reported, it was the first time that the topic of the laity had become a major subject of debate at an Ecumenical Council.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{19} Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, I, 412.
\textsuperscript{20} Daybook, I, 149.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., I, 157
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., I, 163-164.
\textsuperscript{23} Daybook, I, 152.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., I, 189.

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The extent to which the section on the laity already reflected a perspective close to that of Cardijn was obvious from the contemporary CNS summary. The draft chapter on the laity emphasised the “positive” content of the concept of the “layman,” who shared “in the mission of the Church in the world in order to sanctify the world from within.” It proclaimed “the layman’s participation in the priesthood of Christ,” which was “priestly, by participation in the sacramental life of the Church; prophetic, in his witness to Christ and the preaching of Christ in his milieu, particularly in his family; kingly, in his bond with the victory of Christ over sin through the sanctification of his life and his surroundings...” No longer presented as one who listens passively to the word of God,” the layman possessed an “ever-keener insight into the Faith and its applications to the concrete problems of life” and “his own proper share in the Church’s mission for the salvation of the world.\textsuperscript{25}

While these notions were not the exclusive province of the jocist forces, the formulation of many paragraphs in the Congar-revised Philips draft contained unmistakable traces of their influence. Nevertheless, the text also bore the imprint of a sharp spiritual-temporal conceptual division, emphasising that the lay person also had “clear-cut religious duties as well” although it recognised that “most of all, (the lay person) must be outstanding in the environment where he lives and exercises his profession.\textsuperscript{26}

Meanwhile, it had now been formally decided to split the draft chapter into two, with the new Chapter II becoming “The People of God” while the new Chapter IV on “The Laity” followed the re-numbered Chapter III on the bishops.

**The debate**

French Bishop Louis Rastouil, a pioneer of Specialised Catholic Action and the Mission Ouvrière, was the first to speak, calling for a “fuller treatment of the priesthood as realised in bishops, priests and laymen.”\textsuperscript{27} Archbishop Marcel Dubois, another SCA promoter,
emphasised that the term “People of God” was not just a poetic figure but “an actual reality.”

Cardinal de Barros Camara called for a clearer explanation of how the laity shared in the priesthood of Christ. “We should not forget that we are dealing with laymen in the concrete,” he added. Meanwhile his auxiliary, Bishop Candido Padin, founder of the Juventude Universitária Católica (JUC) in Brazil, insisted that the hierarchy too formed part of the People of God.

Cardinal Léon Duval of Algiers pointed out that “in carrying out their apostolate, the laity do not need to leave their ordinary milieu.” Echoing both Cardijn and Pius XI, he emphasised that “each one in his own place and according to his own possibilities is an apostle.”

Similarly, De Smedt noted that “the consecration of the laity” demands that “the whole of life be directed to God.” “The mind, the body, and all the tools of one’s labour become sacred in their efforts to show how a genuine Christian lives in practice,” he emphasised.

In another speech betraying strong jocist and even sillonist influence, Maziers from Lyon noted that “the laity can contribute to the work and purpose of Creation or how in practice they are to fulfil their special functions in the world.” Like Cardijn and other jocist French bishops, he insisted on speaking of Christ as “CREATOR AND REDEEMER” and hence the participation of the laity in both aspects. In a direct shot at Suenens’s conception of evangelisation, he warned that the existing draft seemed “to separate concern for the temporal and evangelisation of the world in the lives of lay people.” Perhaps to appease the Belgian cardinal, he also endorsed the latter’s desire for a “less abstract” drafting of certain sections.

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28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., I, 194.
31 Ibid.
32 Daybook, I, 204.
34 Maziers, Vatican II, 62.
35 Ibid., 64.
Larrain—“repeating the already much repeated,” as CNS noted—added that greater emphasis should be placed on the “prophetic function of the faithful, their role as evangelisers through the living testimony of their Christian lives.” 36 Other jocist bishops also sounded warnings. McGrath said that its description of laymen made them appear “like little acolytes, with the laity at the base of a clerical pyramid subject to everyone.” 37 Ménager added that “the lay auditors found the text disappointing because it struck them as being negative, clerical and juridical.” 38 Striking a different note, the conservative Argentine Cardinal Caggiano, along with many others, emphasised the need to clearly differentiate between the priesthood of the faithful and that of the hierarchy. 39

Suenens’s intervention, however, only served to highlight the gulf that separated his views from those of the jocist bishops. Stating that this was “the age of the Holy Spirit,” he recalled the charisms given to people in the early Church. “Charisms without hierarchical direction would be a source of disorder, but any government of the Church which would ignore charisms would be poor and sterile,” he warned. He called for the chapter on the laity to “be revised with more emphasis on the freedom of the children of God in the Church” in a dig at the involvement of the hierarchy in Catholic Action. On the other hand, he also called for “an increase in the number of lay auditors, with representation on a broader international basis,” including women who constituted “half of the world’s population.” 40

**Tavora’s intervention**

As a peritus, Cardijn was unable to intervene. Nevertheless, he found a way to introduce his ideas in collaboration with the former Brazilian national JOC chaplain, José Tavora, whose own intervention in the debate was apparently drafted largely if not wholly by Cardijn himself. Indeed, Cardijn’s archives contain a typewritten draft of Tavora’s original text, marked as Note 19 in the former’s inimitable red pencil. 41
Moreover, the text itself is classic Cardijn, insisting from the opening line on “the greatest importance” and the “essential mission” of the laity for the Church and “for the salvation of the whole human race.” This mission arose not from any lack of priests and/or religious but from God’s call to all people “from the beginning of the world” as part of God the Creator’s plan, the Cardijn/Tavora text continues:

This divine and human vocation, which was given to all lay people from creation, even though rejected by Adam’s sin, was not abolished by the offence to God; however, by the institution and realisation of the Incarnation and the Redemption it is “marvellously reformed” (as the Church says in the Offertory of the Mass); this, with the help of God and the Church, through baptism and confirmation all supernatural graces and help, by all their brothers in the Church and the world helps them to understand and fulfilling the Kingdom of God and establishing God’s People.  

This task, which included the development of science and technology and the unification of the world’s people, also required increased dialogue and collaboration between laity, priests and religious, as well as between young and old, workers and bosses, in the building up of the Kingdom and promoting peace and unity, Tavora’s text argued.

Whereas many other interventions, even from jocist-oriented bishops, appeared to have been “sprinkled with holy water,” to recall Chenu’s phrase, Tavora’s intervention highlighted the practicalities – and difficulties – of lay life.

**Tavora’s amendments**

Cardijn also drafted a series of “emendationes” (amendments) for Tavora based on his intervention. Phrased in question form, these explained the purpose of the changes:

Isn’t there some way to bring out the indissoluble link that exists between the divine and human mission given by God to the whole of humanity from the moment of Creation, and that given to all the faithful and particularly lay people by Christ and in the Church?

Couldn’t the Schema give greater emphasis to the first mission in which the

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42 Ibid.
second is incarnated? I believe that this would not be so difficult and that this insistence would respond to the primordial aspiration of our era, namely to once again appreciate the mission of each person who must build a worthy world for all of humanity.  

Nor did Cardijn limit the Tavora proposals to the chapter on the laity. Regarding relations with the hierarchy, he proposed that these “should be placed in the light of the universal mission given by Christ to His Church,” which was to “teach all peoples,” and to “bring the good news to the poor.” The “original unity of this pastoral mandate” and the “unity of objective” was “one flock and one shepherd.”

Cardijn writes to Philips

The Cardijn/Tavora amendments at the Second Session evidently did not achieve their objective. Two months later, on 14 February 1964, Cardijn therefore sent an updated series of proposed amendments in his own name to Glorieux at the LAC. Glorieux responded immediately, endorsing their contents but advising that the subject matter was the responsibility of the Doctrinal Commission. If he simply forwarded Cardijn’s proposals to the DC, they risked being shelved, Glorieux warned, suggesting that Cardijn send them to Philips in his new capacity as co-secretary (with Tromp) of the DC for their next meeting in March 1964. Cardijn’s proposals again insisted on his classic themes, including the “condition of the People of God,” “the mystery of the Redemption,” the “mission of the Incarnate Son of God,” but also “the mission of the Holy Spirit.”

“He’s there a way to bring out the plan of God in the mystery of creation and redemption to respond to this spirit of the modern world?” he asked. This “indissoluble link between the double mystery” could be highlighted from the beginning of the chapter “De Mysterio Ecclesiae” and referred to in all the schemas of the Council, he urged. Emphasising human participation in the work of “creation and redemption,” the “mission of the Church” as a whole, “the vocation” of the people, he even sought to introduce his “divine origin, divine

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44 Ibid. (Cardijn’s emphasis)
45 Ibid.
46 Achille Glorieux to Philips, 15/02/1964, Archives Philips, 1422.
mission and divine destiny” trilogy.48

Characteristically, Cardijn proposed to introduce the chapter on the laity with reference to the concrete fact that there were 500 million lay people in the Church as against two million priests, while there were one billion Christians of all denominations among a world population of three billion. Hence, the primordial importance of the lay apostolate. This was Cardijn’s Three Truths dialectic once again. In vain, however, as there appears to be no record of any reply. In any event, Philips was already under huge pressure with the Third Session less than seven months away and hundreds of other propositions to consider.

Nevertheless, the question deserves to be raised: were the Cardijn/Tavora proposals simply lost in the mass of other amendments or were there more theological reasons for ignoring these proposals? Here it is difficult to ignore the contrast between Cardijn’s theology emphasising creation and redemption on one hand and Philips’s traditional dichotomous spiritual-temporal approach.

With his involvement in the World Congresses on Lay Apostolate, Glorieux was well aware of these differences in Cardijn’s and Philips’s approaches. Moreover, the French bishops themselves had submitted similar amendments couched in a theology of creation and redemption. In suggesting that Cardijn send his proposals to Philips, perhaps Glorieux was communicating the fact that the only way to achieve his objectives was to bring on board Philips (and indirectly also Suenens), a vain hope.

Lumen Gentium

The People of God and the baptismal vocation

Despite these disappointments, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, was adopted by the Council Fathers at the Third Session of Vatican II and promulgated by Paul VI on 21 November. Overall, there was much to be pleased about. Without discounting the contribution of Suenens and many others, the jocist and SCA bishops and periti had

48 Ibid.
achieved many of their aims. While they often differed among themselves, these bishops and theologians formed a large part of the core of the conciliar progressive majority. In contrast, many (although certainly not all) bishops associated with Italian Catholic Action, such as Ruffini, remained steadfastly with the conservative minority.

The inclusion and placement of a chapter on the People of God (Chapter II) was rightly acknowledged as a revolution in the Church’s perception of itself, a battle to re-orient the Church that owed much to Lamennais and his school. Similarly, the Specialised Catholic Action movements played a decisive role in bringing forth a corresponding emphasis on the baptismal role of the laity as members of a priestly people and sharing in the prophetic, priestly and royal functions of Christ. These changes revolutionised the Church’s self-perception.

**The lay apostolate proper to lay people**

In any event, achieving a chapter on the laity (Chapter VI) was unprecedented in an ecumenical council document. Even more significantly, the term “lay apostolate,” combining two previously mutually exclusive terms, appeared for the first time. Although the term had nineteenth century roots, there was no denying the role of Cardijn and the Specialised Catholic Action movements in mainstreaming it.

Moreover, the notion of lay apostolate itself had evolved enormously. During the 1930s, Luigi Civardi, the Italian theorist of Catholic Action and Council Father, had insisted that “lay people are not able to exercise a genuine apostolate properly speaking,” and that the lay apostolate was therefore “auxiliary” and “subordinated” to the hierarchical apostolate. Now, however, *Lumen Gentium* (§33) proclaimed that the lay apostolate was “a participation in the salvific mission of the Church itself,” adding that “through their baptism and confirmation all are commissioned to that apostolate by the Lord Himself.”

Even more importantly from Cardijn’s point of view, the Constitution (§31) finally

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recognised the “proper” vocation of the laity in life and the world in terms closely approximating his own:

[T]he laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven.  

As Edward Schillebeeckx noted, this was a great advance from the preparatory schema which had simply characterised lay people as those who “had not been called... to the consecrated hierarchy or to the religious life” but who pursued holiness “according to their own path, including secular activities.”

Similarly, in an evaluation of Cardijn’s conciliar role, his successor as JOCI chaplain, Marcel Uylenbroeck, commented that it was “undoubtedly the first time that such an official document of the Church insisted on the proper character of the lay apostolate.”

We know how much Cardinal Cardijn has ardently defended what he called ‘the proper apostolate of the lay person as a lay person’. If now the Council underlines this so clearly, is it not because the “Message of Cardijn” has progressively made its way in the universal Church...

But if Cardijn played an enormous role in achieving this recognition of the role of the laity, Uylenbroeck notes that there was a corollary to this. This was “another truth” highlighted by Lumen Gentium (§32 and §37) that “the JOC, particularly through the action of its founder, had highlighted since its beginnings,” namely the “fraternal collaboration” that “was essential for the Church, between lay people and the pastors of the Church (Hierarchy and clergy).”

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Tribute also must go to Philips, who despite his differences with Cardijn, certainly played a key role, particularly given Suenens’s own reluctance to recognise a specific role for the laity, as did Congar.

C. The drafting of *Apostolicam Actuositatem*

The Lay Apostolate Commission: A new dynamic

In parallel with the drafting of *Lumen Gentium*, the Lay Apostolate Commission (LAC) continued working on its own schema, albeit much reduced in scope with important sections hived off to Schema XIII and the schema on the Church.

During the First Session, Cento had called a preliminary meeting of the new body on 22 November 1962 just days after Cardijn’s visit to Rome. Participants included Castellano, Larrain, Hengsbach, Ménager, Guano and Glorieux.\(^{53}\)

At this point, the PCLA schema, known as the “1962 Schema” and finalised in June 1962 comprised 272 articles, which were reprinted virtually unchanged in early 1963.\(^ {54}\) The new LAC, however, was now “an organ” of Vatican II with the mission of “implementing its intentions,” as Glorieux noted, meaning that the drafting was now under the control of the Council Fathers and free from previous constraints.\(^ {55}\)

Moreover, the new dynamic meant that most subjects addressed by the PCLA now needed to be completely reconsidered by the LAC. Even the title became a point of new contention with some LAC members preferring “the participation of the laity in the mission of the Church.”\(^ {56}\) The only point on which there was no dispute, Glorieux noted wryly, was that the extreme worldwide variety of situations of lay people required that “great freedom be left to the bishops to organise the apostolate.”\(^ {57}\)


\(^{54}\) Ibid., 276-277.


\(^{56}\) Ibid., 110.

\(^{57}\) Glorieux, “Histoire,” 110.
The name: Faithful versus laity

Although the commission responsible for the schema was commonly known throughout the Council as the “Lay Apostolate Commission,” its formal title was the “Commission for the Apostolate of the Faithful; for the Editing of Printed Material and the Mass Media” or, in a more literal translation from the Latin, “Commission on the Apostolate of the Faithful, Press and (Public) Spectacles.”

As well as lumping lay apostolate together with mass media, there was a clear theological difference in the Commission’s new name referencing “the apostolate of the faithful” (fidelium), concerning all the baptised, rather than “the apostolate of the laity” (laicorum) as with the Preparatory Commission. Glorieux lamented that the change was made without consultation.

So, he approached Felici, the Council Secretary General, in September 1962, seeking to replace the word fidelium by laicorum. According to Klostermann, Felici replied that the word “laity” had an anti-clerical ring, and that the word fidelium made it clear that the schema referred to the Catholic faithful rather than to Christians of other confessions.

But the change was “regrettable,” Glorieux commented, because the word laity had been used throughout the preparatory period in its “current sense.” Moreover, he and Cento made known that the use of the word “faithful” in this context directly contradicted one conclusion of the Preparatory Commission, which was to distinguish between the word “faithful,” meaning “every baptised person” and the word “laity,” referring to “those who did not embrace religious life and did not enter the priesthood.” However, Glorieux admitted that the issue was not simple.

It was too late to change, however, and in practice the commission continued to be known somewhat defiantly as the “Lay Apostolate Commission” (LAC). Nevertheless, it was a clear reminder of the distance still needed to obtain conciliar recognition of the laity and the lay

58 Ibid., 109.
59 Klostermann, “Decree,” 278.
60 Glorieux, “Histoire,” 110.
Members

There were now twenty-five members of the conciliar LAC, plus Cento as president and Achille Glorieux as secretary. As noted previously, eight of these were either former JOC or SCA chaplains or had actively promoted these movements as bishops: Larrain, Hengsbach, Ménager, Petit, Blomjous, Yu Pin, De Vet, all of whom had been elected by the Council and Stourm, the only one appointed by Pope John.

Others who were sympathetic to many of Cardijn’s positions without necessarily being disciples included Silva Henriquez (vice-president), Samoré, who was Substitute at the Secretariat of State, Guano, Castellano, De Araujo Sales and Laszlo. This meant, in effect, that there was close to majority support for Cardijn almost from the beginning of the Commission’s work. In November 1963, the election to the LAC of Helder Camara and the Spaniard Manuel Fernandez-Conde further strengthened Cardijn’s hand.

Little representation among the periti

The periti appointed during the First Session remained dominated by the Italians. These included John XXIII’s encyclical team of Pavan, Ferrari-Toniolo, Quadri and Tucci, who promoted the Cardijn method in Mater et Magistra and Pacem in Terris. In addition, there were the canonist Aurelio Sabattani, Sebastian Lentini and an Italian American, Luigi Ligutti, who played a major role in the US National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

The French periti were Joseph Géraud, a Sulpician priest based in Rome, Jean Daniélou, the Jesuit theologian, usually regarded as conservative by the Specialised Catholic Action movements but nevertheless sympathetic, and Jean Rodhain, the ex-JOC chaplain, founder of Secours Catholique and co-founder of Caritas Internationalis.

Also, members were the American labour priest, George Higgins, Anton Ramselaar, a Dutch pioneer of Jewish-Christian dialogue, Cyril Papali, an Indian Carmelite involved in Hindu-Christian dialogue, Ferdinand Klostermann, the Austrian Catholic Action chaplain, and Johannes Hirschmann, a German Jesuit professor of moral and pastoral theology.

Although Rodhain had been a JOC chaplain, he now worked in the field of charitable action, and took part in the Charitable Action sub-commission of the PCLA, of which he was the only French survivor, as he wrote to Liénart on 26 December 1962. As a result, “neither General or Specialised French Catholic Action are represented among the Lay Apostolate experts,” he added. “And this worries me,” he continued, insisting on the desirability of appointing “a French priest residing in France and specialising in Catholic Action.”

The periti had only “a very accessory role,” Rodhain wrote, “and it may be that the Roman authorities responsible for the allotment of experts attribute no importance to this absence.” On the other hand, “it may also be that, when the lay leaders of Catholic Action become aware that even their national chaplains have been “forgotten” from this list of Commission Experts… they – like me – will end up astonished and worried,” he warned.

Rodhain’s complaint drew a swift response from Liénart, who immediately proposed Mgr Jean Streiff, then secretary-general for the French bishops’ Commission on Lay Apostolate and Catholic Action, resulting in the latter’s appointment as a peritus in March 1963. Evidently, bishops from other countries had similar concerns. Thus, from the Second Session, the addition of more periti with SCA movement experience, including Englishman Msgr Derek Worlock, and of course Cardijn himself, helped to re-balance the LAC.

**Cardijn’s appointment**

Meanwhile, Cardijn’s absence from the initial list of periti provoked consternation from Camara and surely others. Both Cento and Glorieux appear to have been taken by surprise by

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63 Rodhain to Liénart, 26/12/1962, Archives Streiff, St 11, 465.
64 Ibid.
this omission causing Cento “to take several measures” to obtain his appointment. The mere fact that Cento had to make more than one effort offers insight into the level of opposition to Cardijn’s appointment that evidently existed.

Did Suenens play a role in either Cardijn’s absence or his eventual nomination? Certainly, as we have seen, Suenens had acted to prevent the election of Cardijn’s ally, Himmer, to the LAC. Given his hostility to the work of the PCLA on Catholic Action, as well as his theological and methodological disagreements with Cardijn, he had no reason to facilitate Cardijn’s participation and every motivation to block it.

**The lay auditors**

The first and only lay auditor appointed for the First Session in 1962 was the French philosopher, Jean Guitton, who had belonged during the early 1920s to the Sillon-inspired *Equipes sociales* founded by Robert Garric. A year later at the Second Session Guitton and Veronese would become the first lay people to address the Fathers, albeit not during a formal session of the Council. Although another eleven – all male auditors – were appointed at this time, only one – Auguste Vanistendael – had a jocist or SCA background, and none were female. By the same token, nor was the Legion of Mary represented, despite its worldwide success.

For the Third Session, however, i.e. after the election of Paul VI, Keegan, JOCI president Bartolo Perez, and Marie-Louise Monnet from the MIAMSI movement for professionals and business people, were among another fifteen auditors named. Legion founder Frank Duff was also included as part of an effort to broaden representation. Another six women religious were also appointed as “lay auditors.”

Two more auditors from SCA movements were added for the Fourth Session in 1965, namely Gladys Parentelli from the MIJARC movement for young farmers and Walter von Loe for the corresponding adult movement (FIMARC). Lastly, there was a Mexican married couple, Jose Alvarez Icaza and Luz Longoria Gama, from the Christian Family Movement (CFM), also a

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65 Achille Glorieux to Cardijn, 26/02/1963, AC1607.
Cardijn-inspired movement.

Thus, the jocist and SCA movements had a significant albeit minority presence among the auditors while others including French auditor, Henri Rollet, were close to Cardijn.

The Commission begins

The LAC’s first full meeting took place on 5 December 1962. Glorieux presented a relatio summarising several difficulties arising from the preparatory schema:

a) Baptism and confirmation are not the basis of a specific apostolate of the laity;

b) The range of lay activities made it difficult to extract general principles;

c) Lay people were unable to take part in the LAC although contacts were made with various International Catholic Organisations (ICOs);

d) The threefold division of the preparatory schema (which Cardijn had severely criticised) undermined the unity of the apostolate.

It was an important synthesis, which helped spotlight an issue that had prevented the LAC from adopting Cardijn’s conception of the “specific role of the laity.” Since they were not specific to lay people, the basis of this role could not be baptism and confirmation. What then was the basis of understanding of the specific role of the laity?

There could be no answer to this conundrum as long as the discussion remained theoretical and focused on the Church, Cardijn would have said. Nor did discussion of preaching the Word, or of charitable and social action help since these tasks were common to all members of the Church. Only by looking outward towards the world where people live out their lay lives would this specific role of the laity slowly become clearer. In this sense, the parallel work on Schema XIII was also of decisive importance.

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A decree on the apostolate of the laity

At the end of November 1962, the Central Commission communicated its decision to the LAC that the four fascicles of the schema on lay apostolate, now known as Schema XII, needed to be considerably shortened. Soon after, it announced that the schema was no longer to be a constitution but would henceforth become a “Decree on the Laity,” a title that the LAC successfully sought to have changed to “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity,” in a sign of its dissatisfaction with the limits that had been imposed.

However, the battle was far from won as the CC now directed the LAC to focus its work on “general principles” under three major headings:

a) the apostolate of the laity in the service (actio) of the reign of Christ;

b) the apostolate of the laity in charitable and social works;

c) societies of the faithful, based on a schema for a “Decree on the Societies of the Faithful” which had been prepared by the Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and Faithful.

If possible, this restructured plan was even worse than the original division of work in the PCLA. Fortunately, it was abandoned in January 1963 at the urging of Pavan, who warned that it failed to recognise “the specificity of social action.”

Moreover, there was still no mention of the role of lay people in life and the world. More positively, the CC requested the LAC to work closely with the Doctrinal Commission (DC) on the chapter on the laity planned in the schema on the Church. Finally, the LAC was to work with the DC in a Mixed Commission on the new schema, then known as Schema XVII, the future Gaudium et Spes. Everything else that had been included in the draft Constitution

68 Klostermann, “Decree,” 278.
70 Ibid.
was to be set aside for a planned Directory for the Apostolate of the Laity\textsuperscript{71} to be finalised after the Council, which at that point was not certain to last beyond 1963.

### A revised outline

In line with this, the CC decided to retain the original structure of the preparatory schema based on the division into direct and indirect evangelisation that Cardijn had so strenuously opposed:

1. General principles of evangelising action
2. The apostolate directly extending the kingdom of God: To be shortened
3. Charitable action: To be shortened
4. Social action: To be reduced to the essentials with the rest going to Schema XVII (XIII).\textsuperscript{72}

Nevertheless, some progress was made at the LAC meeting on 14-19 January 1963, i.e. prior to Cardijn’s joining the Commission, when the section on general principles was reworked into four parts:

1. The various modes of the apostolate for all baptised (including individual apostolate, apostolate by milieu and organised apostolate)
2. The order to be observed, including relations with the hierarchy, mutual coordination, etc.
3. Some particular current problems of the lay apostolate
   a) Conditions of life: Youth, men, women, families…
   b) Fields of action: World of work, culture, Marxist-dominated milieux, problems of public morality, public life, the international milieu and the international level.
4. Formation for the apostolate.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{71} Klostermann, “Decree,” 280.
\textsuperscript{72} Glorieux, “Histoire,” 113.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 117.
This showed that several of Cardijn’s priority concerns had begun to be addressed, despite his absence, particularly the addition of a fourth section on formation. Reference was now made to the “conditions of life” and to various fields, such as the world of work. Nevertheless, the conception of “milieu” remained rather confused, with references to Marxist and international milieux at variance with the concept of social milieu defended by the SCA movements. Most significantly, the starting point remained “the apostolate of all the baptised” with no reference to the specifically lay apostolate.

Evidently, there was still a long way to go. However, in February 1963, Cardijn finally received his “billet” (ticket) appointing him as a peritus, enabling him to attend the next LAC meeting from 4-10 March 1963.

**Cardijn joins the LAC**

According to Glorieux, the March 1963 meeting of the LAC marked the transition to a genuine conciliar dynamic where the participants, including both bishops and lay auditors, the various debates and documents on liturgy, the Church and even ecumenism and on the evolving Schema XIII, all gradually began to have an impact. But it was heavy going.74

The first subject of discussion was a new draft of the first section on general principles, which had been simplified. These principles were “well accepted” overall, according to Glorieux. Contention began with the section on the associations of the faithful, which had been drafted by a Mixed Commission of the LAC and the Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and the Faithful. Although the text had been “appreciably improved,” according to Glorieux, it nevertheless led to a “very animated discussion” between those who emphasised a distinction between “associations of the faithful” such as confraternities and Third Orders and “the organisations of the apostolate envisaged in the schema.”75 But Cardijn himself did not enter this debate and finally the paragraph concerned was deleted from later versions of the schema.76

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75 Ibid.
76 This may be the origin of Book II, Title V, Associations of the Christian Faithful in the 1983 Code of Canon
Note 18 – Formation

No doubt in preparation for this first meeting, Cardijn prepared a new Note 18. Dated March 1963, this was entitled “Schema Constitutionis,” after the title of the schema under revision, even though it had now been downgraded to a decree. It was also perhaps indicative of the limited information transmitted to Cardijn prior to his appointment as peritus.

In this extremely brief note, he simply emphasised formation “appropriate to the lay states of life” and for “priests, religious men and above all religious women in charge of the formation of lay people for their apostolate in their life, their milieux and institutions of life.”

Young people and migrants

Cardijn’s first recorded oral intervention on 7 March dealt with the subject of youth. Citing the views of various lay groups, Ménager had proposed that there should be a special number in the schema dealing specifically with young people. The response from the drafting committee was that it would be better and easier to deal with youth in the new proposed chapter on formation. Cardijn opposed this, arguing that “young people would feel offended since they already had a legitimate claim to be adults, a view that would eventually prevail in §12 of the final decree devoted specifically to young people.”

Later the same day Cardijn also intervened in support of a proposal by Yu Pin that specific mention should be made of migrants.

Catholic Action

Cardijn’s second intervention came three days later on 10 March in the discussion on

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78 Acta Commissionis Conciliaris, De fidelium apostolatu, 36, Archives Ménager, 434.
79 Vatican II, Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity), §12:
80 Acta Commissionis Conciliaris, De fidelium apostolatu, 37.
Catholic Action. As we saw in Chapter 6, the CC had refused to accept Suenens’s earlier proposal to change the draft sections dealing with the “four notes” of Catholic Action, which had been articulated in part around the Sillon conscience-responsibility binomial. Now, however, a new set of objections arose that Ménager explained well in a 16 March 1963 letter to Larrain, who was unable to attend the meeting.

“We met very firm and strong opposition from all the Anglo-Saxons backed by the English and German-speaking periti (except the Austrians),” Ménager wrote. The problem was that inserting a special chapter on Catholic Action would give it “pre-eminence and privilege” with respect to other forms of apostolate as well creating the impression of a “pressure group” implying an effort by the hierarchy to exercise “temporal influence,” which would smell of “clericalism.” Accordingly, this objection was also shared by the JOC in English-speaking countries, including Keegan, who may have been influenced by the Australian crisis following the politicisation of Catholic Action movements by its head, BA Santamaria and his anti-communist industrial-political organisation, the Catholic Social Studies Movement, which had sought to eliminate communist influence in trade unions and the Australian Labor Party.  

Cardijn made two proposals during this discussion. First, he suggested that it would be better to explain the reasons that the hierarchy needed to support Catholic Action initiatives rather than simply to cite papal authority in support. This proposal was not accepted. Secondly, he pointed out that the JOC did not use the term Catholic Action, even though Pius XI had commended it as a perfect type of Catholic Action. Ultimately, Apostolicam Actuositatem in §20 did recognise that Catholic Action organisations may also go under “other titles.”

In a compromise, the text was moved to a new chapter entitled “The various forms of organised apostolate,” leaving it up to local bishops to choose the forms they judged best suited, although this reservation too was ultimately dropped.

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81 Ménager to Larrain, 16/03/1963, Archives Ménager, 525.
82 Bruce Duncan, Crusade or Conspiracy? Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2001).
83 Acta Commissionis Concilii, De fidelium apostolatu, 50.
The advantage of this compromise, according to Ménager, was that “agreement was reached contrary to the conception of H.E. Cardinal Suenens, who had returned to the attack in quite a violent manner, writing to several bishops of the Commission demanding that the term ‘Catholic Action’ become a generic term designating all forms of lay apostolate in the narrow sense, practically removing the option of bishops to choose between various possible forms of apostolate based on the needs of their dioceses.”

**Cardijn’s participation**

As the above examples illustrated, Cardijn’s oral interventions at the LAC meeting were relatively limited, perhaps because of his advancing deafness. Nevertheless, he had clearly expressed his views in his preparatory notes, in *Laïcs en premières lignes*, the French edition of which was available by June 1963, and in the proposals of the JOCI. The jocist bishops too had begun to take up many of his concerns. As the successive new drafts of the schema emerged, however, he again took up his pen.

**The 1963 schema**

Following the March meeting, the newly revised schema – the “1963 schema” – was transmitted to the CC, which in turn presented it on 22 April to the dying Pope John, who sent it for printing in preparation for the Second Session. Now reduced to 47 printed pages, it was roughly a quarter the size of the 1962 schema. Once Paul VI confirmed that the Council would continue, a 34-page fascicle of “observations on the schema,” including from the newly appointed lay auditors, was also prepared.

The progress achieved between the 1962 and 1963 schemas can perhaps best be appreciated by a side-by-side comparison of their provisions.

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84 Ménager to Larrain, 16/03/1963.
1962 Schema
General introduction
Part I: General notions

1. The laity in the apostolate of the Church
2. Relations of the laity with the Hierarchy
3. The role of the priest in the apostolate of the laity
4. The apostolate of the individual
5. Lay people serving the Church in special positions
6. The family as a subject of the apostolate
7. The organised apostolate
8. Mutual coordination
9. The apostolic spirit
10. The education and preparation of lay people for the apostolate

1963 Schema
General introduction
Part I: The apostolate of the laity in general

Title I: The various modes of the apostolate
Ch. 1. The apostolate to be exercised by each person
Ch. 2: The organised apostolate

Title II: The order to be observed
Ch. 1: Relations with the hierarchy
Ch. 2: Mutual coordination

Title III: Some issues of the lay apostolate requiring particular attention by the Church
Ch. 1: The apostolate of the laity in various conditions of life
Ch. 2: Fields of action that are particularly important in the present circumstances

Title IV: The formation of the laity for the apostolate
Part II: The apostolate of the laity in the service of the direct promotion of the reign of Christ

Title I: The forms of organised apostolate: 74 articles
Ch. 1: The apostolate of the laity in the various ecclesial communities
Ch. 2: Catholic Action
Ch. 3: Other forms of the apostolate tending to directly promote the reign of Christ

Title II: The different forms and domains: 77 articles
Ch. 1: The apostolate of the word
Ch. 2: The apostolate of the family
Ch. 3: The apostolate of youth
Ch. 4: The apostolate in one's own professional and social milieu
Ch. 5: The lay apostolate in international milieux
Ch. 6: The participation of the laity in the apostolate for the promotion of Christian unity
Ch. 7: The apostolate in milieux subject to materialism and marxism
Ch. 8: The apostolate of the laity in the mission areas of the Church
Appendices: Culture, public morals, means of social communication, right use of leisure.
Part III: The apostolate of the laity in charitable works: 36 articles

Ch. 1: The nature and field of charitable works
Ch. 2: Justice and charitable works
Ch. 3: The obligation of charitable action
Ch. 4: Charitable action and the apostolate of the laity
Ch. 5: Individual charitable action
Ch. 6: Organised charitable action
Ch. 7: Formation of the laity for charitable action

Part IV: The apostolate of the laity in social action: 85 articles

Title I: Social action in general
Chap. 1: Lay action to direct and perfect the natural order
Chap. 2: Relations of the laity with the hierarchy
Chap. 3: Forms of social action
Chap. 4: The formation of the laity
Chap. 5: The glorification of God and the supernatural perfection of the faithful

Title II: Social action in particular
Chap. 1: The family
Chap. 2: Education
Chap. 3: The condition of women at work and in social life
Chap. 4: Economic and social life
Chap. 5: Social order
Chap. 6: Science and art
Chap. 7: Civic life or order within the state
Chap. 8: The international or universal order
Progress

In Part I, a clear shift was visible from an initial reference in 1962 to “the laity in the apostolate of the Church” towards an identification in 1963 of “the apostolate of the laity” themselves, particularly in relation to their “conditions of life.” With respect to relations with the hierarchy, a new section was added on “mutual coordination” by the laity themselves in line with Cardijn’s own suggestion and the jocist model.

Part II evidenced the beginnings of a shift from the Suenens-style “direct/indirect” evangelisation underpinning of the 1962 draft towards a conception of “the apostolate of the laity in particular” in the 1963 draft. The new Part II also specifically referred in the new Title III to “the apostolate of the laity in the temporal order,” which replaced Part IV of the 1962 draft on “the apostolate of the laity in social action,” the content of which was moving to Schema XIII.

Again, this certainly reflected the influence of the jocist forces, who had insisted with Cardijn on the importance of action beginning with the life experience of the laity. Still very ecclesially-focused, the 1963 draft nevertheless constituted a step forward from the 1962 schema, progress that was largely driven by the jocist network.

Observations from the Second Session

The LAC met several times during the Second Session, which took place from 29 September – 4 December 1963. On 3 October, Cento called the Commission together to discuss the observations received. Based on its meetings on 8, 10 and 15 October, Hengsbach prepared an update for the Council Fathers.85

However, the extended debate on the schema on the Church, the urgency of the discussion on ecumenism as well as other proposed corrections to the schema meant that a full debate in aula was not yet possible. Nevertheless, on 29 November, the LAC requested the opportunity to present a brief update to the Council Fathers in view of calling for further observations on

the new draft. This was done by Hengsbach on 2 December.

**Cardijn’s observations – Note 20**

Although Cardijn and the jocist leaders worked very hard leading up the Second Session, he had still not prepared his own critique of the 1963 schema, a gap he filled with a new Note 20 dated 25 January 1964.\(^\text{86}\)

Here he again emphasised God’s creation of the whole world and our human and divine mission, proposing a new paragraph on Christ’s mission, which offered an important insight into his theology:

> This primary mission, the divine and the human nature, man refused through original sin and actual sin. Nevertheless, God, in his divine love for and confidence in humanity, never abolished this primary mission. The Old Testament continually repeats, praises and exalts this, and the Church commemorates it each day in the Offertory of the Holy Mass, saying: “O God, who **wonderfully** created the dignity of human nature and still more **wonderfully** restored it....” (Cardijn’s emphasis)\(^\text{87}\)

In effect, Cardijn’s whole theology of lay apostolate was derived from this conception of humankind sharing in God’s mission from the beginning of creation. This God-given mission applied to all people, Christian or not. It was a positive, creative mission, not simply reparatory or redemptive. At one level, it was a restatement in theological terms of Ollé-Laprune’s philosophical conception of each human person having a mission in life.

Understood in this way, the mission of each person depended simply on their human nature. It did not derive from a share in the mission of the hierarchy except in the sense that this encompassed the human and divine mission of the people. Nor did it even depend on baptism and confirmation. Moreover, this conception of the mission of the human person also formed the foundation of Cardijn’s understanding of lay apostolate.

Thus, he insisted again on the irreplaceable (irrepressibili) specifically “lay” apostolate of lay


\(^{87}\) Ibid.
people, which was “different from that of priests and religious, namely the apostolate of their own lay life, in married and family life, in working life, in social life and in national and international life.” Not only did the clerical or religious apostolate differ from the lay apostolate but it also depended on it, just as the celebration of the Mass depended on the human work that first made the bread and wine. This was also why, in Cardijn’s conception, lay people were “in the front line.” This completely overturned existing conceptions of lay apostolate dependent on the hierarchy. And it is easy to see why Cardijn’s proposals proved so difficult for the Council Fathers, including even some of his supporters, to accept.

Although these were the most significant theological points that Cardijn made, he did not stop here. In other proposed changes, he emphasised the growing awareness of people around the world resulting from better communications, the specific formation needs of young workers, and the need for milieu-based organisation. Strikingly, he also recommended special attention to orphans, and all those suffering from physical, psychic or social handicaps. In Cardijn’s conception of lay apostolate, even the poorest, especially the poorest, had their own creative and redemptive missions to fulfil.

A Roman Centre on the lay apostolate – Note 21

In January 1964 Cardijn also prepared a series of reflections concerning the establishment of “a Roman Centre for the Apostolate of Lay People,” expanding the suggestions he had made during the preparatory period. Although the 1962 schema had addressed this in general terms, most LAC members proved “extremely reticent,” Glorieux recorded, because, they said, most apostolates took place at a diocesan and national level. Any international body should therefore have a consultative rather than a directive role and include lay people. On this point, Cardijn shared similar fears, which dated back to Pizzardo’s efforts in the 1930s to create an overarching international centre for Catholic Action.

88 Cardijn, “Note 20.”
Cardijn therefore insisted that the proposed centre “should have a role of information, formation, liaison and animation,” informing Church authorities on “current trends, problems and experiences” as well as communicating “inspirations and suggestions from the Hierarchy to lay leaders.” As such, it would become “the summit of dialogue” between laity and hierarchy in the Church.91

Once again inverting the hierarchy-laity relationship, Cardijn rejected the notion of a centre as “the Secretariat of the Hierarchy for controlling or supervising the laity.” Rather, it should be “(a) a secretariat of the laity for the Hierarchy, and (b) a secretariat of the laity in view of collaboration with other institutions and organisations outside the Church.” It needed to be “the expression of the apostolate of lay people in the Church, based on the continents and races – for youth as well as for adults – for the various milieux of life and modes of lay life.”

It should not be a “superstructure” or, “umbrella body imposed from outside or artificially” but “a peak body, a summit supported by a real and palpable base,” Cardijn argued. It should “not impose itself from on high” but “grow based on the existing and living lay apostolate” with leaders rising “from the base, in full submission to the Hierarchy.”

Its primary focus should be the development of educational material beginning “from life and its problems which are the raw material of the apostolate,” using methods of formation based on the “discovery of responsibilities” and on “enquiries, facts, experiences, achievements in life” rather than “theoretical ideas.”

“Formation must take place based on the method of dialogue and the search for Christian solutions in life,” Cardijn added. In this light, the role of the centre would be primarily to “help, sustain, unite, make known the initiatives taken by others, rather than organising these itself.”

Hence, the need to launch a “loyal consultation” with the major existing lay apostolate organisations on the relevance, role, conception and operation of the body as well as potential

91 Cardijn, “Note 21.”
The 1964 Schema and the vocation of the laity

Following the Second Session, the LAC again confided the task of preparing a shorter third schema – the 1964 schema – to the Rome-based experts. Abandoning the division into “general” and “particular” parts of the 1963 schema, the new plan adopted a two-part framework:

a) A new doctrinal introduction on the vocation of the laity to the apostolate, based on a proposal by the French bishops;

b) Various forms and fields of the apostolate, and finally the order to be observed.\(^{93}\)

The drafting team completed their work during the last week of January 1964. The major change in this French-inspired plan was the emphasis on the vocation of the laity, a key concept in Cardijn’s theology and in his book, *Laïcs en premières lignes*.

Equally important here was Liénart’s report on the Deposit of Faith presented to the Coordination Commission a year earlier on 21 January 1963, which was so important for Schema XIII. This was articulated around humankind created in the image of God with a divine origin and destiny and appeared to be based on Cardijn’s “divine origin, divine mission and divine destiny” trilogy.\(^{94}\) Moreover, Tavora had adopted the same framework in his Cardijn-drafted Second Session speech.

But this was far from enough to satisfy the JOC founder. With the Council expected to end at the Third Session, it was time for a last-ditch effort to improve the schema.

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\(^{92}\) Ibid.

\(^{93}\) Glorieux, “Histoire,” 121-122.

Preparing for the Third Session

In the Third Session planned for September – November 1964 conciliar discussion needed to address the major schemas on the Church, Schema XIII, religious liberty, etc. It was expected that there would be little time for discussion of the lesser schemas including the lay apostolate schema. In this scenario, the 1964 schema would not be discussed as such but a series of “proposals” would be presented for conciliar discussion and later referral to the Canon Law Reform Commission. Now that the 1964 plan was much shorter, it was also proposed to include various unused sections from the 1962 schema in a separate “directory” on lay apostolate similar to the directory then planned for Schema XIII.

Based on this, a new draft schema was completed and sent to LAC members and experts on 25 January 1964. At its next meeting from 2-12 March 1964, the LAC accepted the new draft as the basis for its discussion. However, they concluded that it would be impossible to limit themselves to preparing a simple series of “proposals” for discussion. On the contrary, they argued, there was now an expectation among the Fathers that a full schema would be discussed.

The plan

The outcome, characterised by Glorieux as “decisive,” was a new suggestion from the Jesuit Roberto Tucci, who proposed to re-organise the schema as follows:

Preamble

Ch. 1: The vocation of the laity
Ch. 2: The communities and milieux of life
Ch. 3: The ends of the apostolate
Ch. 4: The associated forms
Ch. 5: The order to be observed.

This plan, which was accepted by the LAC, took it several steps closer to the Cardijn

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95 Glorieux, “Histoire,” 120.
97 Ibid., 120.
conception with its emphasis on the vocation of the laity, the reference to the various milieux of life, organised forms of apostolate as well as the relegation of relations with the hierarchy to the end of the schema. On the other hand, the titles on formation that Cardijn had fought hard for and had been included in the 1963 schema had disappeared, necessitating yet another battle.

To implement the plan, the LAC established five new sub-commissions. The Commission now included several new members and experts, including Helder Camara as well as Derek Worlock, an English monsignor who had worked closely with the YCW, and particularly with Keegan and a group of former YCW leaders who met regularly and were known as “The Team.” Each sub-commission therefore included at least one or two members who had worked closely with the JOC and SCA movements (names in bold) as well as others who were sympathetic.
1964 plan\textsuperscript{98}

Introduction
Part I: The vocation of the laity to the apostolate
Ch. 1. The participation of the laity in the mission of the Church
Ch. 2. The apostolate to be exercised by each and all
Ch. 3. Formation for the apostolate

Part II: The communities and milieux of life
Ch. 1: The fields of the apostolate
Ch. 2: In the family
Ch. 3: In ecclesial communities
Ch. 4: In the milieux of life
Ch. 5: The groups open to all

Part III: The goals to be achieved
Ch. 1: The goals of the apostolate and distinctions
Ch. 2: The conversion of man and his progress towards God
Ch. 3: The temporal order to be restored in a Christian manner
Ch. 4: Charitable action towards our neighbours

Sub-commission members\textsuperscript{99}
Necsey
Ménager
Fernandez-Condé
Guano
Moehler
Lentini
Worlock
Papali
Bogliolo
Morris
Yu Pin
Camara
Stourm
Gutierrez
Ligutti
Fernand Boillat
Claude Leetham
Castellano
Larrain
Babcock
De Araujo Sales
Quadri
Ferrari-Toniolo

\textsuperscript{98} Glorieux 1970: 122-123.
\textsuperscript{99} Glorieux 1970: 121.
Part IV: The organised forms

Ch. 1: The importance of organisation
Ch. 2: The various forms of organised apostolate
Ch. 3: Catholic Action
Ch. 4: Associations of the apostolate should be appreciated by all

Herrera y Oria
Petit
Laszlo
De Vet
Civardi
Cardijn
Klostermann
Piovesana
Streiff
Dalos
Cousins
O’Connor

Part V: The order to be observed

Ch. 1: Relations with the hierarchy
Ch. 2: Pastors and the apostolate of the laity
Ch. 3: Mutual cooperation
Ch. 4: Cooperation with other Christians and non-Christians

Hengsbach
Da Silva
Ramselaar
Higgins
Géraud
Johannes Hirschmann SJ

Final exhortation
“Those Romans”

Despite this progress, Cardijn remained unsatisfied. The Roman drafting team continued to frustrate him, as the Canadian Bishop Remi De Roo later recalled:

Cardinal Cardijn confided to me that he never fully succeeded in getting “those Romans” to grasp the true nature of Specialised (meaning the apostolate of like to like) Catholic Action. They failed to grasp how it was directed primarily towards the transformation of society through Gospel values. It was not meant to be oriented towards the strengthening or promotion of Church structures as such. I remember him bemoaning the fact that in the commission in which he participated during the Council, he had found it practically impossible to get the members to understand the true nature of Catholic Action.  

Indeed, Cardijn offered an uncharacteristically harsh evaluation of the 1964 draft in his Note 24. “I regret that the text had to be so condensed that it does not allow for insisting on the primordial importance of certain forms of lay apostolate and the formation for this,” he wrote. “I fear that a number of people will be disappointed,” particularly working youth,” he lamented.

Warning against “the alienation of certain milieux” from the Church’s message, he argued that their problems could only be solved by lay people organised in their own milieu. “Can one say that General Catholic Action – the apostolic organisation which corresponds to it – is adequate to form, cause to act and organise the young workers?” he asked frankly. “Isn’t it cheating and losing young workers to tell them that any sort of group is adequate?”

“Similarly, the promotion of young people is one of the signs of our time,” he added. “It would be good to highlight this in the text so as to invite young people (boys and girls) to become conscious, capable and desirous of taking up all their responsibilities so as to fully assume their mission for the building of a new world.”

The world of work, its decisive importance as well as efforts to ensure the security and

100 Remi De Roo, Chronicles of a Vatican II Bishop (Victoria, BC: Novalis, 2012), 73-74.
dignity of all workers were also ignored as was the non-Christian context, Cardijn feared. “Isn’t it necessary to emphasise the plan of creation, renewed by that of the redemption, to bring out the mission of the Church, the Christian and man in the world?” he asked. “Would not failure to do so amount to offending the non-Christian, by beginning with Christ and the Church?”

On the other hand, starting from life, work and leisure created “confidence and friendship” and facilitated “the discovery” of the Christian faith and the Church, he argued.\[102\]

These were tough questions – also relevant to Schema XIII – that seriously exposed the shortcomings of the new text.

**A more uplifting schema**

Cardijn was still far from happy in September 1964 as the Third Session began, calling in Note 26 for a “more uplifting” schema. “The Schema must bring out more the apostolate proper to lay people as lay people, the apostolic value of their lay life, their lay activity, in lay milieux and institutions, in the lay world of today and tomorrow,” he insisted yet again.\[103\]

This apostolate could not be fulfilled by priests and religious. Moreover, “nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of every thousand of the world population are lay,” he noted. Even among the 400 hundred million Catholic lay faithful, their religion remained “separate from their lay life.” And if this was not clear enough, he listed various fields of “lay life,” namely “family, professional, economic, social, cultural, civic, private and public, national and international; sciences, arts, technology, leisure, displacements, pleasures, vacations, advertising, information, trade, teaching, etc.”

Yet as we have seen, not only the Roman drafters but some of the French bishops as well as Philips and Suenens were unable to accept such an apparently secular view of the lay vocation. Perhaps this was why Cardijn again insisted that “[a] new world is a world that

\[102\] Cardijn, “Note 24.”

\[103\] Cardijn, “Note 26, De apostolatu laicorum, Souhaits généraux,” 09/1964, AC1577.
understands and realises its whole divine mission: ‘instaurare omnia in Christo,’ ‘consecratio mundi.’”

Meanwhile, now that Part I focused on the vocation of the laity, he called for the Prooemium (Introduction) to make concrete reference to the “decisive” issues of life and society that provided the stage on which the laity exercised their apostolate from local to international levels.

He insisted that all have an apostolate, Christians as well as non-Christians, and that this extended to “all areas of life” in response to the “innate” necessity and obligation that arose from both the orders of creation and redemption and “the commandment to love.”

This was why “apostolic formation” needed to be “given during the age of vocation,” he explained. Youth was the decisive age when young people were “formed or deformed in the meaning of human life,” he emphasised. Hence the need for “active” formation in which “young people themselves determine their vocation and become conscious of their responsibilities and capacities,” he insisted. Clearly, much remained to be done.

**The Third Session**

Cardinal Cento finally introduced the debate on the lay apostolate schema on 6 October 1964, recalling that the subject was closely related to Pope John’s pastoral goals for the Council, emphasising that “the laity are the Church.” Hengsbach presented the content, highlighting the connection between the LAC’s work and Chapter IV of the schema on the Church. Moreover, much material prepared by the PCLA had been contributed to Schema XIII.

Cardijn had been in Rome since 13 September and he stayed until the end of the debate on the lay apostolate schema on 13 October. As a remarkable series of interventions by the jocist bishops make clear, he was not idle during that period. Virtually every point that Cardijn himself had made in his various notes was now taken up by one or more of these bishops.

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105 Ibid, 236-240.
Although some convergence would be unsurprising, the similarities with Cardijn’s own notes as well as the complementarity between the various interventions strongly suggest coordination among themselves.

The jocist bishops intervene

There were 144 interventions in the debate including both oral and written contributions, plus fourteen received prior to the Third Session, including twelve in the name of episcopal conferences. Once again, the jocist bishops punched well above their numerical weight.

De Roo, speaking on behalf of fifteen Canadian bishops, was the first jocist bishop to intervene, with a draft of his speech in Cardijn’s archives strongly implying that the latter was consulted. De Roo stressed two essential elements, beginning with the vocation of the Church and of Christians in which creation and redemption were united, resulting in a twofold calling a) to continue and complete creation through work, industry, science, etc., and b) to raise this human calling to the level of the apostolate, thus uniting the natural and supernatural aspects. The second aspect which was the goal of the lay apostolate, De Roo noted, was on one hand to spread the Kingdom of God and on the other to lead the whole of creation towards its goal. “Creation has a Christian value and Christ does not add to this value but represents the summit,” De Roo continued. Lay people also had a duty “to complete Creation, and therefore, to s’engager [expressed in French] in temporal activities.” Their apostolate should therefore not be confused with that of the hierarchy, he argued.

Paul Charbonneau, another Canadian “friend of the JOC,” followed with an intervention that also bore the imprint of Cardijn’s influence, particularly in his insistence on “the irreplaceable importance of the laity” and “their special task… rooted in their state of life… [that] cannot be done by others.” Lay people “must incarnate Christ in the world,” he said.

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109 Fesquet, Le journal, 547.
111 Fesquet, Le journal, 547.
Bishop Mauro Rubio Repullès, former Spanish JOC national chaplain, called for the introductory chapter to include a “pastoral and sociological description of the lay state” including its spiritual and secular dimensions as well as an explanation of the nature of the apostolate including its secular or civilising activity. This was evidently a bid to counter Suenens’s critique of the SCA movements. Like Cardijn, he called for bishops, priests and religious to devote themselves to the promotion of the lay apostolate.\textsuperscript{112}

Another “friend of the JOC,” Indian Eugene D’Souza explained that St Ignatius of Antioch’s aphorism “nothing without the bishop” did not mean that everything had to be the initiative of the bishop but simply that nothing should be done contrary to or bypassing the bishop. Otherwise, where would the freedom of God’s children be? Slamming clericalism, he asked why lay people could not represent the Church in international organisations or diplomatically.\textsuperscript{113}

De Smedt next lauded the see-judge-act method for the formation of young people and linked it to the need for the lay apostolate schema to respect religious freedom in a speech foreshadowing Cardijn’s own intervention on religious liberty at the Fourth Session.\textsuperscript{114}

For Archbishop Léon-Etienne Duval of Algiers, speaking on behalf of all the North African bishops, the apostolate was “above all dialogue with all people.” The non-baptised are not deprived of grace, he added, hence, “let us not unduly separate nature and supernature,” he proposed.\textsuperscript{115} In these circumstances, the twofold theological foundation of the lay apostolate particularly needed to be shown, he argued. First, Christians were linked to those of other religions in many aspects of life, including culture, morality and intellectual pursuits, and secondly, the Church as a mystical reality was not limited to its visible boundaries, he added.\textsuperscript{116}

Owen McCann from South Africa criticised the schema as lacking inspiration. What was

\textsuperscript{112} Sauer, “The Laity,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 243.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., 244.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 245.
\textsuperscript{115} Fesquet, \textit{Le journal}, 548.
needed was a clear explanation of the apostolate along with a practical daily application of it, acknowledging the maturity of the laity and their sense of responsibility. Attention should also be given to preparation of priests to accompany the lay apostolate, he added.\textsuperscript{117}

In a further echo of Cardijn, McGrath noted on behalf of thirty Latin American bishops that 99\% of all members of the Church were lay people, emphasising the importance of baptism and confirmation as the basis of their mission and their participation in the “one priesthood of Christ.”\textsuperscript{118} Several others insisted on baptism and confirmation as the basis of the universal priesthood and the lay apostolate, including Liénart, who insisted on the need for priests to form lay people for their apostolate.\textsuperscript{119}

In his explanation of the special call of the laity in the modern world, Larrain noted that “God’s voice must be heard in the voice of the times.” It was “the hour of the laity,” he said.\textsuperscript{120} However, to avoid “angelicism,” the lay apostolate needed to be “incarnated,” he argued, without being limited to the temporal sphere.\textsuperscript{121}

In phrases that echoed Cardijn, Larrain noted that the lay person “is naturally present in the world,” and “it is there that he finds salvation.” Thus, the apostolate of the milieu was “the way towards a cosmic vision of the redemption of the world.” This was how the Church moved into a “state of mission,” Larrain said, emphasising that “we are no longer in the era of Christendo.”\textsuperscript{122}

Henri Donze delivered another significant intervention, complaining that the schema was not directed enough at lay people, understood as “a social being, living in a milieu” that formed their attitudes. It was necessary “to reach the total reality of life and modify the milieu from the inside,” he argued.\textsuperscript{123} Similarly, the former Canadian national YCW chaplain, Bishop William Power, insisted on the lay apostolate by “insertion in the present reality through daily

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 246-247.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 257-258
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., 260.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
reality and social and civic responsibilities.”

Regarding the proposed Roman centre on lay apostolate, Cardinal Heenan and Bishop Padin proposed that it should be constituted on a different pattern from other dicasteries, with lay people as its primary members.

Finally, Guerry intervened. “The schema distinguishes two objects of the lay apostolate, namely evangelisation and the Christian animation of the temporal order,” he stated, “but it also simultaneously affirms the unity of these two forms in the Christian conscience”:

It therefore offers the logical application in the practical order of the principles enunciated in *De Ecclesia*, namely distinction and unity of the temporal and supernatural orders in God’s plan, and the double mission of the Church, namely proclamation of the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ and the animation of human society by bringing it the plenitude of light and life of which the baptised must be the carriers.

The testimony of the lay person thus takes place:

a) In the order of creation as a citizen of the temporal order, which, considered in itself is not an apostolate strictly speaking. However, it becomes so in the manner in which the lay person lives out their commitment.

b) In the order of redemption, the Christian witnesses to his faith by words and acts among the non-Christians with whom he exercises his activities in the temporal order.

The schema should better bring out the distinction of levels as well as the unity in the conscience of the Christian, the autonomy of the earthly city and the transcendence of the Church at the service of the human race.

While Cardijn may have expressed it differently, this amounted to an important endorsement of his basic theological approach by a leading conciliar bishop.

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124 Ibid.
126 “Controverses,” Témoignage chrétien.
Suenens hits out

Not to be denied, Suenens took the floor, again insisting that the term Catholic Action should be given a more general meaning or replaced. A specific historical form of Catholic Action appeared to be privileged, he argued, to the detriment of other forms of apostolate. But times had changed. Lay people were more active and conscious of their role in the Church. New forms of lay apostolate had emerged. Protesting his “love for lay people,” he begged the Council not to impose “overly restrictive and uniform categories.” Have faith in the “freedom of the Holy Spirit,” he concluded.

Once again, Liénart responded first, backing the need for the schema to make special mention of Catholic Action as “participation in the hierarchical apostolate” as proposed by Pius XI and endorsed by his successors. In a particularly brutal response, Padin stated that opening up Catholic Action to any kind of apostolate would amount to formalism. “If we are only here to discuss words, then we could also discuss the appropriateness of titles such as the Society of Jesus or the Holy Office,” he said. “There are other offices that are holy and also other societies of Jesus,” he remarked pointedly.

Clues to Suenens’s opposition on these points can be found in a document in his archives, labelled (by him) “Remarks by several lay people on the Schema ‘De apostolatu laicorum’.”

According to the unnamed authors, the schema risked falling into “a legalism that endeavours to account for a form of Catholic Action legitimate and valuable in 1930, but now outdated in the facts in many countries.” Although not named, this certainly referred to the JOC. The only movement mentioned by name was the French Action Catholique Ouvrière, the influence of which, according to the authors, was only too evident in the paragraph concerning the spirit of the apostolate. The document also noted “the crisis of Catholic Action,” as Comblin had done in his book Echec de l’Action catholique?, as well as its “tribulations.” It would therefore be “dangerous” to endow it with “the prestige of the Council,” the document

130 “Controverses,” Témoignage chrétien.
argued.⁹³

Although the authors remained anonymous, Suenens clearly believed these views represented a considerable body of opinion. Thus, in a debate where prelates from every continent took up the defence and promotion of Cardijn’s vision of lay apostolate and Specialised Catholic Action, Suenens offered him not a single word of support.

**Keegan’s intervention**

In contrast, Paul VI made his backing for Specialised Catholic Action very plain. This was undoubtedly a major factor in the pontiff’s choice of Patrick Keegan, first international president of the JOC and now the secretary-general of the emerging World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW) as the auditor who would address the Council Fathers.

Intriguingly, Suenens’s archives contain an undated copy in French of the draft speech that Keegan eventually delivered on 13 October as the first lay person to address a General Congregation of an Ecumenical Council.¹³² Immediately afterwards is a note in parentheses indicating that “the text will be read in English or Spanish.”¹³³ This implied that the choice of who was to make the intervention was not made until very late in the drafting process.

In any event, it was clearly a collective effort by the auditors and their collaborators, including Worlock in particular, as the Australian priest John Maguire later recalled.¹³⁴ Moreover, Keegan was “very keen not to so insult the bishops that they would rather have another person talk to them.” He was also “aware that some of the most important work at the Council was not done necessarily in the speeches – anybody can grandstand in a speech, he said, but it’s how you talk to people on the ground,” Maguire noted.

Indeed, the conservative Cardinal Ruffini congratulated Keegan after his speech, saying “Pat,

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¹³¹ “Avis Général,” Archives Suenens, 2176.
¹³² “Projet d’une Intervention d’un Auditeur laic en Congrégation generale,” Archives Suenens, 2176.
¹³³ Ibid.
¹³⁴ Interview with John Maguire, “Keegan prepares talk to Vatican II,” 16/03/2014: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9SERyue4A8 (Accessed 07/06/2016)
On the other hand, Australian Archbishop Guilford Young criticised him for not being more critical! Keegan responded that he was not speaking in his own name but in the name of the auditors. “It was the first time a layman had been asked to speak at a Council,” Keegan told him. “I was not going to slam the door in the face of any future ones.”

This background illuminated both Keegan’s character and his approach. It also explains what has been described as a “relatively bland speech.” According to Ian Linden, Paul VI himself vetted the speech, demanding inclusion of a phrase referring to the “laity’s submission to the hierarchy.” In fact, Keegan’s draft had referred to “the autonomous activity of laypeople in the temporal sphere” although the word “autonomous” was replaced by the word “responsible” in the final version. Nevertheless, there is no reference in the text to “submission.” Instead, Keegan offered “loyal cooperation.”

In a further subtle assertion of lay independence, Keegan introduced his speech with the sillonist binomial, stating that he was “very conscious of our responsibility at this historic moment to try, however inadequately, to voice the sentiments of the faithful laity throughout the world.”

Keegan’s main concern, however, was to emphasise the need for formation and of the role of movements and organisations in providing that formation:

How are the vast majority of Catholics to be made aware of their apostolic responsibility to bear witness in their daily life, as members of a family, as members of the community of the Church and of the whole community? This is the challenge for all those who bear responsibility for Christian formation…

It is here that we see the first role of our organisations.

Clerics too had a vital role in this formation. It was “the priest who equips us spiritually to...
‘consecrate the world’,” Keegan argued, pointedly adopting a phrase that Philips had described as “not very clear for a Council.”

Keegan’s speech was thus a careful and subtle exposition of lay apostolate as conceived by Cardijn and the SCA movements. Significantly, he made no mention of the term “Catholic Action” that was anathema to himself and to many English-speaking bishops. However, he encapsulated the essentials of the Specialised Catholic Action approach insisting on the “single mission” that bound clergy and laity.

To the extent that he had also won over conservatives like Ruffini, he had left Suenens isolated.

Towards the final 1965 draft

Although many criticisms of the schema were harsh, their effect was “constructive,” giving rise to a series of “happy corrections” over the coming months, as Glorieux observed. Among the most important aspects here was the “clericalism” of the 1964 text, which still referred eighteen times to the dependency of the laity on the hierarchy.

Cardijn’s criticisms that it no longer contained a chapter on formation (later rectified in a new Chapter VI) or a specific section on youth (leading to the new §12 in the final decree) were also taken up. While more emphasis was sought regarding the “individual apostolate,” the Fathers indicated, contra Suenens, their desire to maintain the article on Catholic Action (§20 in the decree).

In fact, work on a new draft began even before the discussion in aula had finished. By 5 November, a new outline divided into six chapters was ready:

Introduction
Ch 1:  The vocation of the laity to the apostolate

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Another fifteen previous articles were put aside for eventual treatment in a schema to be entitled “Societies of the Faithful in Canon Law” or “The Laity in Canon Law.” Based on this, the LAC drafting subcommittee prepared a new draft that was circulated on 27 November 1964.

A new Chapter VI – Note 28

At this stage, the new Chapter 6 existed only in point form. In fact, a Roman team prepared a first draft of this, which was circulated to the LAC. The responses were so negative that the draft was quickly abandoned. A second four-page draft was compiled by Fr Boglioli. At last, Cardijn’s reaction was positive. “This is a very good text!” he wrote in Note 28.142

“I would really like ALL future educators, seminarians, novices, priests, religious, missionaries, fiancés, spouses, parents, future bosses, trade union leaders and party leaders etc. to receive this instruction and to study it together,” he wrote. However, Cardijn added, it still needed to be “improved and completed in several aspects.”

In a remarkable document, he outlined a comprehensive guide for redrafting it:

Do not separate natural, temporal, professional, family, political formation from religious and spiritual formation (and vice versa). Make a clear distinction between teaching and formation for life, but never separate them; teaching is a monologue, formation is a dialogue. Do not separate the content or the matter from the formation, from the method or the manner of giving it: the method… must start from life, the real, the facts: see, judge, act.

142 Joseph Cardijn, “Note 28, Questions, refléxions, suggestions,” 05/01/1965, AC1577.
Formation must link and unite all aspects of life... It must be given throughout the whole of life but above all during the age of education for life, choice of life, vocation: from 14 to 25 years, to be able to form adult, authentic apostles, in true life, the true milieux and problems of life...

Never separate the mystery of the creation (and the mission given to man at the creation) from the mystery of the incarnation and the redemption; but on the contrary inculcate the sense of responsibility, mission with respect to this double mystery: the plan of God is unrealisable without the free and voluntary collaboration of man, in creation, in redemption; the two are inseparables.

Seek together the true, the human, the good, love, the divine, in Time and in Eternity.143

Ultimately it proved providential that Chapter VI had been added so late in the drafting process as it now gave Cardijn a relatively unhindered opportunity to set forth his vision of formation, which clearly had a major impact.

Understanding the see-judge-act

He was also critical. Boglioli had failed to grasp the import of formation in the jocist sense. The draft was too “abstract,” “very paternalistic” as well as misunderstanding “the existentialist aspect of life,” Cardijn complained.

It was necessary to emphasise that lay people “must make an effort to form themselves” and that they acquired this formation “in the exercise of the apostolate, in realising it together, in reflecting together, in helping each other, in seeking themselves to nourish their apostolic life in prayer and the sacraments, in study and reflection, in listening to the problems and aspirations of the world,” he insisted.144 People needed to discover “their own milieu of comrades, neighbourhood, school, leisure, etc.,” he repeated yet again. They needed “to learn to act,” not simply develop a “sensus catholicam and apostolicam.”

To achieve this, associations were necessary in which “lay people themselves help each other in their action and apostolic formation.” In small groups with their companions and friends, they needed to “examine the methods and results of their apostolic action and search together

143 Cardijn, “Note 28.”
144 Cardijn, “Note 28.”
in the Gospel to judge their own daily lives.” In this respect, Boglioli’s draft was “very confused” setting out a highly doctrinal approach to the see-judge-act method:

The “method” see, judge, act, as it is described in the chapter is far from authentic, it is reserved for the formation of Christians engaged in temporal action, in order that they themselves find the concrete solutions starting from doctrinal principles that they have been “given.”

In effect, even the see-judge-act could thus be subverted by the old doctrinal approach. In response, Cardijn set out his own understanding of the method:

All lay Christians need to be formed for an apostolic life of “discovering” the world in which they live (milieu, other persons, conditions of life, mentalities and attitudes to life). (SEE), (to discover in faith the thought and the active presence of the Lord with respect to this situation of life (JUDGE), to discover starting from the concrete call that Christ addresses to them in the world and in the Church (ACT). All these discoveries are made in a team (Church cell) and the response to the call of Christ is possible thanks to the mutual support and fraternal collaboration…

What was required was “a method of progressively forming and perfecting oneself with others and through action,” Cardijn proposed:

Since formation for the apostolate could not consist only in theoretical instruction, it was necessary to learn gradually and prudently from the beginning of the formation process, to see all things, to judge, and to act in the light of faith, to form and perfect oneself with others in act.145

This phrase had a decisive impact being adopted almost verbatim in §29 of the final decree:

Since formation for the apostolate cannot consist in merely theoretical instruction, from the beginning of their formation the laity should gradually and prudently learn how to view, judge and do all things in the light of faith as well as to develop and improve themselves along with others through doing, thereby entering into active service to the Church.146

Similarly, §30 of the decree lauded the jocist review of life:

145 Ibid.
146 Apostolicam Actuositatem, §29.
Their [lay groups and associations] members meet in small groups with their associates or friends, examine the methods and results of their apostolic activity, and compare their daily way of life with the Gospel.

But the partisans of a doctrinal approach were not to be denied either with the text insisting that “in addition to spiritual formation, a solid doctrinal instruction in theology, ethics, and philosophy adjusted to differences of age, status, and natural talents, is required.”

**Transforming life or the temporal order?**

Still not satisfied, Cardijn returned to the fray a day later on the formation issue in Note 28 entitled “Questions, reflections, suggestions”, dated 6 January 1965.

“EVERYTHING depends on formation for the apostolate of both priests and lay people. And this WHOLE is the whole future of the Church and humanity,” he emphasised, underlining the whole sentence.

“There is only one general formation for the apostolate, which is inseparable from the religious and moral sense, and which must be provided by leaders in the family, school, professional, civic milieux,” he argued.

This process of formation was long and required “patience, humility and perpetual recommencement.” It must be “rooted in life, in acts, among comrades, among ‘the others’ with whom we are united by God,” which required “great confidence, great faith and great love.”

“We are the replacements for God in the indispensable formation for lay people to spread his Kingdom on earth as in heaven, in time as in eternity,” Cardijn concluded. But his emphasis on the continuity between the temporal and eternal made no impact. The drafters and/or the LAC members remained preoccupied with rendering “the Church present and active in the midst of temporal affairs.”

147 Ibid.
148 Cardijn, “Note 28.” (Cardijn’s emphasis.)
149 *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, §29.
At least the see-judge-act method itself had been correctly presented.

**Improving the other chapters**

Cardijn also sent further reflections, of which perhaps the most striking was the contrast between the changes he had requested in 1964 and the relatively minor changes that he still sought. Great progress had been achieved.

Regarding Chapter III, he sought more clarity on the term “ambitus” or “milieu,” which was used in a confusing variety of senses. Clearer and more concrete directives were necessary regarding the apostolate in the various milieux. Again, he insisted on the need to organise from local to global levels within each milieu in order that “leaders who understand life and problems at the grassroots could represent it at international level.”

In Chapter IV, he insisted on “the absolute necessity of the organised or associative apostolate” since only in this way would it be possible “to influence and transform both milieux and persons.” While completely respecting personal choice, there was “an absolute necessity to unite” in order to become “apostles working together in free but indispensable communities.”

Concerning Chapter V, he again highlighted “the mission of the clergy and religion in the formation and support for the apostolate of the laity.”

“I am convinced that the weakness or insufficiency of the lay apostolate is attributable to the lack of collaboration on the part of clergy and religious,” he said. A complete reform of clergy education was necessary, he added.

In relation to cooperation with other Christians and non-Christians, he noted that it was “no longer possible to separate lay people based on their religious convictions.” Hence the need to inculcate “a missionary and ecumenical mentality” beginning with young people,

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150 Cardijn, “Note 28.”
151 Ibid.

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particularly from the period of entry into the workforce and adult life. Lay people could not simply be united among themselves “as if in a ghetto.” They needed to “be a leaven within the mass of the milieu” in which they had “a splendid mission.”

January 1965: The nature of the apostolate

Three weeks later, the full LAC met from 25-29 January 1965 to review the updated texts and to prepare drafting guidelines for the final version to be presented at the Fourth Session. Hirschmann, Papali and Tucci were appointed to complete this by eliminating repetitions, adding citations and improving the style.

One major point that still required clarification was the nature of the apostolate, which had been left open in *Lumen Gentium*. According to Glorieux, this issue split the LAC from the beginning. The question was whether the term “apostolate” should be used narrowly with respect to “direct evangelisation and the sanctification of people” or whether it could also be used in a more general modern sense as applying to the “Christian renewal of the temporal order.”

From Cardijn’s point of view, this was a false debate because it wrongly framed the issue in terms of “direct” and “indirect” evangelisation (a primacy of the spiritual approach), a categorisation that he had long sought to replace with his transformational approach framed around creation and redemption. As we have seen, Guerry in his intervention during the conciliar debate also endeavoured to reconcile the two theological approaches.

To resolve the issue, the LAC appointed Ménager and Klostermann to prepare a note for the commission, with additional contributions from Möhler and Daniélou. Here it is relevant to recall Ménager’s comments concerning what he regarded as the exclusively “temporal” approach of the JOC. In a sign of continuing difficulties, the issue was further discussed at the Schema XIII Mixed Commission meeting from 29 March to 7 April.

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The final outcome based on the “observations of several Fathers” was the drafting of a new phrase included at the end of §2 of the final decree:

They exercise the apostolate in fact by their activity directed to the evangelisation and sanctification of men and to the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel. In this way, their temporal activity openly bears witness to Christ and promotes the salvation of men. Since the laity, in accordance with their state of life, live in the midst of the world and its concerns, they are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardour of the spirit of Christ.\(^{154}\)

In effect, this solution synthesised the two approaches. On one hand, the first sentence was closer to Ménager’s and Suenens’s conception of the lay apostolate than to Cardijn’s and the JOC’s conception emphasising the inseparability of the two dimensions. On the other hand, as Glorieux noted, it applied the term “apostolate” to the whole of this activity, which certainly went further than Suenens. Moreover, the second part of the paragraph emphasised the incarnational aspect, acting “within the world like a leaven.” In this way the decree endeavoured to reconcile the two tendencies.

Nevertheless, Cardijn was more successful in having his approach accepted in §29 of Chapter VI.

However, the lay person should learn especially how to perform the mission of Christ and the Church by basing his life on belief in the divine mystery of creation and redemption and by being sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God and who urges all to love God the Father as well as the world and men in Him.

Formation along these lines “should be deemed the basis and condition for every successful apostolate,” §29 concluded.

\(^{154}\) Apostolicam Actuositatem, §2.
D. Cardinal Cardijn

It was also during this meeting that the announcement came that Paul VI was making Cardijn a cardinal. Worlock captured the atmosphere:

Came the day when it was announced that he had been made a Cardinal; and when he turned up for a Commission meeting that afternoon, clad in his old black cardigan over his cassock, we took him to the Commission President’s table and sat him next to Cardinal Cento. Without his hearing-aids, he beamed down at us through his rimless glasses. Work continued but at last we enlivened things by signalling that the time had come to make his intervention.

He took from his pocket his two ear-pieces, set them in place, rose to his feet and, without obvious reference to the matters under discussion, delivered an enthusiastic address on the mission of like to like and the importance of the role of working youth in their own milieu. By that stage in the Council we knew it almost by heart but we cheered him on until exhausted he sat down in his chair…

It was a fitting climax to Cardijn’s participation at the LAC from which he had initially been excluded only two years previously. But it highlighted his difficulties as he aged, limiting his capacity to participate while even his disciples grew tired of his refrains. Nevertheless, “the decree would not have been written without him,” Worlock recognised.

In March, the LAC checked the revised text and Cardinal Cicognani ordered on 28 May 1965 that the final 70-page draft be printed.

The importance of the lay apostolate

As a cardinal, Cardijn hoped for a greater role, as did his supporters, including Paul VI. The reality, however, was that the conciliar process was too far advanced to allow for any further major changes. This did not prevent him from trying.

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In a note written in June as an aide-memoire for his audience with Paul VI on 19 June 1965, he lamented that “the need and importance of the lay apostolate” had “not been inculcated into the faithful.” The principal reason for this was that “priests, religious are not convinced of this importance and need,” which was because seminaries and novitiates failed to so insist. Nor did priests and religious themselves learn through “practical methods of formation.”

“Would it not be opportune to insist STRONGLY on these questions, either on the occasion of the opening or the closing of the Fourth Session?” Cardijn asked. But there was nothing of this nature in any of Pope Paul’s speeches on these occasions.

During the same audience, he also presented the pope with a proposal for a “Call to the youth of the world.” Here Cardijn was more successful and the Council issued a “Message of the Second Vatican Council to Youth” on 7 December 1965.

In another note, Cardijn relayed to Paul VI that many lay apostolate movements feared that the proposed Roman Secretariat for the Lay Apostolate would become “a cause of blockages (arrêt), wardship (tutelle) or deviation.”

“They desire that the voice of those who work ‘at the grassroots,’ in daily life and the milieux of daily life, be heard before one commences experiences that could be discouraging.”

Even before the decree was adopted, these lay leaders were already afraid that the new dicastery would be co-opted by Rome.

**Lay apostolate**

At this point Cardijn still hoped it would be possible to intervene *in aula* on the lay apostolate and the priestly ministry but Felici advised him that no further discussion was planned on

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158 Daybook, III, 4-7 and 359-363.
160 Cardijn, “Secrétariat Romain.”
these themes. Undaunted, Cardijn prepared two interventions he submitted in written form.

The content of his address on “Lay Apostolate” (Note 29) is particularly telling, addressing the points he felt were the weakest in the schema. Many people had requested that the Council provide “clear and precise declarations and directives in language they are able to understand,” he began.

Others had asked him to beg bishops and priests “to help us to understand the apostolic value of our daily life, to persevere ‘in good times and bad times’ in our apostolic responsibilities, in our milieux, in our ordinary lives because we want to make known their apostolic value.” To do this, they wanted the Church to promote “living and active methods that will help us to discover… and spread this value.”

It was vain to simply rely on purely spiritual or doctrinal approaches, Cardijn warned. “During the sixty years I have lived with young workers, I have never met any who are immediately concerned with spirituality and moved by supernatural ends, nor are they concerned with the doctrinal fundamentals of the apostolate,” he stated. “This only comes after a long period of moving forward together.”

Yet “we cannot transform the world without them,” he insisted. “THEY are the Church in the world of today, together with their families, as well as their influence in all the key posts of national and international life but most of all at the grassroots, in ordinary and daily life.”

To form lay apostles, then, priests needed to be convinced of the “fundamental truth” that:

THE APOSTOLATE OF LAY PEOPLE,
is the lay (secular) life of lay people, the problems of that life, at every level: local, regional, national and international;
is the divine value of this life to implement the work of God and Christ, in order to transform life and the world;
is a transformation that must take place with, by and in Christ and the Church, with the resources of the Church (prayer, sacraments, etc.) but which are incarnated in the affairs of the world, the institutions of the world, in view of
the inseparable goals that are the happiness of humanity and the glory of God.\footnote{Joseph Cardijn, “Note 29, The Lay Apostolate,” 20/08/1965, AC1577: http://www.josephcardijn.com/the-lay-apostolate (Accessed 08/06/2016)}

This was Cardijn’s incarnational, life-centred answer to the “primacy of the spiritual” approach that still seemed to inspire Ménager and some French bishops, the “direct/indirect” evangelisation approach promoted by Suenens and “the participation in the hierarchical apostolate” approach of Italian-style Catholic Action.

“If the Council wishes to proclaim this truth and clearly indicate the means for realising it, if the Council shows that it believes in lay people, in their capacities, in their generosity, their vocation and their mission, the lay apostolate Popes – from Pius XI to Paul VI will rejoice,” Cardijn concluded.

Such was the message that Cardijn wished to deliver to the Council Fathers and that he desired the Decree on Lay Apostolate to convey.

**The Fourth Session**

**Promulgation of *Apostolicam Actuositatem***

The Fourth Session opened on 14 September 1965. Six days later, on 20 September Hengsbach presented the various chapters of the schema for voting, resulting in overwhelming approval. Nonetheless, Council Fathers still proposed 4000 further amendments or *modi*. These were examined by the six sub-commissions of the LAC, which reduced them to 655 questions, leading to 150 modifications. Among the last to be considered were several “emphasising the subordination of the apostolate of the laity to hierarchical supervision,” Klostermann noted, in a powerful indication of the struggle that raged right to the end.\footnote{Klostermann, “Decree,” 300.}

A final vote on the corrections to each chapter took place on 9 November.

On 18 November, the Fathers voted on the text as a whole, which was adopted with 2340
votes for and only two against, the fewest dissenting votes for any schema, truly a remarkable success.\textsuperscript{163}

Four days later, addressing a group of mainly francophone bishops from Belgium, France and Luxembourg, Paul VI explicitly acknowledged Cardijn’s role in achieving it:

\begin{quote}
[F]or the first time in the history of the Church, the Council has just dedicated a decree to lay people and their apostolate. Now, it is a matter of implementation. The laity, faithful and devoted to the Church, We know, has your full confidence, well deserved for the ardent zeal that is particularly visible among the ranks of Catholic Action. Yes, the good seed sown half a century ago by several generous pioneers and particularly by a young Belgian priest, has truly delivered a hundredfold.\textsuperscript{164}
\end{quote}

So evident was Cardijn’s contribution to \textit{Apostolicam Actuositatem} (and to the Council in general) that the pope had no need to mention his name. Looking back to the \textit{Proposals} paper that Cardijn and the JOCI had prepared in February 1963, their achievements were all too clear. Indeed, the opening sentence of the decree incorporated Cardijn’s very conception of “the proper and indispensable role” of lay people in life and in the world rather than with the piety and charitable works approach with which the Preparatory Commission had begun in 1960.

\textbf{The Roman Centre}

By now, however, Cardijn himself was already preoccupied with the implementation of the decree’s provisions in §26 for a “special secretariat... for the service and promotion of the lay apostolate.” As Cardijn had proposed, this was to focus on sharing information about various programs, promote research into problems arising in the field as well as “assisting the hierarchy and laity in their apostolic works with its advice.” Importantly, it also added that “the various movements and projects of the apostolate of the laity throughout the world should also be represented in this secretariat, and here clergy and Religious also are to cooperate with the laity.”\textsuperscript{165}

\textsuperscript{163} Ibid, 302.
\textsuperscript{165} \textit{Apostolicam Actuositatem}, §26.
Former JOCI vice-president Betty Villa later recalled these provisions as one of Cardijn’s key achievements.\textsuperscript{166} In an audience with Paul VI on 8 November, Cardijn delivered a detailed note on how the proposed centre should be implemented.\textsuperscript{167} He repeated that it should be the “centre of dialogue between Hierarchy and Laity.” It should not attempt “to control or supervise the laity” but function as “a secretariat of the laity for the Hierarchy.” Above all, it should be “the emanation of the apostolate of the laity in the Church” and “not a superstructure, created far from the realities of the apostolate at the grassroots,” as he had earlier proposed.

Leaders should come from the movements and be able to speak in their name as well as being nominated by the Holy See. The centre should thus represent “the grassroots” in what amounted to a democratised version of the old COPECIAL. As Cardijn foresaw, the struggle to achieve this would continue well after the Council. Even to 2018, the provisions in §26 or lay movements to be “represented” in the new secretariat remain unimplemented,\textsuperscript{168} underlining the radicalness of Cardijn’s proposal.

**Cardijn bishops renew their commitment**

Meanwhile, Camara wished to ensure that the Council’s commitments to the poor would not be in vain. He therefore proposed two concelebrated masses to “reach out to the people”:

(It will be) a concelebration in Cardijn’s cardinal’s church involving twenty bishops from around the world (the difficulty will be to select them). All others will also be invited. A Mass specially dedicated to workers. Delegations from neighbouring countries will come. Workers from Rome will come. In the midst of the Mass, we will take a solemn oath, more concrete and binding than that of Cardijn. The minimum that we will promise will be to renounce our purple habits and the title of Excellency... After the mass, we will have coffee in confraternity with the working class.

\textsuperscript{168} Statuto del Dicastero per I Laici, La Famiglia e La Vita, 06/2016: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco_20160604_statuto-dicastero-famiglia-laici-vita.html (Accessed 09/06/2016).
Another concelebration (will be held) at St Mary’s at Trastevere, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Rome... Twenty bishops from the whole world (again, the difficulty will be to choose them), perhaps around Cardinal Lercaro or Patriarch Maximos IV, who is the protector of the Group of the Poor, which is a little suspect in the eyes of the Holy Office.

We will invite poor people from the neighbourhood...169

Camara wrote to Cardijn to this effect on 17 September.170 Before responding, Cardijn consulted with his colleagues, including Fiévez, Jacques Meett and Uylenbroeck, who reacted cautiously concerning the proposal to take an oath modelled on Cardijn’s commitment to the working class. Nevertheless, the two events went ahead in slightly amended form.

On 16 November, the Group of the Poor held its mass at the Domitilla Catacombs, with forty participants, many of them also former jocist and other SCA chaplains. Here they signed the Pact of the Catacombs, adapting Cardijn’s vow to devote his life to the working class by committing themselves to evangelical poverty:

We will try to live according to the ordinary manner of our people in all that concerns housing, food, means of transport, and related matters.

We renounce forever the appearance and the substance of wealth…

We will not possess in our own names any properties or other goods, nor will we have bank accounts or the like…

As far as possible we will entrust the financial and material running of our diocese to a commission of competent lay persons…

Accordingly, we will make an effort to “review our lives” with them; we will seek collaborators in ministry so that we can be animators according to the Spirit rather than dominators according to the world… 171

The second mass took place the next evening – 17 November, the eve of the promulgation of Apostolicam Actuositatem – at Cardijn’s titular church of St Michael Archangel in Rome’s working class Pietralata district.172

169 Camara, Lettres conciliaires, II, 802.
170 Camara to Cardijn, 17/09/1965, AC1629.
172 Fiévez-Meert, Cardijn, 232.
In another statement, the participants witnessed to the value of their experiences as jocist chaplains discovering “the extent to which lay people are keen to understand their own proper role in the world as sons and daughters of the Church” and their capacities for “apostolic responsibilities”:

    Our hope is that all our brothers in the episcopate become increasingly conscious of the possibilities of the laity, and particularly the worker laity, hope of the Church at the heart of the world today.

“This in particular,” the bishops said, “is the experience, unceasingly renewed across the continents, of an authentic JOC.”\(^{173}\) It was also an eloquent testimony to the efficacy of the JOC’s incarnational approach to bringing the Good News to the poor.

Chapter 11 – Completing the canon: Freedom, mission, liturgy…

Introduction

While the Cardijn influence was particularly evident in Apostolicam Actuositatem, Gaudium et Spes, Lumen Gentium and even Inter Mirifica, it was by no means restricted to these documents. Since detailed analyses of the other twelve Vatican II documents would take us beyond the scope of this study, we will confine ourselves to identifying some of the most significant aspects.

We begin with an examination of three issues for which Cardijn displayed a particular concern, namely religious freedom, the mission of the Church and the role and ministry of priests. This is followed by a brief overview of the jocist impact on the remaining Council documents.

1. Reconciling freedom and faith: Dignitatis Humanae

Given Cardijn’s lifelong commitment to Christian engagement founded on freedom, the plan for a conciliar declaration on religious inevitably attracted his attention. As early as Note 3 for the PCLA on 15 December 1960, he advocated for the development of “Christian doctrine and Christian social organisation that guarantee(d) the freedom of the weakest person.” He also appealed for a conciliar declaration addressed to Christians and non-Christians calling for collaboration in “a common effort of all people to exclude obstacles to human freedom and develop genuine progress.”¹

Similarly, in Notes 13 and 14, he insisted on “private freedom in the social and charitable order” as a counterpart to “loyal and objective collaboration by Christians in the socialisation of that order.”² Most of all, though, he insisted on the link between freedom and education, as in Note 16, where he characterised the formation of young people as “an apprenticeship in the life of freedom.”³

¹ Joseph Cardijn, “Note 3, Réfléxions et suggestions,” 15/12/1960, AC1576.
As peritus, however, Cardijn had no involvement with the successive drafts of the Declaration on Religious Freedom, Dignitatus Humanae. This role fell instead particularly to his friend and ally, Pietro Pavan, and the American Jesuit, John Courtney Murray, who as a member of the Pax Romana network was himself no stranger to Cardijn.

The jocist bishops played a significant role both in the development of the declaration, beginning with the role of De Smedt, who was rapporteur. Others also made important contributions in conciliar debate. At the Third Session, for example, Garrone contrasted the Church’s nineteenth century fears of “doctrinaire liberalism,” which had led to “regrettable incidents in the past,” with the Church’s role “stress[ing] the rights of man in his daily life.”

Strikingly, he also called for “pardon for the errors of the Church in the matter.”

Echoing Lamennais, the South African Hurley repudiated the notion that the state had a “right to intervene in religious matters.” Speaking on behalf of many African and Madagascan bishops, Cameroonian jocist bishop, Jean Zoa, backed the schema on the basis of “the inalienable rights of the human person.” From Canada, Léger also signalled his “total adhesion” to the draft declaration, while Silva Henriquez in the name of fifty Latin American bishops emphasised the importance of the schema, even in a largely Catholic continent.

**Calling on Cardijn**

Even so, the schema’s fate remained in doubt until the Fourth Session. Swayed by the conservatives’ arguments, Suenens baulked (again), favouring a short declaration “that provided no arguments,” De Smedt lamented. Here, Prignon credited De Smedt for convincing the Belgian bishops not to accept this outcome. Yet, even some of the French

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4 Daybook, II:56.
5 Fesquet, Le journal, 488.
6 Ibid., 491.
7 Pierre Haubtmann, Le point sur le concile, Deuxième article, La déclaration sur la liberté religieuse, 1964: Archives Haubtmann, Ha5, 56.
8 Fesquet, Le journal, 467.
9 Ibid., 472.
11 Ibid.
bishops, such as Elchinger remained critical. De Smedt was so concerned that he wrote to the pope warning of possible sabotage attempts.¹²

Congar held similar fears. “We can expect criticisms, perhaps quite ferocious criticisms,” he wrote to Cardijn on 7 July 1965. “I said to myself that you will be greatly appreciated if you explain the positive things that will emerge from the Declaration.”¹³ Three weeks later, during their weekend in Switzerland, they drafted a conciliar intervention for Cardijn, for which he also sought advice from Dondeyne and De Smedt.

**Education for freedom**

A month later, on 20 September, Cardijn delivered this, his first speech to the Council.

“The schema [on religious liberty] pleases me greatly,” Cardijn began, praising its recognition of “the right of the person and of communities to religious freedom.”

Instead of focusing narrowly on “juridical freedom,” however, the schema needed to present religious freedom as “a necessary means for education in liberty in its fullest sense, which leads to interior liberty, or liberty of the soul,” Cardijn continued, again channelling Lamennais. In this way, he argued, “a man becomes an autonomous being, responsible before society and God, ready if necessary to obey God rather than men.”

“This interior freedom, even if it exists in germ as a natural gift in every human creature, requires a long education which can be summarised in three words: see, judge and act,” Cardijn added, presenting the jocist method as a tool for promoting religious freedom, as Ollé-Laprune had foreshadowed.

If the Church unambiguously committed itself to religious freedom, people everywhere would “recognise that the Church wishes to participate in building a more human and more united world,” he continued. This too was Ollé-Laprune’s dream of “ending the division of

¹³ Congar to Cardijn, 11/07/1965, AC1579
spirits” and “building intellectual peace.” But if the Fathers rejected this, “great hopes” would disappear particularly among young people, Cardijn warned.

The only solution was to enable young people “to see, judge and act by themselves, by undertaking social and cultural action themselves, freely obeying authorities in order to become adult witnesses of Christ and the Gospel, conscious of being responsible for their sisters and brothers in the whole world,” Cardijn proclaimed, linking the jocist method to the Sillon’s objective of educating conscious and responsible democratic citizens and Christians. If his “sixty years of apostolate [had] not been in vain,” it was precisely because of this vision and method.

It was a genuine tour de force, marred only by his abominable Latin and over-long delivery. Nevertheless, those who understood it, such as the Belgian Dominican and future cardinal, Jérôme Hamer, greatly appreciated its contribution to “opening up the atmosphere during the final weeks of work.”

For those on a different wavelength, such as Suenens’s protégé and Belgian College rector, Mgr Albert Prignon, Cardijn’s text was “not doctrinal enough.” Although the first part was good, Prignon noted, the second part was weaker because Cardijn “lost himself in aspects of the ‘see-judge-act,’ his great, favourite [theme], which had nothing to do with the debate.”

Conscience/consciousness and responsibility

Nevertheless, by the time the Council adopted Dignitatis Humanae, the Cardijn vision had largely prevailed, as the opening lines of the final Declaration illustrate:

A sense of the dignity of the human person has been impressing itself more and more deeply on the consciousness of contemporary man, and the demand

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is increasingly made that men should act on their own judgement, enjoying and making use of a responsible freedom, not driven by coercion but motivated by a sense of duty.\(^\text{18}\)

As if to emphasise the point, §15, the final paragraph repeated the theme, effectively framing the document with the Sillon definition of democracy, a choice that could hardly be accidental. “There is a growing consciousness of the personal responsibility that every man has,” the declaration concluded. Consequently, to establish “peace and harmony” within the whole of mankind, a “constitutional guarantee” and “respect” were necessary “for the high duty and right of man freely to lead his religious life in society.”

Completing the reversal of Pius X’s 1910 condemnation initiated by Pius XII, the Council now endorsed the Sillon approach of balancing freedom of conscience with an equal emphasis on responsibility. In a compelling illustration of the centrality of this vision both within the Declaration and the Council documents collectively, Karol Wojtyla later structured his 1972 book on the implementation of Vatican II, *Sources of Renewal*, in large part around the concepts of consciousness, participation and responsibility.\(^\text{19}\)

**The Cardijn dialectic**

Secondly, echoing *Gaudium et Spes*, the Declaration sought to present its argument in the form of a see-judge-act, beginning in §1 with the experience, “demands” and “desires” of people of the present time.\(^\text{20}\) As in other documents, this was added late in the drafting process and somewhat artificially, although the intent is clear.

Only then did the Declaration move to set out its own “truth of faith” in §2-12. Here, §2 began with the doctrinal affirmation that “the human person has a right to religious freedom,” based as Pavan had suggested on the inherent dignity of the person. On this issue, Suenens


\(^20\) *Dignitatis Humanae*, §1.

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and Lercaro both wavered again leaving Ancel to articulate the decisive response to the conservative objections that error had no rights or that religious freedom amounted to “indifferentism” to the truth, the old accusation against Lamennais.

In a crucial 22 September intervention recognising the inadequacy of human dignity as the sole basis of religious freedom, Ancel suggested that “the ontological foundation of religious liberty” was rather located in the corresponding duty or obligation of each human person “to seek the truth,” embodied in §1 of the final Declaration.  

Once again, this echoed the Platonic exhortation of Ollé-Laprune and Gratry that “Il faut aller au vrai avec toute son âme,” meaning “one must seek the truth with one’s whole soul,” that the Sillon had once made its own.

Prudential judgment

While §1 highlighted the growing demand by people to “act on their own judgement, enjoying and making use of a responsible freedom,” §3 set out the prudential basis for doing so:

Wherefore every man has the duty, and therefore the right, to seek the truth in matters religious in order that he may with prudence form for himself right and true judgements of conscience, with the use of all suitable means.  

Finally, § 12-15 constituted the “act” section, beginning by condemning “coercion in the faith” as a way of acting (§12) and calling for freedom for the Church and for people to live in accord with their consciences (§13), to be able to “teach all nations” and defend the truth (§14), and approving civil recognition of religious freedom, while condemning its denial (§15).

Moreover, De Smedt himself had insisted on the see-judge-act as the best means of forming people, albeit in his 1964 speech on the lay apostolate schema.  

22 Dignitatis Humanae § 3.
Laprune, he advocated its utility in ecumenical and multi-faith contexts as a means of developing cooperation among Catholics, Christians and all people of good will. Garrone, too, in his own 1964 intervention on religious liberty, had presented his argument in see-judge-act form.²⁴

Yet again the Council had opted for the jocist approach despite the critiques of Prignon and Suenens.²⁵

Mission and evangelisation: *Ad Gentes*

The bankruptcy of evangelisation

This pattern of jocist influence recurred with the Decree on Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*, another of the 1965 batch of documents. Again, Cardijn made a particular effort to influence the drafting, submitting his Note 27, while still a peritus in the Lay Apostolate Commission.

The notion of the mission or vocation of each person in transforming the world beginning with their own life and milieu had always been central to the theology and philosophy of the JOC. Indeed, Cardijn had made his own Pius XI’s exhortation to jocist leaders to become “missionaries of the interior.”

Moreover, he had long been concerned about the state of the Church’s traditional approach in mission countries, as he wrote in uncharacteristically harsh terms following a 1948 trip to Africa. Here, Cardijn condemned the “bankruptcy of evangelisation,” which had linked the Church and Christianity to “occupying forces, to the colonist and to the European” and their “scandalous profits” alongside “the shameful misery of the indigenous masses.”²⁶

This experience had shocked the Cardijn, who henceforth sought to distance the movement

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²⁵ *Dignitatis Humanae* § 3.
from this and to present the JOC methods as an alternative.

Towards a new concept of mission

Summarising his reflections on the mission schema, Cardijn contrasted the JOC’s holistic conception of mission with others based either on exclusively religious or material cooperation:

The apostolate of lay people in developing countries cannot be limited to socio-economic cooperation; it presents first of all as directly religious, in collaboration with the Bishops and missionaries to help form native apostles for the whole of life: personal, family, professional, moral, religious, social, cultural and recreational life.27

He was also concerned to adapt methods to local environments, emphasising that “lay apostles” should as far as possible “live… the life of people in the country.” They should “reflect together” with the local people discussing “the problems of their life” in order “to understand them and resolve them” in collaboration “with their brothers of all races and all continents.”28

It is probable that he circulated this document to at least several jocist bishops involved in the conciliar Commission for Missions. These included Indian Archbishop Eugene D’Souza, French former JAC chaplain, Guy Riobé, Jean Zoa, Archbishop Bernard Yago from the Ivory Coast, another promoter of Specialised Catholic Action, the Canadian Superior-General of the OMIs, Léo Deschâtelets, and perhaps others.

Paul VI and the jocist bishops

Cardijn was surely also familiar with the 1964 controversies over the draft decree, which, as part of the Coordinating Commission’s effort to shorten the Council, had been reduced to the “dry bones” of thirteen bland propositions.29 During this period, Cardijn remained in close

28 Cardijn, “Note 27.”
contact with Paul VI, then preparing his apostolic trip to India where he personally opened the Joseph Cardijn Technical College in Mumbai in Cardijn’s presence. According to Fiévez, it was during this trip that Paul VI resolved to make him a cardinal in a further embrace of his views.\(^{30}\)

Thus, when on 6 November, Paul VI broke tradition to personally preside over the opening of the conciliar debate on the mission schema,\(^{31}\) it was particularly to insist that “the whole Church” was missionary and that “even the individual faithful” should “become missionaries in spirit and in deeds.”\(^{32}\) While he diplomatically praised the existing reduced schema, Paul VI emphasised “the illustrious task of preparing new roads, of devising new means, of stimulating new energies for a more efficacious and wider diffusion of the Gospel.”

Among the jocist bishops, Riobé, who had prepared an alternative schema, called for a document that would make Vatican II the “great missionary council.”\(^{33}\) Similarly, Frings insisted on “a complete and practical schema for the Fourth Session.”\(^{34}\) Bernardin Gantin of Dahomey (Benin) emphasised that the Church is “at home in every culture,” and that the concept of mission needed “to vanquish the preconceptions of domination under the cover of evangelisation.”\(^{35}\)

As a result, Cardinal Agagianian, the prefect of the Congregation for Propagation of the Faith, agreed to send the schema for reworking, a task confided to Congar assisted by Ratzinger and J. Neuner.\(^{36}\) Here too, the jocist bishops played a prominent role calling for further improvement at the Fourth Session. D’Souza spoke of the need for “implantation” rather than “transplantation”\(^{37}\) while McGrath criticised the lack of reference to the role of lay people\(^{38}\)

\(^{30}\) Told to me while Fiévez was working on the archives of the JOCI and I was working with the JOCI from 1990-93.

\(^{31}\) Daybook, II,229.

\(^{32}\) Paul VI, Council address on mission work, in Daybook II, 232.


\(^{34}\) Fesquet, Le journal, 689.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., 690.


\(^{37}\) Ibid., V, 437.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., V, 439.
As Peter Hunermann noted, there was no special chapter dealing with the “present situation,” as there had been in *Gaudium et Spes*. Indeed, many Council Fathers “referred to this in their remarks,” a matter rectified in §1 of the final decree as it had been in *Dignitatis Humanae*.39

Meanwhile, Suenens insisted on the need for lay missionaries as “heralds of the Gospel” on the basis of their baptism, accenting their role as to “teach religion in various ways, cooperate in the parochial apostolate etc.” Once again, this contrasted starkly with the integral, life-centred, transformative concept of mission promoted by Cardijn and the jocist bishops.

**Mission in life and the world**

Ultimately, the final, much improved decree incorporated much of the jocist vision. Drawing on *Lumen Gentium* §31, *Ad Gentes* insisted in §21 that “the main duty” of lay people in the missionary field was to bear witness “by their life and works in the home, in their social milieu, and in their own professional circle;” in effect, as missionaries of the interior.

Indeed, Cardijn had insisted on precisely this point in Note 27, emphasising that “the apostolate of lay people in developing countries cannot be limited to socio-economic cooperation” and “needed to help form native apostles for the whole of life: personal, family, professional, moral, religious, social, cultural and recreational life.”40

Similarly, §21 insisted on the need to “train the laity to become conscious of the responsibility which they as members of Christ have for all men” and to “introduce them to practical methods” in line with *Apostolicam Actuositatem*” in another clear reference to the see-judge-act method.

And §35 expanded on this theme, linking missionary work and evangelization with “deep interior renewal” awakening people to “a vivid awareness of their own responsibility [Latin: *responsabilitatis conscientiam*] for spreading the Gospel, they may do their share in missionary work among the nations.”

40 Cardijn, “Note 27.”
Thus, did the jocist bishops introduce their vision and methodology into Ad Gentes, establishing the foundations upon which the Latin American bishops at Medellín in 1968 would base their concept of “new evangelisation.”

Transforming the ministerial priesthood

Presbyterorum Ordinis: The life and ministry of priests

As Cardijn’s many notes and writings illustrated, he regarded the ministerial priesthood as essential to the Church’s mission and particularly to the lay apostolate. As cardinal, he therefore again grasped the opportunity prior to the Fourth Session to prepare a written intervention on “The life and ministry of the priest” (Note 30).

“Experience and history shows that the whole body of the Church will either succeed by virtue of its good priests or fail as a result of its bad priests,” Cardijn began. “All laypeople, and not only the adults, must be properly and seriously formed and trained,” he insisted.

“How to achieve this? Only through the priests upon whom, and for the same reason, the success or failure of the Reign of God on Earth depends! Do not be deceived, brothers. The renewal or ‘aggiornamento’ of the Church that Pope John of happy memory has called us to implement in practice lies in the hands of the priests of the whole world!” he argued.

Three things were therefore necessary:

1° Good training and formation for priests for which they needed to experience “a human way of life” rather than “abstraction and a scholastic teaching system;”

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2° Dialogue as espoused by Paul VI in his encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*. The starting point for such a dialogue was “listening to people and striving to understand, to love them and accept them as they are.”

3° Extending the range of their flocks, or in other words, going beyond the limits of their parishes in order for the Kingdom of God to “be discovered and grow beyond the range of their flocks.”

And in handwritten notes on his own copy of the speech, Cardijn added several of his favourite biblical and patristic phrases encapsulating the approach required:

- *Nihil sine presbytero*: “Nothing without the priest” [Council of Arles, 309 AD], understood in the way that D’Souza had explained;

- *Vae soli*: “Woe to he who is alone” [Ecclesiastes 4:10], warning priests of the need to work with others;

- *Cognosco oves meas et cognoscunt me meae!*: “I know my sheep and my sheep know me [John 10:14],” calling on pastors to leave their presbyteries to meet their people;

- *Alias oves habeo, illas oportet me adducere*: I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. [John 10:16]

These were the foundations of his own priesthood that he sought to convey to the Fathers.

**Drafting the Decree**

Moreover, Cardijn found a ready ear in the Commission for Discipline of the Clergy and the Christian People, which was responsible for the drafting of the “Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests,” *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. This commission too was well stocked with jocist bishops, including Belgian Guillaume Van Zuylen, French bishops François Marty and Henri Mazerat, Brazilian Agnelo Rossi as well as the Sri Lankan Oblate Thomas Cooray and 

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Cardijn, “Note 30.”

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Bernardin Gantin from Dahomey (Benin).

Their eventual influence was particularly visible in §9 of the final decree, which emphasised that priests were “brothers among brothers with all those who have been reborn at the baptismal font.” Priests therefore needed to “work together with the lay faithful,” and “acknowledge the dignity of the laity and the part proper to them in the mission of the Church.” This clearly echoed Cardijn’s Note 30 remark that “priests must be present among the lay faithful in order to encourage them and form them for their own irreplaceable apostolate.”

In a particularly jocist phrase, §9 also exhorted priests to “willingly listen to the laity… recognise their experience and competence in the different areas of human activity, so that together with them they will be able to recognise the signs of the times.”

Paragraph 10 was also highly significant. Drawing on Pacelli’s Sillon-inspired call for trans-territorial or “personal” church structures, and extending Crdinal Suhard’s Mission de France model, this paragraph proposed the establishment of “international seminaries, special personal dioceses or prelatures (vicariates), and so forth,” which would enable priests to be “trained and incardinated for the good of the whole Church.”

Montini, who was heavily involved in the development of the Mission de France in his work at the Secretariat of State, had also supported this proposal before his election as pope.44 In making Cardijn both an archbishop and cardinal, was Paul VI also foreshadowing the creation of a personal prelature for the JOC? Intriguingly, the pope had indeed told Cardijn that “it was not because you represent an historical see or a national episcopate, it was for the YCW that I have made you Cardinal!”45

**Optatam Totius: Formation for seminarians and priests**

Given Cardijn’s view of the importance of the role of priests in promoting and sustaining lay

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45 Fiévez-Meert, Cardijn, 234.
people in their own mission to transform their lives, their milieux and the world, it followed that the need for appropriate priestly formation was at least as important.

Indeed, this implied the need for a completely new kind of formation, Cardijn argued. “More often than not seminarians learn the Catholic system... but without experiencing a human way of life,” Cardijn warned. “Yet they need to begin to accept and love people, people just as they are, in order that they too can discover, grow and build!”

Traditional seminary formation was “based too much on abstraction and a scholastic teaching system,” Cardijn complained. Instead, it was essential for priests to be “practically taught a human way of life and learn to deal with people.” Instead, seminarians needed to learn “to reach [people] and to form them for this life, in the milieux of life, in their proper mission.” Moreover, the parish alone was not enough. “Inter-parish teams” were needed as well as cooperation with “the chaplains of movements.”

Once again, the eventual Decree on Priestly Formation, Optatam Totius did incorporate much of this vision, particularly in §19, which called for priests to be trained in “the art of directing souls” to enable them to develop “a fully conscious and apostolic Christian life” so as to fulfil “the duties of their state of life,” and to learn “the art of dialogue with people.” In addition, §20 required that priest learn to foster “the apostolic activity of the laity.” As Cardijn had wished, it also emphasised training to enable them “to transcend the limits of their own diocese, nation or rite.”

Again, jocist bishops played major roles in achieving this, with Hurley in the Commission and Larrain intervening strongly in the conciliar debate.

**Christus Dominus: The Pastoral Office of Bishops**

Although there were fewer jocist-oriented bishops in the conciliar Commission for Bishops and Government of Dioceses than in others, the efforts of the French bishops Guerry and

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46 Cardijn, “Note 30.”
47 Ibid.
Veuillot as well as the South African Owen McCann ensured their influence was felt.

Cardijn also had again offered his reflections on the draft *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops, Christus Dominus*, appealing in Note 27 for “a new pastoral (approach), both in cities and in country areas” appropriate to “the new conditions of life of parishioners.” Paragraph 16 of the decree explicitly addressed these concerns, calling for bishops “to employ suitable methods, especially social research,” and to “manifest their concern for everyone, no matter what their age, condition, or nationality, be they natives, strangers, or foreigners.” Moreover, bishops should “encourage institutes and hold special meetings” to enable priests to renew themselves in various fields, including “especially Sacred Scripture and theology, the more important social questions, and the new methods of pastoral activity.”

Not surprisingly, particularly given the involvement of Guerry and Veuillot, §18 also emphasised encouraging the faithful “to participate in and give aid to the various works of the apostolate of the laity, especially Catholic Action.” Remembering Guerry’s emphasis on the prudential origins of the see-judge-act,49 the suggestion in §38 that bishops’ conferences share and exchange “the insights of prudence and experience” to promote the emergence of “a holy union of energies in the service of the common good of the churches” was clearly a reference to the Cardijn method.

Indeed, this was precisely how the Latin American bishops (CELAM), the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences (FABC)50 – and eventually Synods51 – later implemented this paragraph.

**Participative liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium**

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, was yet another document that addressed issues of concern to Cardijn and the SCA movements. For decades, the JOC

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had fought for and pioneered changes in the liturgy, including the dialogue and the vernacular mass.

Cardijn expressed this often in his Eucharistic theology, which he linked to his theology of work. “Your task is to make your day a continuation of the Mass, in union with that which is offered by the Pope, the Bishops, and all priests, and which you are going to sanction by the whole of your life,” he wrote in 1933. “Without work there is no Host, not a single drop of wine to consecrate, no altar stone, no vestments, no Church. Without work there is no religion,” as he often repeated.

Until the very eve of the Council, the JOCI continued to lobby for shortened fasting times to enable young workers to begin their day with Mass and communion. As Benedictine liturgical pioneer and peritus, Bernard Botte, recognised, this influence made an impact, despite a lack of jocist representation in the conciliar Liturgical Commission.

“Those rallies of young workers, responding to the priest, singing the ordinary of the mass, participating in the offertory and in communion, helped the liturgical movement to progress far more than many [learned] articles,” Botte noted. Indeed, Cardijn had worked with the Mont César Benedictines to prepare many movement liturgies.

**Reading the Word of God: *Dei Verbum***

The JOC, like the Sillon before it, had also played a pioneering role in promoting commentary on the Gospel as part of their meeting practice. Moreover, many jocist chaplains displayed great interest in modern biblical studies. A number had even published popular commentaries.

At the Council, the jocist bishops also sought to ensure even greater access to the treasures of biblical literature. To achieve this, Liénart to propose “a complete revision” of the preparatory

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schema on revelation. Appointed rapporteur, he continued to play a key role until the adoption of the constitution in November 1965.\textsuperscript{54}

Significantly, the Doctrinal Commission with its large jocist representation was responsible overall for this schema. Moreover, its seven-member sub-commission on revelation established in 1964 included Charue as chair, Heuschen, Pelletier and Van Dodewaard, all of whom had direct jocist experience,\textsuperscript{55} as well as the English Bishop Christopher Butler, another Benedictine friend of the JOC.\textsuperscript{56} Additionally, the nineteen periti included Cerfaux, Congar and Philips.

The \textit{Constitution on Divine Revelation}, \textit{Dei Verbum}, reflected this in §22, which emphasised that “easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful” in vernacular languages in order that “the word of God” would be “accessible at all times.”

\textbf{Christian Education: \textit{Gravissimum Educationis}}

The commission responsible for \textit{Optatatam Totius} was also responsible for the Decree on Christian Education, \textit{Gravissimum Educationis}. The jocist influence here re-emerged in the introduction which, following the \textit{Gaudium et Spes} model, opened with a brief reference to “the circumstances of our time” that “made it easier and at once more urgent to educate young people and to continue the education of adults.”

People were “more aware of their own dignity (\textit{conscio}) and position (\textit{officium})” and wanted “to take an active part in social and especially in economic and political life.”\textsuperscript{57} The French translation made more explicit the reference to the conscience/responsibility binomial while §1 declared that young people needed to “gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly.”

\textsuperscript{54} Grootaers, “The Drama Continues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, II, 385.
\textsuperscript{55} Miccoli, “Two Sensitive Issues,” in Alberigo-Komonchak, IV, 196.
The next paragraph continued in this line, insisting on the “right” of young people “to be motivated to appraise moral values with a right conscience, to embrace them with a personal adherence, together with a deeper knowledge and love of God.” Again, this echoed the necessity of “personal adherence” that Lamennais foreshadowed and Cardijn advocated. Moreover, §2 emphasised the “most serious obligation” on the part of pastors “to see to it that all the faithful, but especially the youth... enjoy this Christian education,” while Footnote 10 of the Declaration linked this to §12 of Apostolicam Actuositatem, the paragraph on youth largely inspired by Cardijn.

**Renewal of Religious Life: Perfectae Caritatis**

Similarly, §2 of the Decree on Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life, Perfectae Caritatis, specifically adopted the see-judge-act as a means for “the adaptation and renewal of religious life” according to “the changed conditions of the times.” Institutes therefore needed to promote “an adequate knowledge of the social conditions of the times... judging current events wisely in the light of faith” in order “to assist men more effectively.”

This was likely due, in part at least, to the influence of jocist Council Fathers, including Gerard Huyghe, another Liénart protégé from Lille, and perhaps the Jesuit Superior-General, Belgian Jean-Baptiste Janssens.

**The exceptions**

**Interfaith and inter-religious relations: Unitatis Redintegratio and Nostra Aetate**

Perhaps surprisingly, given the involvement of De Smedt, the Decree on Ecumenism, Unitatis Redintegratio, contained no reference to the see-judge-act. This document, however, was adopted in 1964, before the Cardijn method had fully impacted on the Council.

In the paper on dialogue he prepared for Paul VI in 1964, Cardijn emphasised that it was

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above all lay people who experienced interfaith relations in the circumstances of their daily lives at work and in their communities. However, this conception did not make it into the final decree on ecumenism, which retained a very doctrinal and Church-centred perspective.

On the other hand, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate*, another 1965 document, does seem to have incorporated more of a jocist-oriented approach, beginning in §1 with a series of existential questions “about the unsolved riddles of the human condition” that underline the need for inter-religious understanding and dialogue.

“What is man?” the document asked. “What is the meaning, the aim of our life? What is moral good, what is sin? Whence suffering and what purpose does it serve? Which is the road to true happiness?” it continued, listing the kind of questions that Cardijn himself had raised in several conciliar notes.59

**Eastern Rite Churches: *Orientalium Ecclesiarum***

Finally, it is difficult to detect any jocist influence in the Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, which like *Unitatis Redintegratio* was adopted in 1964.

This was so even though several prominent Eastern Church bishops were certainly sympathetic to the jocist movement, Specialised Catholic Action and the promotion of the lay apostolate. These included Patriarch Maximos IV and Bishop George Hakim,60 both of whom were heavily involved in the Church of the Poor group, while drafts of *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* did indeed speak of lay apostolate.

However, no doubt because of the content of other conciliar documents, the final decree did not pursue these issues.

60 George Hakim, “Intervention 24/10/1963, 55th General Congregation, De Ecclesia, Chap. 3,” in Council Digest, Council Fathers of the USA, Simonds Archives.
From liberty to liturgy

As this overview illustrates, the jocist influence on the documents of Vatican II extended to nearly every field, reflecting the integral vision of the Church and its mission in the world that the bishops and periti formed in the JOC and SCA movements brought to the Council.
Conclusion
Chapter 12 – A Cardijn perspective on Vatican II

At the crossroads

Looking back over this study, we can now appreciate more clearly both the long- and short-term impact of the Lamennais-Sillon-JOC tradition as well as that of Cardijn and the jocist network in the decades prior and at Vatican II.

In Part I we traced the “longue durée” development of Cardijn’s thought and methods from their sources in the Lamennais School, the Sillon and the experience of the JOC itself, the essentials of which were encapsulated in Cardijn’s “Christian dialectic.”

In Parts II and III, we illustrated the contemporaneous influence of Cardijn and the jocist network of bishops, periti and lay auditors on the Council’s work, resulting in the incorporation of key aspects of the Cardijn dialectic in the Vatican II documents, particularly regarding the lay apostolate, the see-judge-act method and the three truths.

In this sense, Cardijn’s role can perhaps best be located as standing at the crossroads of these diachronic and synchronic dynamics, initially as a vector and interpreter of the Lamennais-Sillon-JOC tradition and later as an animator and leader of the jocist network at the Council.

In this conclusion, we therefore endeavour to show how this Cardijn perspective offers a series of interpretive keys both for understanding the historical development of Vatican II and for implementing it.

1. The see-judge-act

In total, we have identified references to the see-judge-act in ten of the sixteen conciliar documents – effectively, in almost every relevant location. Gaudium et Spes and Apostolicam Actuositatem occupy pride of place. The references in Inter Mirifica, Dignitatis Humanae and Ad Gentes are almost as significant while those in Perfectae Caritatis, Presbyterorum Ordinis, Optatam Totius, Christus Dominus and indirectly in Gravissimum Educationis
illustrate the breadth of its application.

While Cardijn deserves much credit for this, particularly for his contribution to Mater et Magistra and to Apostolicam Actuositatem, the role of the jocist network was also critical. The post-conciliar application of the JOC method in pontifical Catholic Social Teaching, Synods and by bishops’ conferences also attests to this impact.

Thus, Paul VI’s 1971 Letter to Cardinal Roy, Octogesima Adveniens was completely structured around both the conscience-responsibility binomial and the see-judge-act. Indeed, Roy, the first president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, reportedly prepared the original draft himself. More recently, the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church incorporated the see-judge-act in §547, specifically citing its Aristotelian and Thomistic prudential origins.

Adopted by the Latin American bishops at the CELAM conference in Medellin in 1968, its use was renewed at Aparecida in Brazil in 2007, under the leadership of Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, now Pope Francis. Similarly, many other groups beyond the JOC and other Specialised Catholic Action movements have since adopted the method.

Achieving the goal

So widely has the see-judge-act been adopted that it is easy to forget the long struggle that led to its acceptance. As early as the late 1880s, Le Play’s enquiry method was rejected by French ACJF chaplains as being too “sociological.” Transformed by the Sillon into a “method of democratic education” maximising conscience/consciousness and responsibility, Pope Pius X rejected it in 1910 as a “chimera” and a “dream.”

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2 Christine E. Gudorf, “Commentary on Octogesima Adveniens,” in Modern Catholic Social Teaching, ed. Himes, 318.
Rescued from the ashes of Marc Sangnier’s movement by Cardijn and the JOC, who developed it as the see-judge-act, it was again rejected by many Belgian ACJB chaplains, who preferred the ACIF “doctrinal” prayer-study-action method. Repudiated at the Council by Suenens, despite its approval by John XXIII in *Mater et Magistra*, it was re-introduced by the jocist bishops and periti drafting *Schema XIII*, and eventually “canonised” in every relevant Vatican II document.

It is a truly remarkable story that can only be understood in the context of a century of struggle, the second fifty of which were dominated by the personality of Cardijn.

2. Conscience, responsibility, democracy

In a perhaps even more astonishing corollary, the Council also canonised the Sillon conscience-responsibility binomial, which was embedded in both the introduction and conclusion to *Dignitatis Humanae*, in §1 of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* as well as in *Ad Gentes* §21, once more in the context of promoting the lay apostolate.

As we have seen, Haubtmann attempted to introduce the Sillon definition almost verbatim into *Schema XIII*. Indeed, §7 of the final French version of *Gaudium et Spes* specifically notes that young people are increasingly “conscious” of their social role and seek even sooner to take up their “responsibilities.” Although the inadequate Latin text here still uses the expression “have a part” (partes habere) rather than “take responsibility,” §19 is more explicit, albeit toned down in the Latin, with “have a part” substituted for “taking their responsibilities”. Nevertheless, §19, clearly incorporates the conscience-responsibility binomial, which also appears in §31, §57, §87 and §90. All told, the term “conscientia” appears thirty-nine times and “responsabilitas” twenty-six times in the Latin text of *Gaudium et Spes*, with another sixty references to “participare” or “partes habere,” etc., fully justifying Wojtyla’s choice of the themes of consciousness, responsibility and participation as structuring elements for the development of a conciliar attitude.

Significantly, in what was evidently a deliberate decision, not one Vatican II document refers
explicitly to “democracy.” Yet, by incorporating the conscience-responsibility binomial into several conciliar documents, Vatican II in effect adopted the democratic virtue ethic that comprised the content of the Sillon definition, which was undoubtedly the aim of its proponents.

The role of Cardijn and the jocist network

In all this, the role played by Cardijn and the jocist network was crucial. Only three years after Pius X’s letter against the Sillon, the French Social Week of 1913 took “responsibility” as its theme, providing a platform for a plethora of speakers to re-frame the conscience-responsibility binomial in a new, broader context.

Building on this, Cardijn in 1921 publicly adopted the Sillon binomial, which appears in his writings and speeches with greater frequency than the see-judge-act. Once Pius XII reinstated the conscience-responsibility binomial in his Christmas letter of 1944, Cardijn again gave it prominence, resulting in its appearance in several pontifical texts addressed to Cardijn and the JOC.

Clearly many others contributed to this effort, including the Dominican ex-sillonists, Joseph T. Delos and Georges Renard, but also a number of French conciliar bishops, including Ancel, Maziers and others. Nor can the role of Haubtmann and Pavan be overlooked. As a student of democracy, the latter was certainly familiar with the term and was perhaps the source of the appearance of the Sillon binomial in Mater et Magistra and particularly Pacem in Terris. Even so, Cardijn’s role as a vector of the Sillon message for half a century was decisive.

3. The Cardijn dialectic

Less well known outside the jocist movement than the see-judge-act, Cardijn’s Three Truths dialectic also played a key structuring role in Gaudium et Spes with the addition of Houtart’s introductory statement on the situation of the world, transforming the final document into an ascending dialectic, as Haubtmann later explained and as Inter Mirifica had foreshadowed.
Here too, the foundations were laid years earlier with Cardijn’s articulation of his Proudhonian dialectic, first at the JOC International Congress in 1935, then subsequently at the International Congress of 1950. Hence, its influence at the World Congresses on Lay Apostolate of 1951 and 1957 in the presence of many future Council Fathers.

As a result, it is not possible to divorce the adoption of the Cardijn dialectic at Vatican II from Cardijn’s systematic global promotion of the framework through the JOC over the quarter-century preceding the Council.

4. Lay apostolate

Historically, the very term “lay apostolate” was also controversial. It took 130 years from Ozanam until its acceptance in 1965 in the formal title of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity. For conservatives, it remained an oxymoron. Even for those who admitted that laity could “participate” or “collaborate” in the hierarchical apostolate, it remained a relationship of dependency.

Again, it was Cardijn who developed the solution. Borrowing from the Ozanam and Sillon traditions, he made the concept of lay apostolate a central plank of jocist theology. Whereas Sillon adviser Louis Cousin lacked the theological tools to take his conception of the role of the laity beyond the dichotomous spiritual-temporal “perfect societies” framework, Cardijn drew on emerging twentieth-century thought, situating the lay apostolate within a unified creation-redemption, temporal-eternal model.

Meanwhile, from the 1930s, together with the jocist chaplains and theologians, Cardijn developed a theology of lay apostolate based on baptism and confirmation. Almost single-handedly, he pioneered the concept of a specifically lay apostolate “proper” to lay people that transcended the dependency model that then characterised Italian Catholic Action.

Crucially, it was Cardijn and the jocist movements who fought for the holding of a World Congress on Lay Apostolate in 1951 rather than one on Catholic Action, as Veronese had
proposed. At the Council, it was Cardijn who waged a virtually lone battle in the Preparatory Commission against a piety/works, spiritual/temporal, or direct/indirect evangelisation approach in order to defend the JOC conception of the lay apostolate “proper” to the laity in transforming life, milieu and the world. The apparent price he paid here was his exclusion as a peritus at the First Session of the Council.

Meanwhile, the jocist bishops, particularly from France, Latin America and Quebec rallied to the cause, as did most Belgian bishops, who nevertheless often seemed to be out-maneouvred – like Himmer – by Suenens. Once Cardijn was drafted to the conciliar Commission, he successfully worked to ensure that *Apostolicam Actuositatem* was entitled the *Decree on Lay Apostolate* rather than a *Decree on the Laity*. The jocist network also played a vital role here in ensuring that *Lumen Gentium* adopted an understanding of lay apostolate close to Cardijn’s.

Paradoxically, however, *Gaudium et Spes*, over which Cardijn’s method exercised so much influence, failed to mention the term even if §43 recognised crucially that lay people had a distinctive and proper role in the secular field. Did the Council Fathers deliberately avoid the term? If so, it is difficult not to wonder whether it was not to keep onside with Suenens.

**A Cardijn hermeneutic**

No doubt many more aspects of Cardijn’s involvement, influence and even failures at the Council remain to be examined. Nevertheless, on the essential points concerning lay apostolate and method, the influence of Cardijn, the jocist network and the Lamennais-Sillon-JOC tradition clearly impacted the whole canon of the Council.

Recalling Cardijn’s conciliar dialectic – Church, world and lay apostolate – we can conclude that its various components – the see-judge-act, the conscience-responsibility binomial, the three truths dialectic, lay apostolate and Specialised Catholic Action – collectively comprise a set of tools that illuminate not only the historical development of the Council but also provide a guide for its future interpretation and implementation. Together, these tools offer a genuine “Cardijn hermeneutic” for Vatican II.
The leaven in the Council

How did Cardijn and his colleagues achieve this? Simply, they applied the very techniques and methods of influence and transformation that as jocist chaplains they had taught to generations of lay leaders. Just as JOC leaders sought to act as the salt of the earth or the leaven in the dough in their families, communities and workplaces, the jocist bishops and periti worked to achieve this in their own clerical domain. In this sense, Cardijn and his colleagues truly acted as a leaven in the Council.

Nor can we forget the role of those earlier generations whose work inspired and shaped the contributions of Cardijn and the jocist generation. Here perhaps Cardinal Gerlier’s comments to Marc Sangnier on the night of a famous JOC rally in Paris in 1937 are particularly apposite: “Rejoice tonight, Marc, you are one of the great artisans of the marvel that we have just witnessed.” Or, to paraphrase the post-conciliar comment of one of the last sillonists: “We thought it would take a hundred years for the Church to change. It only took fifty.”

And, of course, there were many other contributions to this achievement, some of which we have recorded while others have been lost to history or remain to be rediscovered. Particularly relevant here is Léon Ollé-Laprune’s exhortation -- borrowed from Alphonse Gratry -- to the Stanislas College students in 1893 to the effect that “work well done is work of salvation” no matter how much the role of the workers may be obscured.

Nevertheless, how to conclude without acknowledging the very first sillonist, Lamennais, that “priest despite himself,” whose vision of a Church close to Christ, founded on freedom and an alliance with the poor first inspired Cardijn?

From his pauper’s grave, the prophet of the windswept Sillon beach of Saint Malo still challenges us with his reflection on the St Luke text that gave Cardijn his episcopal motto:

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6 Ollé-Laprune, La recherche des questions pressantes, 205.
Have the poor heard the good news? Are the broken hearts healed? Have the blind seen?... I tell you this: Christ is still on the cross, awaiting his apostles.

Let them come, let them come quickly, because the anguish is great and eyes are tired of looking to the horizon for the dawn that will announce the beginning of the year of the Lord.⁸

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