BUSINESS IS CALLED!

From Luther and Calvin to Catholic Social Teaching:

On Business, Social Responsibility, and the Common Good

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ABSRACT:

In this paper I utilize the analysis of sociologist Max Weber on the meaning of the word "vocation" or "calling" as it underwent historical changes from a medieval, Roman Catholic view through Martin Luther and John Calvin to its dynamic meaning in the context of an economic order organized around capitalism. I then examine the changes in the understanding of "vocation" in Catholic Social Teachings from 1891 to the present. Finally, I undertake an analysis of four major themes of Catholic Social teaching, namely, the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, and participation for their help in analyzing business as a vocation and the vocation of business in the contemporary context.

Introduction

Worldcom. Tyco. Enron. Arthur Anderson. Qwest. Global Crossing. The list continues of business companies involved in questionable if not illegal business activities. Business Week magazine in its July 1, 2002, edition admonishes the business community that enforcement of existing laws is simply not enough; currently cases against major and smaller businesses are pending in 17 attorney general offices across the country. Regulation must follow. Jane Bryant Quinn, financial columnist for Newsweek, notes that "the rot runs deep." These authors and many in the United States worry that business in general is tainted with the brush of these abuses of power and misuse of wealth, no matter how legal many of the abuses might be. It would seem that now is an excellent time to begin a discussion of the "vocation" of business as well as how business is a "vocation" in terms of a calling by God.

In this paper I will explore the "calling" or "vocation" of business itself as a human enterprise. In spite of the many difficulties theoretically with his analysis and the danger of a monocausal approach to the dynamics of modern capitalism, I begin with Max Weber's analysis of "calling" in its transition from the medieval Catholic tradition to its place in John Calvin's Geneva as a means to examine the developing meanings of "vocation" in Catholic thought. Weber demonstrates that Calvin developed a worldview around "calling" or "vocation" which provided the needed impulse for the dynamism associated with modern capitalism. Following this inquiry of "calling" the paper moves to business today, where the psychological and sociological dynamics of Calvin's sense of engagement in worldly, economic activity continues without religious restraint, motivation and goal and often in defiance of legal restraints. As Weber notes, "Where the fulfillment of the calling [vocation] cannot directly be related to the highest spiritual values or need not simply be felt as economic compulsion, the individual generally abandons the attempt to justify it as all" (Protestant Ethic, 182). The result often leads to an "ethic" in business of relentless competition, low wages, and unrestrained acquisition of wealth, troubling to religious reformers after Calvin and certainly disturbing to the writers at Business Week.

Next I will examine the emergence of a broadened sense of a "calling" for business and economic activity in Catholic Social Teachings. In his major encyclical "Solicitudo Rei Socialis" in 1987, pope John Paul II utilizes a new understanding of vocation in relation to development: "… the notion of development [of each person and of all persons] is not only 'lay' or 'profane,' but it is also seen to be . . . the modern expression of an essential dimension of man's [sic] vocation, [author's emphasis] … the difficult yet noble task of improving the lot of man [sic] in his totality, and of all people" (O'Brien, 414). However, the question of the word's meaning here is quite different from its meaning as used in medieval texts and even among Roman Catholics until quite recently.

Through an analysis especially of Pope John Paul's works, we will examine the question of whether there are principles and approaches in Catholic Social Thinking which can provide substantive guides to business theory and practice. I believe we will find such principles and approaches in the themes of common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, and participation in corporate ownership by workers in formulating a framework which can guide business and economic activity in achieving the goals of contributing to the well-being of local, national and international communities. I have chosen these four themes from among the many themes of Catholic Social Teaching because of their direct relationship to business as a vocation and the vocation of business itself. In this sense business is being "called" to take up its place in global society; where Calvin once saw economic engagement as building up the Holy Community, Catholic Social Teaching moves the dynamic to building up global, sustainable community.

Max Weber on Luther, Calvin and the Sects

In his classic analysis of "vocation," Weber addresses the crucial transition of the term from its Roman Catholic meaning in the medieval world and the new understanding employed by Martin Luther which would so come to dominate Protestant understandings of the meaning of "vocation." In the Catholic understanding, vocation was a response to God's calling by removing oneself from the cares and concerns of this world. Weber notes that whether in Jewish traditions, among the Greek and Roman classics or into the medieval world of Catholicism, vocation had none of the contemporary meaning of a fulfillment of one's duties to God by active engagement in the contemporary world. Further, in the medieval world someone who engaged in business was certainly suspect, was too easily tempted to greed, and was known more as a reprobate than as a saint: today's business state of mind "would both in ancient times and in the Middle Ages have been proscribed as the lowest sort of avarice and as an attitude entirely lacking in self-respect" (Protestant Ethic, 56). The most devout and ethical of Christians were kept from the trade of economics: "Business was only possible for those lax in ethical thinking" (The Sociology of Religion, 220). According to Thomas Aquinas, there is "something shameful about it [commerce], being without any honorable or necessary defining goal" (quoted in Tam, 5). In Calvin's Geneva, on the other hand, a business person was one of the more respected and responsible members of the community, precisely because he went about his business with a conviction that God had called him or her to this work. How account for such a transition?

Weber begins his analysis with the transitions of the word "calling" or "vocation" in Martin Luther's use of the idea that the "fulfillment of duty in worldly affairs" is "the highest form which the moral activity of the individual could assume" (Protestant Ethic, 80). No longer is worldly activity just a necessary matter of the flesh, a neutral matter, but "vocation" now was a way of living acceptable to God precisely in "the fulfillment of one's obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world. That was his calling" (80). However, in itself the Lutheran evaluation of work was not sufficient to serve as the spirit which impelled capitalism to the fore. For Lutheranism did not require a transformation of the world in a rationalized, ethical direction (The Sociology of Religion, 198), the cornerstone of modern capitalism. That further understanding awaited the workings of the Protestant sects, following Calvin's understandings of economic activity and predestination.

The key to understanding this transition lies in the pietistic sects (a term used by Weber to denote a withdrawal from the world) which flowed from Calvinism and the "inner-worldly asceticism" emerging from their understanding of the relationship with the world and especially of economic activity. In this view, the Protestant "takes as his [sic] mission, as sphere of his religious 'vocation,' the bringing of this world and its sins under the rational norms of revealed divine will, for the glory of God and as an identifying mark of his own salvation" (<u>Sociology of Religion</u>, 257-58). By conceiving of human relationships to a transcendent God without the necessity of intervening hierarchies of saints, priests, and other intermediaries found in Catholic piety, ascetic Protestantism was able to restructure the quest for salvation:

> Only ascetic Protestantism completely eliminated magic and the supernatural quest for salvation, of which the highest form was intellectualist, contemplative illumination. It alone created the religious motivations for seeking salvation primarily through immersion in one's worldly vocation (<u>Sociology of Religion</u>, 269-70).

As a result the ascetic Protestant, denying in his or her vocational work any impulse toward extravagance which might detract from work itself, engages in worldly work and economic activity "which is faithful to rationalized ethical requirements and conforms to strict legality" (<u>Sociology of Religion</u>, 166-67). Moreover, as opposed to the medieval monk, priest or nun whose vocation calls for removal from the world, the ascetic Protestant does not ask questions about the meaning of the world since that is God's responsibility. In this way the world possesses unique and religious significance and is the place in which the believer now organizes working life and one's whole life in a spirit of asceticism which does not deny the world but provides him or her with assurances of religious salvation precisely in an ethic of vocation: I am doing God's work in my calling (<u>Sociology. of Religion</u>, 167, 182).

Weber notes that this ethic of inner-worldly asceticism achieved its greatest power in the Puritan interpretation of predestination. The doctrine of predestination produced in its believers the strongest motives for acting in service of God's desires. "In the case of the Puritans …, [this] belief in predestination often produced ethical rigorism, legalism, and rationally planned procedures for the patterning of life." Consequently, the "inner-worldly asceticism and the disciplined quest for salvation in a vocation pleasing to God were the sources of the virtuosity in acquisitiveness characteristic of the Puritans" (<u>Sociology of Religion</u>, 203).

Ernst Troeltsch, Weber's contemporary and a church historian, remarked that this ethic of acquisition was held in check by an important set of religious principles:

> This peculiar combination of ideas produces a keen interest in politics, but not for the sake of the State; it produces active industry within the economic sphere, but not for the wake of wealth; it produces an eager social organization, but its aim is not material happiness; it produces unceasing labour, ever disciplining the senses, but none of this effort is for the sake of the object of all this industry. The one main controlling idea and purpose of this ethic is to glorify God, to produce the Holy Community, to attain that salvation which in election is held up as the aim (<u>Social Teachings…</u>, Vol. II, 607).

As Troelsch notes, such a conception provides a much freer sense of "vocation" or "calling" than a Catholic or even Lutheran conception, by "a deliberate increasing of the intensity of labor." Yet, the result in our time is that without the constraints of the "Protestant" religious dimension of the calling, "once this psychological state of mind has been created, it can then, through a process of metamorphosis of purpose, be detached from its original meaning and placed at the disposal of other ideas," the plight of an acquisitive, consumer ethic which pervades modern life (Troeltsch, Vol. II, 611).

As Weber remarked in his conclusion to The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, ascetic Protestantism created the force so decisive to the effectiveness of the idea that faithful labor is highly pleasing to God: "the psychological sanction of it through the conception of this labor as a calling, as the best, often in the last analysis the only means of attaining certainty of grace" (178). Then in a phrase which offers a key insight into the question of business as a calling, he adds: "And on the other hand it legalized the exploitation of this specific willingness to work, in that it also interpreted the employer's business activity as a calling." Weber then states what Troeltsch only indicated, namely that in our day the religious basis of this asceticism and valuation of work has "died away." The result is the following:

> Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history. Today the spirit of religious asceticism--whether, finally, who knows?--has escaped from the cage. But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs its support no longer. (Protestant Ethic, 182-83).

In an attempt to revitalize that idea of the religious duty in one's calling we now turn to Catholic Social Teaching.

Vocation in Catholic Social Teaching

As long as the idea of "calling" or "vocation" was tied in the Catholic worldview to a removal from worldly activity in the monastery, nunnery, or rectory, the only other meaning of "calling" by extension was to married life. The idea of a "calling" to productive activity in "worldly" work and much less in business was foreign to this world view. Correspondingly theologian David Hollenbach notes that it was not until the 1960's that Catholic Social Teachings themselves shed the hierarchical model of society in which one's state in life was generally fixed by natural conditions of birth, etc. and embraced a more democratic social model and an ecclesiology in which the Church was engaged **in** the world (Hollenbach, 216-17). In those transitions the idea of a "calling" to work gradually emerged not as the means of salvation, an idea more to be found in ascetic Protestantism, but as the fulfillment of one's person **through** work, a theme enunciated by John Paul II in his 1981 encyclical, "On Human Work." While the full development of these transitions is beyond the scope of this paper, we can trace the emergence of this contemporary understanding in Catholic Social Teachings.

In order to understand the contemporary uses of vocation and calling in CST, especially in relation to business, it is instructive to return to the uses of "vocation" and "calling" in "Rerum Novarum," Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical on the condition of labor. There Leo reiterates the traditional understanding of vocation as a "call" to a state of life: "In choosing a state of life [calling], it is indisputable that all are at full liberty either to follow the counsel of Jesus Christ as to virginity, or to enter into the bonds of marriage" (O'Brien, p. 18, #9). Even by John XXIII's writings in 1959, the word "vocation" was still used to refer to priestly vocations or more generally a calling of persons to Christian faith, i.e., a religious response to God's call ("Princeps Pastorum," www.osjspm.org).

It is not until John XXIII's 1961 encyclical, "Mater et Magistra," that the meaning of vocation is extended to include a more contemporary understanding of work as vocational: this requires "the establishment of economic and vocational bodies which would be autonomous" ("Mater et Magistra," www.osjspm.org). And here although there is a connection between work and calling, it can be seen that the word still lacks the power of an ethical call to transform the world in relation to service of God. However, in one brief reference John does imbue the word with a meaning which will emerge later, vocation as work in an industry or labor effecting the world. Here the reference is to agriculture: such work as agricultural labor "should be thought of as a vocation, a God-given mission" ("Mater et

Magistra," www.osjspm.org).2 This is the closest John comes to a link between ordinary work in the world and vocation.

As the Second Vatican Council of 1963-65 wrestled with the difficult question of relating the Church to the larger world, the bishops refer to calling in the broader sense indicated by John XXIII, i.e., the understanding that all people because created in God's likeness "enjoy the same divine calling and destiny," a transcendent call to union with God ("Gaudium et Spes," #29, Obrien, p. 182). Yet, then, in one small remark the bishops open up the meaning of the word to a more specific understanding as a calling to specific work in the world:

> This Council exhorts Christians, as citizens of two cities, to strive to discharge their earthly duties conscientiously and in response to the Gospel spirit. They are mistaken, who, knowing that we have here no abiding city but seek one which is to come, think that they may therefore shirk their *earthly responsibilities*. For they are forgetting that by the *faith itself* they are more than ever *obliged to measure up to those duties*, each according to his [sic] proper *vocation* [my italics] (#43, O'Brien, p. 192).

In this quote we begin to see a movement toward a Catholic understanding of vocation as engagement in the world as part of one's responsibilities and duties required by faith itself. While couched in the language of "two cities," the idea has begun to develop, and later John Paul II will then use the term in two senses: a transcendent calling to God of all people, and a specific vocation for each person in his or her work.3

John Paul II on Business and Vocation

In his 1981 encyclical "On Human Work," John Paul outlines an important dimension of work essential to the understanding of a business as a vocation and the vocation of business, namely, the subjective nature of work.   In the pope's words,

> man [sic] is a person, a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself and with a tendency to self-realization. As a person, man [sic] is therefore the subject of work . . . [His] actions must all serve to realize his humanity, to fulfill the *calling* to be a person that is his by reason of his very humanity [author's italics] ("On Human Work," O'Brien, 358).

Thus all work in this sense involve a calling, a calling to be fully a person. This subjective dimension in turn "conditions the very *ethical nature of work* [author's italics]." The ethical value of work is linked "to the fact that the one who carries it out is a person, a conscious and free subject." This changes the ancient and even medieval view that persons are classed according to their work done, since now the primary basis of the value of work is the person "who is its subject." This subjective dimension of work has pre-eminence over the objective nature of work "however true it may be that man [sic] is destined for work and *called* to it" [author's italics] ("On Human Work," O'Brien, 359).

In particular, for John Paul, the "ethical meaning of work" lies in two dimensions, not only do people "transform nature," i.e. produce products, good, services, whether material or intellectual, but also and more importantly because people achieve "fulfillment as a human being and indeed in a sense become 'more a human being'" (#9, O'Brien, p. 364). Then in words which might echo Weber's analysis, John Paul notes that this consideration of the ethical nature of work posits industrious as a virtue, that is, as a habit whereby one becomes good as a person in work (#9, O'Brien, p. 364). Thus through the industriousness in work humans perfect themselves; work "constitutes one of the fundamental dimensions of his [sic] earthly existence and of his *vocation*" [author's italics] (#11, O'Brien, p. 367).

This theme finds itself repeated in John Paul's 1991 encyclical, "Centessimus Annus": "Work thus belongs to the vocation of every person; indeed, man [sic] expresses and fulfills himself by working." This subjective, personalist dimension of work is immediately followed by a reference to the social nature of work: "At the same time, work has a 'social' dimension through its intimate relationship … to the common good" (#6, O'Brien, pp. 443-44), a theme we will take up later.

At this point, then vocation has taken on a meaning similar to that found in ascetic Protestantism, i.e., a calling to work in an industrious manner in the world and in doing so to perfect oneself and to work toward the common good as part of one's responsibilities to God and to others. Furthermore, vocation has come to express two different but related meanings in John Paul's writings, perhaps most dramatically reflected in his use of the word "vocation" some 20 times in his 1987 encyclical letter, "Soliditudo Rei Socialis." First, John Paul refers to the "transcendent vocation of the human being" and the rights which follow from that vocation. This repeats the earlier formulations found in John XXIII of a calling to union with the divine. The rights which follow from this meaning of vocation begin "with the right of freedom to profess and practice one's own religious belief" (#33, O'Brien, p. 427).

Secondly, each person has a "natural and historical vocation," attained not only "by exploiting the abundance of goods and services" (#33, O'Brien, p. 427), but also in one's specific work. Although he does not develop the idea in this encyclical, the conclusion to that thought involves the subjective nature of work in which one perfects oneself through work. Later in the document, John Paul again notes that a person's vocation is "at once both earthly and transcendent," and one's commitment to justice is "to be found in each individual's role, *vocation*, and circumstances" [author's italics] (#41, O'Brien, p. 425), a reference to <u>vocation</u> as one's individual calling to work toward the common good and perfect oneself in a particular occupation and job in life.

In other writings directed toward business people John Paul's two-fold understanding of work's subjective and social dimensions, along with its transcendent and historical meanings, leads him to see business not only as an instrument for production and distribution of goods, but also as a community of persons. The pope notes: "[A] business firm is not merely an instrument at the service of the well-being of its management; rather, it is itself a common good of both management and labor, at the service of the common good of society." Indeed, business people must see "their enterprise as a social function. They must not conceive them only as instruments of production and profit, but as a community of persons" (quoted in Calvez and Naughton, 11). As Calvez and Naughton note in their commentary on the pope's remarks, "profit and productivity are necessary and critical dimensions; but unless a community develops within a business to provide a proper ordering of these economic dimensions, the possibility of the business becoming a place where people can develop evaporates" (12).

Thus we have a sense in which people are called to engagement in the world around them both to produce and take action "industriously," but more importantly to develop themselves in their full potential. In relation to business, then, when one is called to a particular business, that call challenges both the individual to take steps to ensure that his or her potential is developed and challenges the business to first, ensure that employees have opportunities to develop themselves within the meaning of the enterprise and secondly, that the business itself contribute to the common good of all employees and to the social and international common good.

In conclusion, in this analysis we have outlined the development of the meaning of vocation in Catholic Social Thought to include 1) a subjective dimension in which humans perfect themselves through industrious work, providing an internal ethical motivation for work far different from the "acquisitive" habits surrounding work Weber analyzes in today's work ethic and 2) a social dimension in which the worker and the business as community contribute to the common good. Now it is time to turn

to the further questions of whether CST can provide substantive guidelines for the meaning of business as a vocation and the vocation of business through the guiding principles of the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, and participation.

The Common Good: Model and Goal

If vocation is considered as a service to self, others, and the community, then the concept of the common good emerges as critical to the flourishing of individuals and communities. In the reigning business model, business is usually interpreted as having the "sole genuine purpose of making money." However, as one author notes, "Money-making is certainly an important part of why we are in business, but it is not the whole story" (Dianna, 38). Rather, there is a deeper drive that leads people towards a certain work. People strive for other goods for personal development and for community, besides money (39, 40).

In terms of the common good it is important to distinguish that "business is not responsible for the common good; it is responsible to the common good". (41) That is, business does not determine the content of the common good, but business has a responsibility to operate in such a way that the common good is promoted throughout the community. As defined by Pope John XXIII in "Mater et Magistra," the common good "embraces the sum total of those conditions of social living, whereby men [sic] are enabled more fully and more readily to achieve their own perfection" ("Mater et Magistra," #63, O'Brien, 94). The common good referred to in this case is "considered to be a human perfection or fulfillment achievable by a community, such that the community's members all share it, both as a community, and singly, in their persons" (41).

The common good model described here thus serves two functions, first as an internal model for the firm or business itself in terms of employees, workers, shareholders, and other stakeholders, and secondly as a model for the business in relation to the larger society. In relation to the first, internal dynamic, the common good model preserves the integrity of the business enterprise. "Within the common good model of the firm, managers and employees are expected to create conditions within the firm that foster a holistic notion of human development." (Dianna, 41) The goals under which the common good model functions are "the ends of human development that perfect the firm as a community of work, and that benefit its members personally by their participation" (66). The model recognizes the personal goals of the employees and their own ends rather than solely focusing on the shareholders and their gain. In this model the entire community is involved and can participate in a sense of ownership. As we shall see in the sections on participation, solidarity and subsidiarity, the common good model in Catholic Social Teaching calls for "employees to be partners in enterprises with which they are associated and wherein they work" ("Mater et Magistra," #91, O'Brien, 98-99).

"The common good model involves a commitment to definite convictions concerning what constitutes genuine human development." (71) It is both a communal and personal model, in that it serves both the community and persons. The promotion of the person, within the work community, calls for a recognition of individual diversity and an appreciation and promotion of each person's unique talents and skills. In this model of community the particular gifts of the individuals can be utilized and brought together for a more efficient and holistic business, while at the same time each person's unique contribution is appreciated.

When looking at the common good as a guide for business in relation to the larger society, to the vocation of business itself, John XXIII is clear when he argues that a portion of the common good is "to provide employment for as many workers as possible; to take care lest privileged groups arise even among the workers; to maintain a balance between wages and prices . . . .; that the competitive striving of peoples to increase output be free of bad faith; that harmony in economic affairs and a friendly and beneficial cooperation be fostered" ("Mater et Magistra, #79-80; O'Brien, 97). A difficult, but essential

task for business in working out its vocation in the larger world of multi-national corporations and globalization, given the dynamics we see in the Enrons of the world.

Subsidiarity: Paradigm and Principle

In his helpful and provocative discussion of business and the principle of subsidiarity, Dennis McCann asks whether in addition to sets of moral conclusions and arguments which businesses are called to develop and follow, there is a paradigm for business in Catholic Social Teaching. He believes such a paradigm is found in the principle of subsidiarity. While McCann's argument is too long to repeat adequately here, the gist of his proposal is that the principle of subsidiarity specifies the limits and the possibilities of economic institutions. McCann's analysis rests upon three premises: 1) business is a form of social relationships, in contrast to classic contract theory; 2) in recent Catholic Social Teaching, the principle of subsidiarity has been extended from political to economic institutions; and 3), most importantly, the model of human life in terms of the Christian doctrine of Trinity, in which "persons" are united in love, means that Trinity is in the very structure of human reality, namely , in our human capacity for knowledge and love (McCann, 177-78).

McCann's first point reflects traditional understandings of Catholic Social Teaching that humans are by nature social and thus initiate and come together in societies to achieve goals they could not achieve individually. In contrast to contract theory in which individuals surrender individual rights to the larger entity of society, the state, CST argues that the social nature of humans brings them into relationships which are extensions of themselves. Thus economic institutions are another form of this natural propensity.

The classical text for defining the principle of subsidiarity is found in Pius XI's 1931 encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno":

> It is a fundamental principle of social philosophy … that one should not withdraw from individuals and commit to the community what they can accomplish by their own enterprise and industry. So, too, it is an injustice … to transfer to the larger and higher collectivity functions which can be performed and provided for by lesser and subordinate bodies (Quadragesimo Anno," #79; O'Brien, 60).

While Pius was concerned with the intrusion of the totalitarian states of fascism and communism into community organizations and groups, in 1961 John XXIII used the principle of subsidiarity to call for an "intervention of public authorities that encourages, stimulates, regulates, supplements and complements" ("Mater et Magistra," #52; O'Brien, 92) the increase in the output of goods and services, all to better serve the common good. Thus the notion of the importance of "intermediary" associations which promote the interests of individuals and service the common appears essential to CST's view of a flourishing civil society.

McCann's second point is that subsidiarity has been extended from the political to the economic, and indeed is a generalizable principle to other social institutions (McCann, 174-75). Here he relies upon the Unites States Catholic bishops' 1986 pastoral, "Economic Justice for All." The bishops at several junctions call for mediating structures to develop economic "partnerships" on a local, national, and international scale, new forms of corporate governance, ranging from "innovative styles of corporate management to employee stock ownership plans, all of which are intended to foster a greater sense of accountability through increased participation throughout the enterprise, consistent with the pastoral letter's overall theme of justice as participation" (McCann, 175), a theme I will take up later.

Finally, McCann's analysis develops the important theological theme of the Trinitarian structure of social institutions. Borrowing Augustine's contention that "the distinctively Trinitarian pattern of

divine life is inscribed in the exercise of human intelligence—in our distinctively human capacity for knowledge and love," McCann asks if we cannot "discover similar traces in the organization of human institutions" (177). He concludes that "the divine life must somehow already be encoded in the institutions where we test and fulfill our vocations. Such … is the Trinitarian theological perspective that is tacitly presupposed in the principle of subsidiarity" (178).

The implication for a business model is that the principle of subsidiarity is first of all a truth about God's relations with us, and consequently "a theological understanding of the modern business corporation must be about God first of all, or it is about nothing at all" (McCann, 179). Subsequently subsidiarity is about the "scale and scope" of people and institutions in society. Finally McCann argues that the principle can provide designs for business strategies likely to advance other principles he identifies, such as solidarity and participation, can help identify patterns of marginalization, and can help "transform these same institutions" producing marginalization (McCann, 180).

One final insight from McCann focuses upon the question raised earlier concerning the transition from a traditional Roman Catholic suspicion if not disdain for business. He refers again to the pastoral "Economic Justice for All" and the call there for collaboration between bishops and business people. McCann comments: "The invitation is based, first, on the teleological definition of business in terms of its role in achieving the common good …, and second, on a recognition that such an understanding of business should enable Christians to understand their business practice as an opportunity to exercise a 'vital Christian vocation'" (McCann, 181). And he concludes with a significant remark that "Business has now become theologically significant for Roman Catholics, *as it has long been for Protestants, particularly in the Calvinist traditions*" (author's italics) (McCann, 182)! Up to this point, then, the principles of common good and subsidiarity have provided strategic guidelines for business in terms of the internal structure of the business as a community, namely the flourishing of the persons involved, as well as a theological basis for economic engagement through work in building the societal common good.

Solidarity

In his encyclical letters John Paul II develops a new theme in Catholic Social Teaching, namely, the virtue of solidarity. Although the word "solidarity" appeared in the writings of John XXIII and Paul VI, it acquires new meaning in John Paul II. In light of contemporary global interdependence, solidarity is a virtue, "a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all" ("Sollicitudo Rei Socialis," #38.4). In this way interdependence is transformed into solidarity, "based upon the principle that the goods of creation are meant for all." Solidarity is the virtue which challenges the structures of sin created by all-consuming desire for profit and the thirst for power, a challenge calling for social justice.

In his challenging analysis of solidarity in relation to modern business, Robert G. Kennedy examines the principles of the "economic paradigm" which underlies contemporary views of economic activity and contrasts those principles with those of Catholic Social Teachings. In Kennedy's view the dominant and powerful "economic paradigm" rests upon a set of philosophical convictions. First, persons are solitary individuals, and human communities are "instruments for the satisfaction of the needs and desires of the individuals who constitute them" (Kennedy, 51). Secondly, human happiness lies in possessing. The implications of this statement are that possession in the sense of ownership is separate from responsibility and that the value of work lies in its usefulness to others and the extent to which is brings possessions to the workers (52).

In contrast, Catholic Social Teachings emphasize the social nature of persons. Consequently, communities are not instruments but integral to human development. The common good of all involves human flourishing, and happiness then rests on what John Paul II calls "being" rather than "having," the full flourishing of each person and every person. Secondly, since all goods, as gifts in God's creation, are

thus intended for the benefit of the global community, i.e., human goods have a universal destiny, then "Private property … is under a 'social mortgage'" (John Paul II, quoted in Kennedy, 54). Finally, as seen in the earlier discussion of the subjective dimension of work, the best work "is the work that most completely draws out the potential of the worker and develops him as a human person" (Kennedy, p. 55). Kennedy's summary of the different views at play here reveals the sharp contrast between paradigms:

> Under the economic paradigm, rational behavior [remember Weber!] is essentially utility-maximizing or wealth-maximizing behavior. One participates in relationships and in communities in order to acquire the possessions and experiences that are understood to constitute satisfaction and happiness. . . .
>
> Rationality in the Catholic social tradition takes on a different character. Since human fulfillment consists in being and acting, practical rationality requires that a person seek to develop a certain character (that is, to become virtuous), which in turn both depends upon and results in acting well. . . . . [S]ince human persons are understood to be essentially social, practical rationality requires behavior that supports the common good of the various communities of which they are members (Kennedy, 56).

In contrast to the economic paradigm in which business is seen as strictly instrumental and in which "participation in the firm's proper activities by employees is [not] understood to be intrinsically valuable" (Kennedy, 58), the principle of solidarity "calls businesspeople to be mindful of the impacts of their decisions on others and to make courses of action that benefit others a priority in their decision making" (Kennedy, 59). Kennedy defines the object of solidarity as "the just society, characterized first by right relationships among all its members, and second by fairness in the distribution of resources, knowledge, opportunities, cultural participation, and anything else that may be needed for human flourishing" (Kennedy, 59).

For Kennedy, the Catholic social tradition has a richness and flexibility which the economic paradigm, rooted in inexorable laws of business, lacks:

> The "laws" of economics can be amended to place them at the service of human flourishing and the common good. . . . What is required is a more comprehensive vision of the proper function of business in society, clearer practical guidelines about how management professionals can give life and breath to that function, and a firm commitment to move forward. In short, what is required is informed solidarity (Kennedy, 64).

Participation

Given the central dimension of these principles of common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity, we now turn to the principle of participation, a relatively recent concept in Catholic Social Teaching. It was in his 1971 pastoral letter, 'Octagesimo Adveniens," that Pope Paul VI singled out two aspirations emerging in these times, namely, equality and participation, two specific forms of human dignity and freedom ("Octagesimo Adveniens," #22). Paul then notes that these two aspirations seem linked to a democratic form of society and thus the Christian in particular has a duty to participate "in the organization and life of political society." In the context of business as a vocation and the vocation of business, the principle of participation has a centrally important position, for it asks about the ways in which all members of the business are engaged in the enterprise and the ways in which the enterprise itself participates in the larger society through its contribution to the common good.

Even as far back as 1891, Leo XIII had posited the necessity for workers to be involved in the enterprise, at that time primarily through "associations" or unions. Then in Pius XI's "Quadragesimo Anno" and more particularly in John XXIII's encyclicals, the participation of the workers was enlarged to

encompass a form of worker sharing in the means of production: "it is today advisable . . . that work agreements be tempered in certain respects with partnership arrangements, so that 'workers and officials become participants in ownership, or management, or share in some manner in profits'" ("Mater et Magistra," #32, quoting "Quadragesimo Anno," O'Brien, 88).

Further, in his 1961 encyclical John continues:

> "We believe that companies should grant to workers some share in the enterprise. . . . It is very desirable that workers gradually acquire some share in the enterprise by such methods as seem more appropriate. . . . Furthermore, … we regard as justifiable the desire of employees to be partners in enterprises with which they are associated and wherein they work. . . . We do not doubt that employees should have an active part in the affairs of the enterprise wherein they work. . . . But it is of utmost importance that productive enterprises assume the character of a true human fellowship whose spirit suffuses the dealings, activities, and standing of all its members. . . . This means that the workers may have a say in, and may make a contribution toward, the efficient running and development of the enterprise" (#75, 96;#77, 97;#91,98-99;#92,99).

Almost 20 years later John Paul II continues this theme when he calls for "proposals for joint ownership of the means of work, sharing by the workers in the management and/or profits of businesses, shareholding by labor, etc. … it is clear that recognition of the proper position of labor and the worker in the production process demands various adaptations in the sphere of the right to ownership of the means of production" ("Laborem Exercens," #14, 372). Here John Paul combines the idea of private property's "social mortgage" with a call for workers to share in the very ownership of a business as a basic right!

Summary and Conclusion

In these pages we have examined the development of the idea of "vocation" from its appropriation as a special calling to salvation through removal from concerns of the world to work in the daily world precisely as a form of ensuring salvation. Weber has carefully and forcefully traced that development in the form of "ascetic Protestantism" to what today we call the "work ethic," an ethic of industriousness shorn of its religious dynamics. Similarly we traced the transition in Catholic social thought to a similar understanding of "vocation" as active engagement in the world with the goal of building up a just society. In that discussion we also examined the role of work as not only an external activity but also as a means of the full development of the person, the "subjective" dimension of work. In that sense, work in the Catholic tradition has two dimensions related to the nature of the person: a "transcendent" dimension drawing and pushing each person toward a "calling" by God to union with God and a "historical" dimension to work in a particular area of business as a co-creator with God in using the riches of God's creation to build a better world in which humans and creation itself flourish.

In addition we examined the nature of a business as a community of persons, concerned not only with producing an object for exchange but also with the development of each firm member's gifts and talents. The business then is not just an amalgam of individuals, but a true community fostering the growth of people. This "subjective" nature of the enterprise is complemented in Catholic Social Teachings by a sense of the common good of both the particular business community and of the society, indeed of the global society, in which work takes place. As the United States bishops state in "Economic Justice for All," "Commitment to the public good and not simply the private good of their firms is at the heart of what it means to call their work a vocation and not simply a career or a job" (#111, 605).

Finally I have explored the possibilities which Catholic Social Teaching can offer to business as a vocation and in its vocation through substantive principles and approaches in the discussion of the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, and participation. In the conception of business as a community,

the "common good" of the business itself demands that all involved participate in some way in ownership and management of the enterprise. Through the principle of subsidiarity all members of the business are joined in ways which allow the gifts of each to be fostered and promoted. Here the Trinitarian pattern of relationships can serve as a conceptual and motivating factor in shaping relationships within the business. Solidarity brings the members of the business together to look beyond a strict economic end or instrumental purpose of the business, and it challenges members to envision ways in which their vocation in the business can promote the vocation of business to serve the societal common good.

I hope that in the discussion I have provided a useful, historical analysis of the meaning of vocation itself as it has emerged in recent Catholic Social Teaching as well as an initial strategic paradigm for the evaluation of business as a calling in which persons flourish and of the calling of business to serve the common good. Further work remains, in particular a reading of the principle of preferential option for the poor in relation to business practices and the further development of specific modalities for carrying out the principles examined here.

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