

# INTERCULTURALITY, LEADERSHIP AND VOWS: LIABILITY OR RICHNESS

Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM

*Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM, is a member of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto Sisters). She is an educator who has served as Peace Education Officer and President of the Irish Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace. She was a member of the General Council of her congregation and the first Executive Director of Solidarity with South Sudan - a new model of inter-congregational missionary presence. She is currently the Executive Secretary of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). She has a MEd (TCD-Dublin), and an MA (Theology) and DMin from Catholic Theological Union -Chicago.*



*This article was published in the volume : Lazar T. Stanislaus, SVD/Christian Tauchner, SVD (eds.), *Becoming Intercultural. Perspectives on Mission*, Delhi: ISPCK/Steyler Mission-swissenschaftliches Institut 2021, pp. 153-170.*

An extraordinary confluence of events is currently reshaping our world. Social and cultural landscapes are shifting, as a new consciousness spreads worldwide. Years ago, Alvin Toffler commented that humanity was facing a quantum leap forward with the deepest social upheaval and restructuring of all time. He said “without clearly recognizing it, we are engaged in building a remarkable new civilization from the ground up.”<sup>1</sup> What is happening now is certainly part of that upheaval. Religious don’t live outside of today’s context – it affects who we are and who we are becoming as consecrated men and women. Only if we engage in critically examining our lives in the light of these “signs of our times” can we judge whether inculturation, leadership and vows are a liability or a richness.

Early in 2020 a new viral infection called covid-19, or disparagingly “the Chinese flu;” or “Kung flu,” began spreading from Wuhan, China. Social commentators noted that “whenever a pandemic goes, xenophobia is never far behind....Disease, after all, fosters fear, which in turn fosters discrimination.”<sup>2</sup> Various studies provide clear evidence that black and minority ethnic groups are at a higher risk of dying from Covid-19 than people of white ethnicity. Experts point to racism as a fundamental cause of this differential because it “restricts access to education and employment opportunities.”<sup>3</sup> These factors in addition “lead to poorer socioeconomic circumstances which lead to poorer health outcomes.”<sup>4</sup> In addition people from black or other ethnic minorities work in greater numbers in “es-

sential jobs," live in over-crowded accommodation, have underlying health issues, thus putting them at even greater risk.

The world was further jolted by the senseless killing of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis, USA. As videos of the event emerged and were replayed, we watched a man die, "face down on the pavement, pinned beneath a car, and above him another man, a man in uniform, his skin lighter than the man on the ground... his knee boring into the neck of the darker man... The man on the ground went silent, drained of breath."<sup>5</sup> These 8 minutes and 46 seconds galvanized millions of people to take to the streets proclaiming "I/We can't breathe"; "Black Lives Matter." They represent people of every age, gender, ethnicity, race and religion united in solidarity, anger and grief with this one man but also with every person who suffers discrimination, stereotyping, racism, xenophobia and exclusion of any kind.

Increased mobility, transnational travel, a globalized market place, refugees fleeing wars and conflicts, migrants seeking better opportunities, have shown the ugly face of exclusion. Now personal transformation and conversion of attitudes, symbols and systems are being demanded. These global happenings have placed a mirror to the face of our global society and to contemporary religious life. Recently Jayne Helmlinger CSJ, acknowledging her own complicity in racism because of white privilege, called on women religious to undertake "the pilgrimage into the terrain of racism....not leaving too quickly, crossing back to a place of comfort and protection."<sup>6</sup> Worldwide the focus is clearly on how to manage difference and diversity. This is a challenge that must be faced by both society as a whole and by leadership within religious life.

A recent Vatican document notes the enormous change that has occurred where "female congregations have passed from almost entirely monocultural contexts to the challenge of multiculturalism."<sup>7</sup> The face of religious life reflects a "labyrinth of cultures."<sup>8</sup> Younger male and female religious live in multi-cultural communities or participate in networks of communion and mutual support that are "culturally, ethnically, theologically and ecclesiologicaly diverse."<sup>9</sup> This recent evolution within and across many congregations "has made the challenge of integrating different cultures even more acute."<sup>10</sup> The same document notes that

Some institutes now find themselves in a situation that is hard to manage. On the one hand, a few dozen elderly members who are tied to the classic and sometimes altered cultural and institutional traditions, and on the other side a large number of young members from different cultures who tremble, who feel marginalized and who no longer accept subordinate roles.<sup>11</sup>

It notes the de-westernization of consecrated life keeping pace with the process of globalization.<sup>12</sup> It says that what is essential "is not the preservation of forms" but the willingness "in creative continuity to rethink the consecrated life as the evangelical memory of a permanent state of conversion."<sup>13</sup> During a recent online meeting the leader of one religious congregation posed the question "what does religious life look like when it doesn't have the overlay of western civilization?"<sup>14</sup> How should we understand the vows from a different perspective? Many leaders are educating themselves about different aspects of culture so that they may lead well and wisely.

The increased membership from new cultures together with declining vocations from traditional sources has changed the cultural composition of religious congregations. Newer members can experience overt or covert prejudice, generalizations, stereotypical judgments and reciprocal misunderstandings. This can be further compounded by a generation gap or personality differences. Criticism of individuals or groups can often circulate in an underhand manner creating an unhealthy atmosphere. There can be fear

of being dominated by the majority group. If it is perceived that congregational resources such as power, money, relationships of solidarity with the families of members and hospitality are distributed unevenly, trust is deeply affected. Despite these experiences conversations rarely take place around differences and the issue of racism and prejudice are almost never addressed openly. Members practice a double approach: "In the presence of members from the 'other' culture, we emphasise the positive...but when we are with those of our own culture, it is all the negatives (about the other culture) that emerge."<sup>15</sup> In the well-known iceberg picture of culture nine tenths of what constitutes a culture is under the surface. Leaders need to consider that conscious and unconscious processes exist culturally at individual and organizational levels.

How then to exercise leadership amid this growing cultural diversity? Leaders need to lead deeper conversations which will call for a radical change of mind and heart. If religious life is to mirror the enormous cultural shifts that are taking place both in our world and within congregations, there is an increasing need to pay attention to the anthropologies of various cultures and to learn the language of culture. It is clear that "a ministry to lead that can solicit real synodality by fostering a dynamism of synergy is becoming ever more necessary."<sup>16</sup> Amid the growing diversity in religious life leadership must ask "are there brothers and sisters among us who whisper and even shout "I can't breathe, we can't breathe" because they feel marginalized culturally? Are we not called to examine the radical implications of what it means to live as an intercultural community? How are leaders to lead an exploration of the meaning of the vows in today's multicultural world? Are we not being called "to discover the dignity of difference and celebrate it?"<sup>17</sup> If we can demonstrate to the world that we who are culturally diverse can live and work together, then we can be a prophetic sign of hope in today's world.

### **Leadership in a Multicultural World.**

How then to lead amid growing difference and diversity? Organizational theorists affirm that leaders who undertake a voyage of personal understanding and development, can transform not only their own capabilities but also those of others and of their organizations.<sup>18</sup> Transformative leaders are individuals who are able to "identify their inner core or higher self which can effectively guide them through turbulent times."<sup>19</sup> However without a personal process that develops the person's capacity for perception, for learning, for interiorization, for explicit sense-making and for constructing meaning, such transformative leadership is impossible.<sup>20</sup> Where there is good leadership there must be a vision – an articulation of a purpose "that is worth the rest of your life."<sup>21</sup> Men and women who are leaders in religious congregations are therefore being called to motivate their members to the Gospel values and attitudes that are needed in today's intercultural world? These must include empathy, openness to the other, mutual sharing and enrichment, hospitality, encountering and welcoming the stranger, inclusion, respect for the other, understanding and celebrating difference, and developing deep connectedness. When these attitudes and values flourish in congregational members they will in turn influence ministry outreach. But first leaders must undertake a journey of personal discovery. Only then can they challenge others "to commit to live similarly....championing a new way of leading in our culture."<sup>22</sup>

One of the first challenges for leadership is to understand the dynamics of culture. This is a very complex task, like peeling an onion. Culture describes everything that makes a large group of people unique. It has been compared to the air we breathe, which we really only notice when it is absent. Culture is seen as a "set of norms according to which things are run or simply "are" in a particular society, country or organization."<sup>23</sup>

A culture can be examined externally (etic) or internally (emic).<sup>24</sup> A person's cultural identity develops over time and has been defined as "identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings as well as norms/rules for conduct."<sup>25</sup> It means that a person can function appropriately within the culture, understanding the systems of symbols and beliefs and following norms. People who are socialized into different cultures react differently to the same set of circumstances, because of previously internalized conceptions of what is normal and what is appropriate. So, there isn't one way of reacting and as people from different cultures meet, they have to continually learn the appropriate cultural responses of new acquaintances.

Any review of contemporary writing on interculturality notes that this term encompasses the "theology, practice and spirituality of prophetic dialogue."<sup>26</sup> At the practical level, missiologist Anthony Gittins has written extensively on how from a community of many cultures, genuine interculturality will only emerge, when a new culture is created through



intentional, honest and creative exchanges on the part of all the members. In addition, a religious community needs to "bear public witness to the real possibility of people of different cultures and languages but a common faith and vision being able to survive and thrive for a purpose beyond any whim or comfort and a sign of the Kingdom and Reign of God."<sup>27</sup> To engage in the process of interculturality a person must be open to being transformed by people from other cultures. Sometimes this process has been reduced to a superficial sharing of food, an exchange of symbols or the celebration of national holidays. To be genuine the process must involve sharing at a much deeper level. It means making "more explicit the essential mutuality of the process of inculturation on both the personal and social level."<sup>28</sup> This means being open to listen to the feelings, fears and struggles of the other, facing real cultural tensions and inequalities together. It involves learning how to express negative feelings and misunderstandings towards one another. The missiologist, Aylward Shorter invites us to begin our intercultural learning by first believing "...in the positive character of other cultures," then by nurturing "the desire to

be enriched by them.” Finally we must “welcome those of other cultures and give them (our) unreserved trust.<sup>29</sup>” To understand and respect another person’s culture is to affirm another person’s identity and acknowledge his/her dignity. When mutual respect and understanding is cultivated this helps to build trust and openness, enrich intercultural communication and create a truly intercultural community.

### **The Intercultural challenge of the vowed life**

Leaders must begin by asking to what extent our globalized multicultural world is reshaping the theology of religious life. Are new insights about the vowed life emerging? Prior to the Vatican Council vowed religious life was seen in terms of individual commitment, “No one who puts his(her) hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God.”<sup>30</sup> The congregational culture of the vows privileged “I-ness” (an individualist culture) even though members lived in community. Scriptural quotations such as “anyone who

**To understand and respect another person’s culture is to affirm another person’s identity and acknowledge his/her dignity. When mutual respect and understanding is cultivated this helps to build trust and openness, enrich intercultural communication and create a truly intercultural community**

loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me”<sup>31</sup> were used to construct systems and structures that created distance between vowed religious and their families, local communities and wider world. Consecrated life was seen as a withdrawal from the world. Vatican II created a new awareness that the Church and by extension religious life must be “in, with and for the world, participating in its struggle for the transformation of humankind.”<sup>32</sup> Congregations began a renewal process asking how “the enterprising initiative, creativity and holiness of their founders and foundresses” could respond “to the signs of the times emerging in today’s world.”<sup>33</sup> However the process of renewal and adaptation has not been an easy one.

We must not be afraid to honestly acknowledge how, despite a series of changes, the old institutional framework struggles to give way to new models in a decisive manner. Perhaps the entire constellation of languages and models, values and duties, spirituality and ecclesial identity that we are used to has not yet left room for the testing and stabili-

zing of the new paradigm born of inspiration and post-conciliar practice.<sup>34</sup>

There is a renewed call for reflection on what is required today if religious are to be a prophetic presence and a counter-cultural witness inspired by evangelical values. There is a growing awareness that vows lived communally (WE-ness or collectivist in cultural terms) can be a significant prophetic witness. Through their vows religious dedicate themselves to the person of Christ and then personally and communally commit themselves to the transformation of all aspects of human life. Sandra Schneiders demonstrates how the vows focus specifically on three important dimensions of personal life – possessions, affectivity and power which are simultaneously the three major areas of human interaction which structure the world (economics, social life and politics). We have already seen how these three fields impact on different cultures contributing to poverty, exclusion and discrimination. Therefore, a contemporary theology of the vows must highlight “the potential of the vows for enabling the religious to play a significant role in the transformation of the very structures of the world”<sup>35</sup> particularly in the creation of a new intercultural way of living together.

**The Vow of Poverty:** The vow of poverty is a commitment to bear witness to an alternative way of living in a world where there is a sharp divide between an economy of abundance and one of scarcity. There are two dimensions to the vow of poverty – one societal and the other personal.<sup>36</sup> The societal dimension requires religious congregations to contribute “to the restructuring of the economic situation on a worldwide scale.”<sup>37</sup> This is done by committing resources to meeting the needs of the materially disadvantaged, by engaging in advocacy on behalf of the poor and demanding structural change. The personal dimension calls religious to witness to “inner freedom and simplicity” and to “the evangelical freedom lived by Christ who enriches us through his poverty”<sup>38</sup> The vow calls for a balanced relationship with material goods, acknowledging everything as a gift from God; therefore “we religious have no right to more than we need when another is in need.”<sup>39</sup> It calls for a conversion of heart that will change behavior in relation to materials goods and possessions.

Religious are to denounce selfishness, exploitation, domination and “to model a sharing of life through the sharing of goods.”<sup>40</sup> The vow calls for responsible stewardship and global solidarity. It is lived out in attitudes and behaviors which bear witness to “contentment and thanksgiving, detachment of heart, works well done, trust in providence, respect and solidarity with the poor.”<sup>41</sup> Hospitality and radical welcome are hallmarks of this vowed commitment. It must be shown that there is room at the table for each person no matter their culture or ethnicity, their age or gender, their religion or their political beliefs, for all are welcome.

Today, many religious come from contexts and cultures where millions grapple with absolute poverty. Families may live in poverty while their sons and daughters who profess a vow of poverty are well provided for. These religious have access to resources and opportunities that might not be possible otherwise. Membership of a religious community can give a person access to an “intellectual and professional formation and lifestyle that are the fruit of an almost Western preparation.”<sup>42</sup> Family members don’t always understand that the consecrated person does not have independent access to the material goods of the religious congregation. They have expectations that the religious will help them financially or help them find benefactors. Being a religious however does not absolve a person from family obligations. It must be clear that it is the community rather than the individual that is responding to what is expected culturally of a family member when a death occurs or when celebrating important family occasions.

Leaders need to lead reflection with members on this tension between poverty as a lived

reality and poverty as a vowed commitment. Sandra Schneiders points out that the real difference “between the truly poor and people who choose a poor lifestyle is precisely that the latter choose it, and they can unchoose it, if things become too difficult.”<sup>43</sup> She believes that it is only when our options evaporate that we can experience solidarity with the poor, “not the conspicuous solidarity of chosen deprivations but the real solidarity of fellow-sufferers in a world we do not control and cannot change.”<sup>44</sup> Leaders need to help members to explore how to respond appropriately within different cultural contexts to the needs around them in ways that makes the living of the vow of poverty credible.

**Vow of Celibacy:** Consecrated celibacy is seen as a gift of God to the individual and by extension to the Church and the people among whom the religious lives and ministers. Through the vow of celibacy, a person makes a lifelong commitment, signifying a personal relationship with God and availability to promote God’s Reign. Sacrificing the opportunity to marry is not easy but it frees religious to engage fully in socially transformative ministries. However, in some cultural contexts although celibacy has existed for centuries this consecration was to the deity, the ruler or the spirits. Life is seen as a gift from God and a guarantee of the group’s continuity therefore “the person who deliberately refused to transmit it or who was incapable of transmitting life was considered as a useless link in the evolutionary chain.”<sup>45</sup> Every culture has its own understanding of fecundity and fruitfulness and for some the commitment of a son or a daughter to the priesthood or religious life can pose great difficulties. On the one hand there is the issue of the continuance of the family or tribe and on the other hand the future obligation of children to take care of their parents and members of their extended family in their old age. While these obligations have been somewhat weakened through contact with Western values, they are deeply embedded cultural responsibilities within the young men and women who join religious life. Any exploration of the vow of chastity needs to deal with issues about life, fecundity and fruitfulness and familial obligations and how these are to be re-interpreted in contemporary religious life?

The essence of the vow of chastity calls for openness to “interpersonal and community relationships of an affectivity that has been radically healed, purified and liberated.”<sup>46</sup> Personal and communal prayer helps to develop the ability to create relationships even with those with whom we do not find an immediate affinity.<sup>47</sup> Celibacy for the sake of the Gospel calls for inclusivity and diversity when developing relationships. It is a commitment to live a life of expansive and inclusive love of humanity. This doesn’t happen naturally and is a particular challenge in parts of the world where cultural differences have caused division and hostility. Fostering mutually enriching relationships across our differences is a profound counter-cultural prophetic expression of God’s reign. Most people having grown up within a certain group “have assimilated its rules and expectations... and become relatively ethnocentric.”<sup>48</sup>

A person’s ability to include others, depends on the ability to engage in honest conversation about difficult topics such as ethnocentrism, racism, discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping and any other barriers which prevent us from stepping in the shoes of the other. In addition, a community of religious whose members have vowed celibacy needs to have the flexibility “to extend its boundaries to take into consideration another group’s experience and context.”<sup>49</sup> It means stepping outside of our safety zone and stretching our boundaries. Inclusion is complicated, multi-layered, time-consuming...involving a great deal of thinking and listening to others.<sup>50</sup> Jesus was concerned with the inclusion of the weak, the outcasts and the outsiders. He continually asked his followers to connect with the compassionate God whose mercy and loving kindness made space for each one and for all. This is a crucial aspect of the vow of celibacy.

**The Vow of Obedience:** Our understanding of obedience has changed radically since Vatican II. Prior to the Council, congregations were structured hierarchically where some members “were thought to be intrinsically, personally and relatively superior to the others.”<sup>51</sup> However it is important to note that “what worked in a pyramidal and authoritative relational context is no longer desirable or livable in the sensitivity of communion of our way feeling like and wanting to be a Church.”<sup>52</sup> The participative model which has since emerged acknowledges the fundamental equality of all and “a growing sense of the inalienability of personal responsibility.”<sup>53</sup> When individuals are now appointed to specific leadership roles within religious communities this position is now understood to be “provisional, temporary, limited in scope, functional and above all “secular” in the sense of non-sacralized.”<sup>54</sup> This change in model puts the emphasis on collegiality in the search of God’s will in and through personal and communal discernment.



The vow of obedience is now understood as “a dedication to freedom and not to subjection or servitude.”<sup>55</sup> Making a vow of obedience commits a person to “a personal quest for freedom and holiness in a community context.”<sup>56</sup> It requires each member to openly share his or her own convictions and insights obtained through discernment. However, it is important to acknowledge that in certain cultures and contexts the exercise of authority “still shows a tendency towards the vertical concentration of the exercise of authority, on both the local and higher levels.”<sup>57</sup>

When leaders set out to engage members in discernment, they need to consider how relationships and participation operate within different cultures. This can influence how leaders are likely to lead and individual members are likely to participate in discernment processes. Geert Hofstede has demonstrated how some cultures demonstrate a “high power distance” with a markedly authoritarian and hierarchical structure. Here people believe that power and influence are concentrated in the hands of a few and are highly



centralized. Members are comfortable with having a distance between those who have power and influence and those governed. Respect is paid to a person of higher status and “there is a pattern of dependence on seniors which pervades all human contacts, and the mental software which people carry contains a strong need for such dependence.”<sup>58</sup>

Obedience towards superiors is highly valued. Members from “high power distance” cultures are likely to show so much respect for those in authority that they may find it difficult to offer alternative opinions. In addition, any loss of face or feelings of shame can impede communication and the development of a relationship.

In other cultures where people feel that they are relatively equal and have the same rights, they feel uncomfortable with an unequal distribution of power. If they become members of congregations with a “high power distance” structure they are likely to be seen as argumentative when they offer suggestions which differ to those in authority. In cultures which demonstrate “low power distance” members believe that the function

**Understanding power dynamics and the complex dynamics of intercultural communication are key for the growth of relationships within a multicultural religious community.**

of leadership is to facilitate the participation of as many as possible, in order to build a consensus or to reach a compromise. Members feel free to offer suggestions and to voice their opposition publicly to plans and projects being considered. Knowing how cultural power distance has shaped long established patterns of participation is essential if leaders and members are to create processes where each person can participate freely, without judgment.

When speaking about discernment Pope Francis highlighted the fact that “discernment is a choice of courage” and “to educate in discernment means “to expose” oneself, to go out of the world of one’s convictions and prejudices to open oneself to understand how God is speaking to us today, in this world, in this time, in this moment.”<sup>59</sup> To do this together means understanding how culture affects the actual dynamics of communication in order to avoid misunderstandings. Interculturalists have demonstrated how members from low and high context cultures communicate in different ways. Edmund Hall<sup>60</sup> has

termed a high-context culture communication or message as “one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit transmitted parts of the message.”<sup>61</sup> When communicating with another person something which is on her mind, a person from a high-context culture may appear silent and taciturn. Instead he/she expects the interlocutor to interpret what is being communicated and therefore he/she will not explain in great detail. By contrast a low context communication is the direct opposite. The information is in the explicit code, and the verbal messages are “elaborate, highly specific, detailed and redundant.”<sup>62</sup>

In addition, in some cultures, if opinions offered are ignored or trivialized a loss of face and shame is experienced. If leaders and members don't understand the complex dynamics of intercultural communication, then communal discernment becomes difficult. We need to recognize that all have a part to play in discerning the collective truth. A discerning group allows the truth to be born “from the womb of the whole”<sup>63</sup> recognizing that everyone must help shape that truth.

### **Richness or Liability:**

Any consideration of the Interplay between interculturality, leadership and vows needs to acknowledge where human flourishing occurs (the riches entailed) and where problematic areas lie (the liabilities encountered). It is increasingly clear that leadership holds the key to the personal and communal growth that can occur when the vows are explored through the lens of culture. However, the leader must first of all undertake a personal journey, one which will involve study and reflection from an intercultural and theological perspective. If this personal exploration is avoided, leadership is likely to continue to present an understanding of the vowed life that has emerged from a dominant ethnocentric cultural perspective. The meaning of the vows will seem frozen in time and prove irrelevant in new cultural contexts. The deeper meaning of such cherished cultural values as unbounded hospitality, filial and communal responsibilities, reciprocity and practical solidarity need to be continually contextualized and embedded within the vowed life. In this way the rich meaning of the vowed life is continually being rearticulated in new realities. Examining the vows through the lens of culture offers new invitations for personal and communal conversion. It creates a mutually enriching exchange for members of congregations and sharpens the prophetic impact of personal and community living in relation to local and global contexts. Without this ongoing reflection and reinterpretation religious life could be in danger of losing its vibrancy. The outcome could lead to a loss of meaning and significance and the continued imposition of historic understandings and practices that burden newer members.

Leadership has an important role to play in facilitating the development of prophetic intercultural communities. A deeper appreciation of the complexity of culture can help members reinterpret the meaning of the vowed life from an intercultural perspective. Various studies indicate that currently most cultural awareness happens on a trial-and-error basis and not by undertaking a serious study of culture. These studies also note that inaccurate knowledge gleaned on a trial and error basis can often have negative results leading to misunderstandings and conflicts. Leaders need to make sure that education for intercultural living and ministry is an integral part of both initial and ongoing formation. With this awareness members can then engage in honest conversations about critical topics. This increases interpersonal understanding, develops mutually enriching relationships, and ultimately enriches communal discernment. Where this knowledge and these processes are absent members will continue to relate in ethnocentric ways, unaware of mistakes made, hurt caused and opportunities for growth missed.

Finally, leaders need to understand how cultural differences affect how members view relationships with authority figures. Where this understanding exists, leaders adapt their approaches when engaging in personal and group communication and developing processes that encourage maximum participation by members from different cultures. Understanding power dynamics and the complex dynamics of intercultural communication are key for the growth of relationships within a multicultural religious community. Members with adequate cultural knowledge and insight, are enabled to build bridges of mutuality that are a prophetic witness in societies marked by division.

As members of religious congregations open up and listen to one another they realize that all “are summoned to the same table where God feeds us not only with the familiar food and spirits but also with the new and untried food and spirits of God’s most recent revelation.”<sup>64</sup> In an interview with a journalist in 2007, Pope Francis remarked that “fidelity is always a change, a blossoming, a growth.” Effecting change within an organization requires a cultural shift. Firstly, the cultural shift has to be named by leadership and then actualized. The increased multicultural nature of religious life calls for a shift in imagination and understanding at every level. Enlightened leadership will engage all of the members to “follow the lights within the group to the edge of tomorrow rather than the preservation of yesterday.”<sup>65</sup>

- 1 Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), 10.
- 2 Yasmen Serham and Timothy McLoughlin, “The Other Problematic Outbreak: As the Coronavirus spreads across the globe so does racism,” *The Atlantic*, March 13, 2020.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 Isabel Wilkerson, “America’s Enduring Caste System,” *New York Times*, June 1, 2020.

- 6 Sr. Jayne Helmlinger CSJ, "Vulnerability, Borders and the Long Notes of Religious Life," Online LCWR Presidential Address, August 12, 2020.
- 7 New Wine in New Wineskins, The Consecrated Life and Its Ongoing Challenges since Vatican II (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2017), #7.
- 8 Marie Chin RSM, "Towards a New Understanding of Cultural Encounter in Our Communities," Horizon, Winter 2003, 16.
- 9 Mary Pellegrino CSJ, "Opening Space for an Emerging Narrative of Communion," Presidential Address, LCWR, August 10, 2017.
- 10 New Wine in New Wineskins, #13.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Sr. Antoinette Gutzler MM, Comment made during the US\_C3 Constellation Meeting of UISG members, Zoom Meeting, August 14, 2020.
- 15 Patricia Murray ibvm, Becoming a Multicultural International Institute, MA Thesis (Chicago: Catholic Theological Union, 2005).
- 16 New Wine in New Wineskins, #8.
- 17 Anthony J. Gittins, Living Mission Interculturally: Faith, Culture and the Renewal of Praxis (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2015), 10.
- 18 David Rooke and William R. Torbert, "Seven Transformations of Leadership," Harvard Business Review. [www.hbr.org](http://www.hbr.org).
- 19 K. Muff et al. Management Education for the World (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013), 32.
- 20 Joseph M. Lozano Soler, "Leadership, The Being Component: Can the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Contribute to the Debate on Business Education," Journal of Business Ethics, Vol.145, No. 4, 11/2017, 795-809.
- 21 Chris Lowney, Pope Francis: Why He Leads The Way He Leads (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2013), 9.
- 22 Ibid., 9.
- 23 Ingmar Torbjörn, "Cultural Barriers as a Social Construct: An Empirical Validation" in Young Yun Kim and William Gudykunst ed., Cross Cultural Adaptation: Current Approaches (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1988), 48.
- 24 External culture is the conscious part of culture. It is the part that we can see, taste and hear. It consists of acknowledged beliefs and values. It is explicitly learned and easily changed. However, this constitutes only a small part of culture. The major part is the internal part, which consists of the unconscious beliefs, thought patterns and myths that affect everything we do and see. It is implicitly learned and is very hard to change. (Eric Law)
- 25 Mary Jane Collier & Milt Thomas, "Cultural Identity: An Interpretive Perspective" in Theories in Intercultural Communication, ed., Young Yun Kim and William B. Gudykunst (Newbury Park, Beverly Hills, Ca: Sage Publications, 1988), 112.
- 26 Roger Schroeder, "Interculturality and Prophetic Dialogue," Verbum SVD, 54, no. 1, (2013); 8-21.
- 27 Gittins, Living Mission Interculturally, 9.
- 28 Robert Kisala SVD, "Formation for Intercultural Life and Mission," Verbum SVD, 50 No.3 (2009), 335.
- 29 Aylward Shorter, Celibacy and African Culture (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998), 13.
- 30 Luke 9:62.
- 31 Matt. 10:37.
- 32 Sandra M. Schneiders IHM, "A Contemporary Theology of Religious Life," Journeying Resources, 14-27. Washington, DC: Leadership Conference of Women Religious, 1977, 14.
- 33 John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Vita Consecrata (March 25, 1996), 37.
- 34 New Wine in New Wineskins, #9.
- 35 Schneiders, "A Contemporary Theology of Religious Life," 19.
- 36 Sandra M. Schneiders IHM, "A Vow of Poverty," C21 Resources (Fall, 2014), 18.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Rev. Prof. Guillaume Kipoy-Pombo, "The Inculturation of Consecrated Life Today in Sub-Saharan Africa," The Catholic Voyage: African Journal of Consecrated Life, vol. 16, 2019, 24.
- 39 Schneiders IHM, "A Contemporary Theology of Religious Life," 19.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Kipoy-Pombo, "The Inculturation of Consecrated Life Today in Sub-Saharan Africa," 24.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Schneiders IHM, "A Vow of Poverty," 19.
- 44 Ibid, 19.
- 45 Kimpoy-Pombo, "The Inculturation of Religious Life Today in Sub-Saharan Africa," 27.
- 46 Schneiders, "A Contemporary Theology of the Vows," 21.
- 47 Edward Kinerk SJ, "The Vows," The Way. Campion Hall Brewer St. Oxford, 66.
- 48 Anthony J. Gittins, Gifts and Strangers: Meeting the Challenge of Inculturation (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 33.
- 49 Eric H.F. Law, Inclusion: Making Room for Grace (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2000), 26.

- 50 bid.
- 51 Sandra M. Schneiders, "A Contemporary Theology of the Vows", 22.
- 52 New Wine in New Wineskins, #24.
- 53 Schneiders, "A Contemporary Theology of the Vows," 23.
- 54 Ibid. 22.
- 55 Ibid. 23.
- 56 Ibid. 24.
- 57 New Wine in New Wineskins, #19.
- 58 Geert Hofstede et al, Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind,(New York: McGraw Hill, 2010), 32.
- 59 Pope Francis, Meeting with Seminarians, Vatican News, March 16, 2018.
- 60 Edward T. Hall, Beyond Culture (New York: Anchor Press, 1977).
- 61 Hall, Beyond Culture, 91.
- 62 Fred E. Jandt, Intercultural Communication: An Introduction, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition(Sage Publications Inc.: Thousand Oaks, 2001), 220.
- 63 bid.
- 64 Gerdenio Manuel SJ, "Little Brown Brother," Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits, November 2001, 33/5, 27.
- 65 Joan Chittister OSB, "LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award Acceptance Remarks," August 4, 2007, Kansas City, MO.