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Solidarity with outsiders: The quest for common ground in theological ethics

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SOLIDARITY WITH OUTSIDERS:
THE QUEST FOR COMMON GROUND IN THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

by

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ABSTRACT

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Deborah Truman Rankin

Definitions of solidarity multiply as religious communities respond to concerns of the marginalized and the oppressed. Roman Catholic social teaching and Sharon Welch's communicative ethics are compared with the communitarian positions of Stanley Hauerwas and James McClendon on solidarity. Descriptions of relationships with world and outsiders prepare or deny the possibility of solidarity with them. Communities open themselves to challenge by outside voices or obstruct it with witness to truthful viewpoints which must be true for everyone. Separation of claims for truthfulness from claims for the completeness of their viewpoint might open communities with positive traditions to the challenge of outside voices. Where viewpoints of outsiders are considered corrective of our own, more equal relationships are enabled. Common work provides contexts in which insiders and outsiders seek common ground for moral commitment and practice together. Solidarity is created in mutual relationships and shared life experiences.
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1 INTRODUCTION

Solidarity "concerns the welfare of consociates who are intimately linked in an intersubjectively shared form of life—and thus also to the maintenance of the integrity of this form of life itself."1 This is the particular meaning of solidarity in its conventional form from a recent article by Juergen Habermas. The limits of family, tribe, city or nation can be broken through "only in discourse, to the extent that the latter is institutionalized in modern societies."2 Otherwise, solidarity is "limited to the internal relationships of a collectivity that is ethnocentrically isolated from other groups." Within the membership of these communities concrete duties and norms are defined with respect to "corresponding typical roles and situations."3 Importantly, the substantive morality of these communities is not fundamentally challenged.

Habermas does a remarkable job of detailing a community whose solidarity would be restricted to insiders, arguing in his article for discourse ethics as a means of breaking the ethnocentric isolation of such communities. Religious communities involved in projects of social transformation seek to make the concerns of the marginalized and the oppressed part of the central concerns of their communities. Not only may the marginalized and the oppressed be outsiders of these communities, but they represent viewpoints that are outside those commonly held by the privileged of society who may be church leaders and members. The marginalized and the oppressed may be outsiders in more than one sense. They may even represent life forms


3. Habermas 50.
condemned by the religious community. These religious communities are striving to break their own isolation.

A religious community with a positive tradition holds certain truthful narratives, doctrines, traditions and practices which constitute common ground for moral commitment and practice among insiders. The “typical roles and situations” carried in the truthful narratives, doctrines and traditions of this community do not have the same authority with outsiders in the determination of duties and norms that they do with insiders. The proposal of solidarity with outsiders, therefore, requires the identification of common ground for moral commitment and practice with them. The way in which this solidarity with outsiders is worked out in terms of the church’s fundamental relationships and its positive tradition affect the type of moral action that a community proposes. Those communities that believe that their own truthful viewpoint must be true for outsiders propose moral action characterized by witness and service. Moral action is distinguished by participation and common work in those communities that conceive of the viewpoints of outsiders as offering something that insiders lack.

I am interested in the preservation of a positive tradition that is open to challenge. Solidarity with outsiders may be established along other lines than a shared life form. Joining in common work with outsiders creates a context in which viewpoints may be regularly exchanged with them. In this context actions which demonstrate a willingness to enter into accountable relationship create the possibility of solidarity with outsiders. Solidarity is created with outsiders in mutually transforming relationships.

I argue that a positive tradition becomes a problem when it is believed that the viewpoint of a religious community must be true for everyone. Openness to outside viewpoints is obstructed. It seems to me that a claim for
truthfulness can be separated from a claim to the completeness of one's own viewpoint. A community aware of the partiality of its own viewpoint, is more likely to be open to the viewpoints of outsiders. If, in addition, insiders expect the viewpoints of outsiders to offer something that the viewpoint of the community may lack, a more equal relationship may be created with outsiders. In this relationship the viewpoints of insiders would change in response to the challenge of outsiders.

Opposing positions have emerged over the problem of establishing common ground for moral commitment and practice with outsiders. Stanley Hauerwas in The Peaceable Kingdom questions the possibility of moral commitment and practice together with non-members because response to ethical questions must draw on the particular convictions of human communities. Where persons socialized into different traditions live together there are no commonly held moral means by which moral arguments can be settled. Violence must ensue. The lack of common ground, those shared narratives, goals and practices that form the character of persons poses a problem for solidarity with outsiders. When McClendon argues in his Ethics: Systematic Theology for solidarity among all those churches with origins in the Radical Reformation, he seeks to demonstrate that these churches already share a common life form, the basis for solidarity.

This thesis explores the descriptions of fundamental relationships of religious communities with the world or society and of insiders with outsiders in four authors. Particular relationships are compared in the interests of raising


consciousness of how characterizations of these relationships may affect challenge by outside voices. Solidarity with outsiders is a form of relationship with them. A proposal of solidarity with outsiders may indicate the specific commitment of a religious community to relationships with the marginalized and the oppressed. Attention in Hauerwas and McClendon is focused on the development of distinctively Christian resources for social ethics to the end of creating a peaceable kingdom that will show the world what society should be. Comparison with Roman Catholic social doctrine and the communicative ethics of Sharon Welch helps to demonstrate the particular efforts these religious communities are making to facilitate solidarity with outsiders. In particular, Roman Catholics offer concepts of solidarity that do not tie solidarity to the holding of a common life form. Ways in which moral disputes may be settled peacefully are proposed.

Roman Catholic social teaching recognizes the membership of the church in society and takes a leadership role in a common work with outsiders, the establishment of more just relationships in society. The church shares with society the goal of world peace. The solidarity required in this common work is an attitude of commitment to the good of the other, both insiders and outsiders, which should lead to the establishment of more just relationships in society and thus to world peace. 6 Solidarity as an attitude builds a concern for justice in both insiders and outsiders. As a virtue it has much in common with charity. Outsiders may hold this attitude, engage in dialogue and common work with members, and yet remain non-members of the Roman Catholic community. This is a solidarity which is not connected to any particular community though it

may contribute to the solidarity of society through the promotion of more just relationships. Solidarity as an attitude does not require a response of the outsider; it is offered gratuitously.

Sharon Welch describes a common work for communities involved in communicative ethics, dialogue and mutual critique leading to political action which will transform society. The solidarity of these communities is established in mutual acts of recognition and accountability. Those who place themselves in accountable relationships with insiders are in solidarity with these communities. This solidarity prepares the way for an "understanding of consensus that means a common recognition of social ills and the need for the rectification of those ills." The actions which establish solidarity initiate transformation as persons listen and make themselves accountable to one another. Solidarity requires the response of another. Transformative dialogue is considered a fruit of these foundational interchanges.

Solidarity is established and described differently in these authors. New definitions of solidarity are multiplying in the contemporary literature of theological ethics as religious communities involved in projects of social transformation rethink their fundamental relationships with outsiders and with society. As they seek to include the interests and needs of the marginalized and the oppressed with those concerns which have been considered more typical of a religious community they develop new definitions of solidarity which serve the new relationships. New definitions of solidarity mark the tip of the iceberg.


8. Welch 133.
Freshly minted definitions of solidarity in the literature tend to accent the new paths to solidarity, but the work begins with the description of the fundamental relationships of the community with outsiders and with society. These configure how the parts of society with be related to one another. Roman Catholic social teaching from *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, for example, describes a common membership in society with outsiders and common work for social justice. Its doctrinal understanding of the relationship of the church with society joins it with society in a common work. Themes like interdependence, adopted from the social sciences, offer a rationale for solidarity with outsiders and also lend definition to basic relationships. The adoption of these themes from outside sources demonstrates, I think, commitment to an exchange of ideas with society. Solidarity is created with those socialized into other life forms in a commonly held attitude, but the way is prepared in understandings of fundamental relationships.

Stanley Hauerwas is uninterested in the exploration of common ground with outsiders. His work and that of James McClendon defines communities in which solidarity is understood as possible only among those who share a common life form. Common membership and common work with outsiders is not proposed because it is believed that peaceful settlement of moral disputes with outsiders is not possible. Solidarity exists among those who share a common life form and is created in shared practices such as forgiveness, presence or the quality of being there with and for the other, and the Lord’s Supper.

Even though Hauerwas is not interested in solidarity with outsiders he believes that the viewpoints of outsiders offer a challenge and an important

corrective to the viewpoint of insiders. The relationships of the church with the
world and of insiders with outsiders are characterized by witness to the
truthfulness of a particular Christian life form. I will argue that the challenge
offered by outside viewpoints in relationships defined by witness is limited.
Because Hauerwas does not believe that moral disputes with outsiders can be
settled peacefully, he argues against common work with them. Denial of
common work with outsiders, I argue, distances the church from those contexts
in which its position might be challenged.

The church witnesses to the truthfulness of its particular life form in
Hauerwas' s *Peaceable Kingdom*, in McClendon's *Ethics: Systematic Theology*
and also in Roman Catholic social teaching from *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*.
Communitarians and Roman Catholics differ, however, in their doctrinal
understandings of church and world and their relationship. The church in
Hauerwas and McClendon is a social ethic which stands creatively over against
the world. As a member of the kingdom of God the church witnesses to
kingdom life. Solidarity is restricted to relationships between those who share a
common life form. The church is a social ethic.

Roman Catholic social teaching, on the other hand, models the church as
a sacrament for the world. "This supreme model of unity, which is a reflection of
the intimate life of God, one God in three Persons, is what we Christians mean
by the word communion." A dual membership is envisioned; the church
witnesses to the kingdom of God through its participation in society. Solidarity
is an attitude of commitment to the good of the other which is recommended to
all of society. It is transformed by faith "to take on specifically Christian
dimensions of total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation. One's neighbor is

then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit."\textsuperscript{11}

This transformed relationship requires Christians to love the neighbor, to offer themselves self-sacrificially on her behalf. The attitude of solidarity offers an occasion for religious faith to transform human relationships. The witness of the church to the truthfulness of its life form occurs together with a commitment to solidarity with outsiders. This, I think, marks a significant difference with respect to the witness of Hauerwas and McClendon. These commitments take various forms from the acceptance of social-scientific analyses from outside sources to a stand with the poor to discern the justice of their requests.\textsuperscript{12}

In Sharon Welch's \textit{A Feminist Ethic of Risk} solidarity may be created with any outsider who places herself in accountable relationship with the oppressed. Recognition of the other and accountable relationship with her is the form of relationship with these outsiders.

The role of narrative in each of my communities is compared. Answers to questions are sought. What is narrative, interpretation, how is it normative, how authorized. What might the effect on solidarity of different concepts of narrative? Claims for the truthfulness of a positive tradition may exclude the possibility that an outside viewpoint might offer challenge, but Sharon Welch, it is argued, has surrendered a positive tradition. This has the effect now, I argue, of depriving interpreting communities of standards by which to judge whether or not a story has been, is now, or is likely to be liberating. Standards, as I

\textsuperscript{11} John Paul II 655.

\textsuperscript{12} John Paul II 654.
imagine them, might change gradually as communities seek to respond to challenge by outsiders. I believe that the loss of a positive tradition may lead to the loss of distinctive life forms in society, and I think this is too high a price for openness to challenge.

Actions which indicate a willingness to place oneself in accountable relationships with outsiders may build solidarity in mutually transformative relationships that enable common work. I believe that religious traditions might keep a positive tradition and yet be made responsive to the challenge of the marginalized and the oppressed, if it is understood that the viewpoints of outsiders offer important correctives to our own.

The viewpoints of the marginalized and the oppressed, I believe, offer important correctives. Witness to the truthfulness of a particular life form limits the challenge that may be offered by outsiders. A more equal relationship must be described if outside viewpoints are to be challenging. Actions which demonstrate a willingness to enter into accountable relationships with those who represent other life forms may be creative of solidarity in the context of common work. These relationships would be mutually transforming.

The particular narratives, doctrines, themes, goals (where these are defined), and practices that constitute the shared life form of religious communities also distinguish them from the rest of society. Regardless of how solidarity is defined in a religious community, each particular shared life form must be described in such a way that solidarity with outsiders is enabled. Doctrinal statements that identify the church and the world and their relationship either prepare the way for solidarity with outsiders or place the possibility into question. The “beloved community” of Sharon Welch does not understand its heritage as doctrine, but the contribution of outsiders to the common work of the community is so strongly drawn that outsiders can be understood as essential to
its success. Religious communities go on to employ themes like interdependence and difference that outline fundamental relationships and may be implemented in the argument for solidarity with outsiders. Communities describe projects with them as well as those attitudes and practices that will assist work together. The foundations are laid for the peaceful settlement of moral disputes.

Themes such as interdependence and difference lend a particular form to human relationships and may be used to argue for solidarity with outsiders. These are adopted from social sciences, economics or philosophy. Sharon Welch builds on Foucault’s understanding of the important contribution of difference. "Michel Foucault has argued that we can see a system of logic as partial and not as reason itself only because we participate in alternative systems of making and validating truth claims." 13 The central work of those communities that do communicative ethics is moral critique. The different viewpoints formed by socialization into other life forms contribute directly to the common work. Welch adds to Foucault’s understanding that we can transcend the blinders of our own social location by recognizing the differences by which we ourselves are constituted. She believes that we should also be "actively seeking to be partially constituted by work with different groups. Thus the condition for overcoming ideology is difference, a mutually challenging and mutually transformative pluralism." 14 The theme of difference from Foucault adapted to the purposes of Welch’s community makes solidarity with outsiders an important contribution to the common work.

13. Welch 126.
14. Welch 151.
The theme of interdependence in Roman Catholic social teaching structures an understanding of human society in which each part has an important effect on the whole. This is a social-scientific claim about the nature of human society which is conceived as a single whole with common goals of peace and happiness. The existence of a plurality of nations, communities and cultures within human society is acknowledged, but there is little evidence that the church is conscious of the partiality of its own viewpoint. The church’s analysis of social relationships is considered to be an objective statement of fact offered by the church in its role as an expert on humanity. The moral obligation of both insiders and outsiders to the development of peoples and nations is tied to its analysis. "The obligation to commit oneself to the development of peoples is not just an individual duty and still less an individualistic one, as if it were possible to achieve this development through the isolated efforts of each individual. It is an imperative which obliges each and every man and woman as well as societies and nations." 15 It is believed that the viewpoint of the church truthfully represents reality and that all others are obliged to accept the church’s proposals.

In the Roman Catholic theme of interdependence no nation exists in isolation from the rest of society; policy pursued by one part must have positive or negative impact on all. Human society is a giant interactive system. Understanding the whole is vital to moral participation in it. The attitude of solidarity with other members of society should strengthen a concern for justice. "Today, perhaps more than in the past, people are realizing that they are linked together by a common destiny which is to be constructed together if catastrophe

15. John Paul II 652.
for all is to be avoided." The good to which all are called and the happiness to which all aspire cannot be gained without a common effort and commitment by everyone. Personal selfishness must be renounced. Peace must be "for all or for none". "It demands an ever greater degree of rigorous respect for justice and consequently a fair distribution of the results of true development." As more just relationships are established, peace should ensue.

Interdependence is tied to the interests of the Roman Catholic community through the theme of vocation. The church is called to lead humanity to its vocation as builders of a just society. In this capacity the church interprets the signs of the times in the light of the gospel message. "The encyclical of Paul VI, in declaring that the social question has acquired worldwide dimensions, first of all points out a moral fact, one which has its foundation in an objective analysis of reality." Interdependence is a fact requiring the moral response of solidarity. Each religious community characterizes and establishes solidarity with outsiders in its own distinctive way.

The tradition of the Roman Catholic community is opened to include solidarity with outsiders; the tradition retains its authority for members. "The God who is rich in mercy, the redeemer of man, the Lord and giver of life, requires from people clear-cut attitudes which express themselves also in actions or omissions toward one's neighbor." Moral decisions required in the

17. John Paul II 650.
20. John Paul II 645.
overcoming of the main obstacles to development in society will "take their inspiration from the principles of faith, with the help of divine grace". Development is a theme borrowed from the social sciences and economics that describes the inter-relationships of the parts of society. Some nations are much more developed in terms of goods and services generally available to citizens than the multitudes of human beings, most of them living in the Southern Hemisphere, who lack the goods and services offered by development. "We are therefore faced with a serious problem of unequal distribution of the means of subsistence originally meant for everybody, and thus also an unequal distribution of the benefits deriving from them."22 Principles of distributive justice derive from the natural law tradition of the Roman Catholic community.

Authors who propose solidarity with outsiders describe attitudes and practices that will assist the common work of their communities. The attitude of solidarity will facilitate the establishment of more just relationships in Roman Catholic social teaching. Examples are offered of the types of practices among individuals, peoples and nations that will demonstrate solidarity as a converted attitude. True development "implies a lively awareness of the need to respect the right of every individual to the full use of the benefits offered by science and technology."23 Welch suggests practices such as receptive listening in the context of common work which should assist in the formation of mutually transformative relationships with outsiders. These relationships are the precondition of transformative dialogue, mutual critique and social transformation in her communities. Interdependence in her thought is a form of

22. John Paul II 645.
23. John Paul II 652.
relationship in which each community and person relies on the important
collection of others. Each different life form is viewed as a positive resource
for moral critique and social transformation.

Two inter-nested communities are envisioned in Roman Catholic social
teaching as it is formulated in the encyclical Sollicitudo Rei Socialis and in the
communicative ethics of Sharon Welch from her A Feminist Ethic of Risk. The
religious community is imagined in cooperative relationship with a larger
community. The larger community is human society in Roman Catholic social
teaching, and is the association of those communities that have transformative
practice in Welch. The fundamental relationships of the religious community
are described in such a way that solidarity with outsiders, as this is defined in
the different authors, is facilitated. Common work is undertaken with outsiders,
common attitudes and practices outlined. Solidarity with outsiders is inscribed
into the particular way the religious community understands itself.

The first chapter of the thesis will examine the particular meaning of
solidarity in each author. The second will trace the fundamental descriptions of
the religious community and society and their relationship as these are outlined
in the different works. Those themes which validate solidarity with outsiders in
Welch and in Roman Catholic social teaching will be explored. Chapter three
will show that all our authors take a similar approach to the use of narrative; it
serves the common work of human communities. The proposal of common
work with outsiders initiates relationships with them as well a quest for common
ground for moral commitment and practice. The last chapter will present
conclusions and new directions for study.

Communities have gone about establishing solidarity with outsiders in a
manner analogous to the way in which it is established with insiders by telling
stories or developing social doctrine that involves them in a common work. The
sacraments of the Roman Catholic community, of course, are closed to outsiders; they have not been initiated into membership. Outsiders to Welch’s beloved community do not share the faith of insiders in God as transforming power. Commonalities with outsiders in both authors are described in such a way that they are made compatible with the commonly held beliefs and practices of the religious community. The religious community can be envisioned as a discrete whole within the larger community with which it is in solidarity and as having important points of contact with that larger whole.

Sharon Welch poses a moral question when she states, “From the perspective of communicative ethics, we cannot be moral alone.”24 Welch is conscious of the partiality of her own position and welcomes the positions of others as important correctives to her own. Can a single religious tradition, no matter how truthful its resources, be moral alone?

Hauerwas and McClendon believe that the church can be a social ethic. The church recognizes the partiality of its own position. Its position, however, is truthful and potentially complete. Other viewpoints may offer an important corrective, but I will argue that the church’s understanding of the truthfulness of its own viewpoint in Hauerwas and McClendon is so central that the challenge that can be offered by outsiders is marginal. Where the relationship with outsiders is characterized by witness to the truthfulness of a particular life form, the viewpoint of an outsider may be overshadowed. The Roman Catholic church expects to lead the world to its proper vocation. Its viewpoint is truthful and does not require other viewpoints as correctives. Understanding different life forms as important correctives marks a division in the discussion of ethical relationships.

24. Welch 127.
Those persons and communities which understand other viewpoints as important correctives to their own will probably need to rethink their relationships with outsiders, particularly the relationship of witness. How may the Christian life form retain its truthfulness for Christians and yet open itself to the correctives offered by other life forms?

It seems to me that a claim for truthfulness can be separated from a claim to the completeness of one’s own viewpoint. In recognizing other life forms as important correctives to our own we may acknowledge that we expect to hear the truth from outsiders. Plural forms have been characteristic of the Christian church since the Reformation. Is the truthfulness of the Christian tradition relativized by these plural forms? In their lives saints, those recognized as representative of the best of their particular traditions, show us that truth may appear in human lives. Their lives testify to the transforming power of particular traditions. The Christian tradition has clouds of witnesses to its truthfulness. These lives challenge Christians to bring their particular traditions to life. The truth of these lives cannot be relativized by truthful lives from other traditions. The truthful lives of outsiders challenge us to imagine truth larger than our particular traditions.

Remarkably Hauerwas believes that his position will do for all Christians. “No theologian should desire anything less than that his or her theology reflect the catholic character of the church.” As opposed as he is to “mid-air” stances Hauerwas believes that there is such a catholic position and that he has properly represented it. I believe that a theologian would do well to properly represent his own portion of the Christian tradition, preserving, challenging and interpreting it in careful response to the complex demands of common work with

25. Hauerwas xxvi.
outsiders. The position of Hauerwas on narrative formation sets aside the history of interpretation and the complex and shifting ways that men and women have interpreted the biblical narratives in the history of the church. Each segment of the tradition has historical approaches to interpretation that differ in important ways.

Religious communities that believe that the church by itself can be a social ethic do not involve outsiders in a common work. They remove the church from those contexts in which regular challenge for the community and its position may emerge. Challenge by outsiders must occur on an individual basis and in the context of relationships characterized by witness. Those communities that recommend solidarity with outsiders, whatever their particular viewpoints on Welch’s moral question, “Can we be moral alone?”, have set about establishing solidarity with outsiders by telling stories which include them in a common work. Work together with outsiders creates a context in which regular challenge for partial viewpoints may arise. It also places the religious community in a position which favors the creation of important relationships with non-believers and their communities. Where the viewpoints of others are valued as correctives to our own, mutual transformation should be enabled.
2 THE PARTICULAR MEANING OF SOLIDARITY

In this chapter the particular meaning of solidarity in each author will be compared with attention to the way that solidarity is established in each case. Stanley Hauerwas has argued that persons socialized into different life forms could not agree on moral questions. James McClendon seeks to demonstrate in his systematic theology that common ground for solidarity among those communities with origins in the Radical Reformation already exists. McClendon illustrates how Hauerwas' ideas may be carried out in existing Christian communities. Convictions, practices and an interpretive form called the baptist vision are commonly held in these communities. The solidarity of these communities is built up in common practices like the Lord's Supper, forgiveness and presence. The common life form of these communities enables moral commitment and practice among them. Where solidarity is believed to be limited to a common life form, the possibility of solidarity with outsiders is placed into question.

The proposal of solidarity with outsiders in Roman Catholic social teaching and in the communicative ethics of Sharon Welch indicates that solidarity is not considered limited to those who share a common life form. Attitudes are described in Roman Catholic social teaching and practices in the communicative ethics of Sharon Welch that should be creative of solidarity between those socialized into different life forms. Roman Catholic social teaching recommends an attitude of solidarity with all others, both insiders and outsiders. The church is understood as a member of society, the common life form of the church can be imagined within the context of society and in relationship with it. The various parts of human society are interdependent,
requiring solidarity as an attitude of commitment to the good of others which assists common work for justice and peace.

In her communicative ethics Sharon Welch seeks to unite those socialized into many different life forms in the common work of foundational moral critique. Her beloved community represents a single life form in relationship with others joined in a common work, mutual critique and social transformation. The common work is supported by solidarity established in acts of recognition and accountability. These include listening and accountability to one another. In Roman Catholic social teaching interdependence requires solidarity; moral critique is enabled by solidarity in Sharon Welch.

Stanley Hauerwas is strongly opposed to both objective "mid-air" stances like the analysis of the nature of society adopted by Roman Catholic social teaching and all attempts to secure a universal ethic. "I have no reason to deny that human nature may well require a fundamental orientation to truth, but I do not think it is possible to abstract such truthfulness from its various narrative contexts in order to make it the basis of a "universal" and "objective" ethic".\(^1\) Hauerwas considers such analyses as abstractions. The natural law tradition most likely represents the consensus of a widely scattered Christian and pluralistic community. It codifies a particular moral tradition rather than a universal one.\(^2\) "Indeed, when Christians assume that their particular moral convictions are independent of any narrative, that they are justified by some universal standpoint from history, they are tempted to imagine that those who do not share such an ethic must be particularly perverse and should be coerced to

\(^1\) Hauerwas 59.

\(^2\) Hauerwas 51.
do what we know on universal grounds they really should want to do." Violence becomes conceptually intelligible from a natural law standpoint.³

Hauerwas would oppose the Roman Catholic recommendation of solidarity from the standpoint that it is based on a "mid-air" stance, an objective analysis of human society which is used to argue for solidarity. Roman Catholic social teaching could argue for solidarity as an attitude on the grounds of the common membership it has described for itself in society or common work for social justice but does not do this. I will argue that common work with outsiders offers a concrete relationship with outsiders which requires the finding of common ground for moral commitment and practice together with them. If the church is serious about challenge from outsiders, the context of common work provides a relationship within which challenge can emerge.

I argue that the narrative context of moral reflection in religious communities makes common work with outsiders crucial. Common work with outsiders creates a context in which their different viewpoints can emerge. Those committed to accountable relationship with outsiders will hear challenge to their common life form. As interpreters they might be driven back upon their truthful narratives and traditions in an effort to respond to outsiders in a way that is faithful both to the demands of accountable relationship and to their distinctive life form. I believe that the association with outsiders will be creative of fresh understandings of particular traditions. This way of imagining relationships with outsiders was inspired by Hauerwas' understanding of imaginative challenge, but I argue that it cannot function as he has intended in the context of human relationships characterized by witness. ⁴

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3. Hauerwas 61.

4. These relationships will be explored at length in chapter three.
2.1 Solidarity with Insiders Only

Communitarians separate from Welch and Roman Catholic social teaching over the issue of common ground for moral commitment and practice with non-members. Hauerwas outlines the problem of solidarity with outsiders. "Life in a world of moral fragments is always on the edge of violence, since there are no means to ensure that moral argument in itself can resolve our moral conflicts." Response to moral questions "necessarily draws on the particular convictions of historic communities to whom such questions may have significantly different meanings". The particularities of a community's history and convictions determine the nature and structure of its ethics.

Stanley Hauerwas believes that common ground for moral commitment and action might be found with outsiders, but argues against it in his section "The Church is a Social Ethic". In such an effort, he believes, the distinctively Christian resources for ethics must be downplayed as we seek to make a more peaceable and just world for everyone. He asks the church to move in the opposite direction, to direct its resources to the creation of a peaceable kingdom that will show the world what it should be. "I am in fact challenging the very idea that Christian social ethics is primarily an attempt to make the world more

5. Hauerwas 5.

6. Hauerwas 1. Hauerwas and McClendon use the word conviction in a particular way that McClendon has defined. Conviction: "A persistent belief such that if X (a person or a community) has a conviction, it will not be easily relinquished, and it cannot be relinquished without making X a significantly different person (or community) than before" (McClendon and Smith, 1975:7, 91-94). Conviction, defined this way, includes those narratives, goals, values and practices which establish the solidarity of particular communities.
peaceable or just. Where common ground is not sought with outsiders, a discussion of solidarity is directed to joining together the efforts of those who, it is believed, already share a common life form.

The burden of McClendon's argument for solidarity in his *Systematic Theology* is devoted to demonstrating that common ground for solidarity does already exist among churches with origins in the Radical Reformation. He shows that narratives, goals, practices and the baptist vision are, in fact, held in common in these communities. "Christians are a people formed by their shared convictions. As participants in a common story, they are bound together by convictions, moral convictions, about God and neighbor, about self and community about where they have been and whither they are bound." 8 For McClendon solidarity is to be established among those churches with origins in the Radical Reformation through the description of common ground in certain "persistent marks of the heirs of the Radicals". These marks include "biblicism", understood as the acceptance of the authority of Scripture, "mission" as the responsibility to witness to Christ, "liberty" as freedom to respond to God without the intervention of state or other powers, "discipleship" as life transformed into service by Christ's lordship, "community" as sharing in a "storied life of obedient service to and with Christ".9

Christian convictions in Hauerwas "transform the self to true faith by creating a community that lives faithful to the one true God of the universe. When self and nature are thus put in right relation we perceive the truth of our

8. McClendon 62
9. McClendon 28
existence."¹⁰ Faith is fundamentally a moral response and a transformation of the self. It is fidelity to Jesus and the appropriate response to salvation. The baptized are initiated into the life of Jesus.¹¹ Ethics investigates that transformation which leads to true faith and to truth. Communities teach us the kinds of intentions that are appropriate to insiders. Every question of what we ought to do is prepared for in the commonly held understanding of what we ought to be. “The nature of Christian ethics is determined by the fact that Christian convictions take the form of a story, or perhaps better, a set of stories that constitutes a tradition, which in turn creates and forms a community.”¹²

I have asserted that Christian communities describe fundamental relationships in such a way that the possibility of solidarity with outsiders is affirmed or denied. What I hope to demonstrate throughout this section is the way that particular understandings of human relationships prepare us to meet outsiders. For example, in Hauerwas self and nature are placed in right relationship through the transforming power of Christian convictions. Christians are enabled by this transformation to perceive the truth of human existence.¹³ This indicates, I think, that in shared existence with outsiders Christians would believe that they were better able to perceive the truth, better prepared to know what men and women ought to be than outsiders are.

McClendon writes of theology as "the mirror in which today's church is confronted with her potential convictions, the mirror which asks if in this set she

¹⁰ Hauerwas 16.
¹¹ Hauerwas 93.
¹² Hauerwas 24.
¹³ Hauerwas 16.
recognizes herself not as she is but as she must be.\textsuperscript{14} The test of McClendon's organizing principle of theology, the baptist vision, will be its power "to organize the convictions of the present sharers of the vision, as well as the narrative life in which these are imbedded".\textsuperscript{15} The solidarity of these communities will be established through the description of a common theology. The formation of persons by this theology after the Christian Way will be the test of its adequacy.

Solidarity describes the relationship of insiders to other insiders formed by Christian convictions, living in obedience to the Christ. Personal and social ethics are linked, in McClendon, "in the self-involving common practices that draw the disciples of Jesus Christ into solidaristic union in their obedient following of him. Such a practice is that of establishing and maintaining Christian community, with its involved symbolic meal, the Lord's Supper."\textsuperscript{16} Because the church is understood as a social ethic in Hauerwas and McClendon, those actions creative of solidarity among insiders are considered both personally and socially ethical. The Lord's Supper is a moral and ethical rite which shapes the common life of the Christian community; the point of the meal is solidarity in the kingdom. It is an ethical practice which establishes and maintains community. The rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper "disclose the present power of God in Jesus' ministry."\textsuperscript{17} The symbolic meal is understood as creative of community in the present, a solidarity that distinguishes this community, in its obedience, from the world in its disobedience. The formal relationship of the church to the milieu which surrounds it, gathered under the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{14} McClendon 35.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} McClendon 34.
  \item \textsuperscript{16} McClendon 239.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} McClendon 307.
\end{itemize}
term world, is described by the term witness. Outsiders are disobedient if they refuse the salvation of God offered by the church in history.

Hauerwas argues that one would have to set aside distinctively Christian resources in order to find common ground with outsiders for moral commitment and practice. Solidarity is closely linked with a shared life form in his thought and in McClendon’s, and the religious community is given a central role in Christian formation. Solidarity is not considered possible with outsiders. Other forms of relationship characterized by witness are described. “Attitudinally speaking, forgiveness is this: one takes another’s life up into one’s own, making the offender a part of one’s own story in such a way that that cost of doing so overcomes the power of the injury, healing it in a new bond of union between them.” McClendon indicates that forgiveness implies an “offense against some requirement or rule or law.” Forgiveness of the outsider is a means of community witness to the world. McClendon also develops a Christian virtue, presence. “Presence is being one’s self for someone else; it is refusing the temptation to withdraw mentally and emotionally; but it is also on occasion putting our own body’s weight and shape alongside the neighbor, the friend, the lover in need.”

18. Descriptions of the concrete relationship of church and world from Hauerwas and McClendon and of the forms, witness and service, of the relationship of church to world are further explored in chapter two.


22. McClendon 106.
Forgiveness and presence are consistently viewed as witness to the truth of a particular life form. McClendon's description of the act of forgiveness is based on a particular concept of narrative from Hauerwas in which actions are viewed in the context of the continuous narrative of a Christian life. It was formulated in opposition to decisionism. "For the abstraction of 'decisions' or 'acts' into 'case studies' which are then to be adjudicated in terms of overriding 'principles' justified either in a deontological or consequential manner fails to deal with the most essential aspect of any decision -- namely its narrative context."\(^{23}\) Those who share a common life form perceive and describe situations requiring "decisions" in ways that correspond with their shared life form. "Thus nonviolent persons do not have to choose to use or not to use violence, but rather their being nonviolent means they must use their imaginations to form their whole way of life consistent with their convictions."\(^{24}\) It is important to remember that convictions in McClendon refer to more than shared belief; the term indicates a common life form, including attitudes and practices as well. This way of thinking about moral reflection requires a common life form and common truthful narratives. The participation of outsiders with another life form is excluded.

I have chosen to focus on descriptions of relationships and their comparison rather than on larger moral issues because I seek to raise consciousness of how our characterizations configure our relationships. If our commonly held method of moral reflection excludes participation by outsiders, solidarity with them is made more difficult, and particularly if this is the only form of moral reflection in operation. Hauerwas' thought on moral reflection might be

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23. Hauerwas 125.

24. Hauerwas 125.
interpreted as indicating that moral reflection with outsiders would require a different form than the one commonly employed among outsiders. Solidarity with outsiders, then, may require a social contract worked out between parties.

Disciples in McClendon share in the common life and practices of the church, sharing other commonalities with other neighbors, that is, with outsiders. The witness of members includes the work of discipling, baptizing and teaching. The last is described as the formation of a church culture which "would stand creatively over against the world's culture by imparting its own."25 The Christian community is expected to provide a good example for the world.26 Witness in Hauerwas and McClendon has this character. Insiders and the church provide examples and masters for the world. "Taken to the full, the analogy will be both to individuals within a society, and to the relation of communities, nations even, to one another, modeled upon Christian interchurch or ecumenical relations."27 Hauerwas and McClendon are careful to indicate that the church does not consider itself superior to the world, only saved out of the world by grace.

In his chapter on casuistry Hauerwas gives a place to challenge from outsiders in the formation of Christians.28 The relations of insiders with insiders and with outsiders is described as witness; outsiders present insiders with a challenge and perhaps an important corrective. Challenge by an opposing viewpoint contrasts with Welch's welcoming of other viewpoints. Witness to the truth of a particular life form indicates an assumption that the church has

27. McClendon 235.
28. Hauerwas 120.
something, salvation, that society or the world lacks. Service is understood as a form of witness in Hauerwas and McClenendon. Welch, as we will see, presses the idea that the outsider brings something with her, her viewpoint, that the religious community lacks. It is not difficult to imagine a relationship in which the contributions of both parties might be valued, but fresh understandings of witness as a form of relationship would be required.

Stanley Hauerwas refers to the church community as that place in which self and nature are put in right relation. He calls the church to be the church, and recognizes that it often fails in its commission. The church in its inner workings is often in need of repentance. As a consequence, the church enjoys a rather ambiguous reputation at the same time that it is called to be so much more. "That means that the church must never cease from being a community of peace and truth in a world of mendacity and fear. The church does not let the world set its agenda about what constitutes a "social ethic", but a church of peace and justice must set its own agenda." This understanding that the church must set its own agenda provides the strongest evidence that the church, in Hauerwas and McClenendon, does not consider itself accountable to outsiders.

The isolation of the church from social concerns may allow a form of charity in which insiders are little concerned with altering material conditions of poverty and oppression. Hauerwas is openly disinterested in projects directed to changing the world, but he does expect the church and its members to remain responsive to outside viewpoints. Indicating belief in the truthfulness of a particular viewpoint, witness as a form of relationship does not, I believe, ____________________

29. Hauerwas 16.

30. Hauerwas 98.
promise openness to outside viewpoints. When the church describes itself as a social ethic, it implies that outsiders and their interests are marginal to its central concerns. Teaching, evangelization, discipling and witness in Hauerwas and McClendon are ruled by the drive to initiate outsiders, to resocialize them in the church. It is difficult to imagine how an outside viewpoint could challenge under these conditions.

I understand why Hauerwas does not recommend solidarity with outsiders. A common life form is necessary to agreement in his understanding of moral reflection. He understands that formed Christians perceive issues requiring moral action in ways that are distinctive of their particular life form. This renders moral agreement with outsiders problematic.

I believe that solidarity with outsiders can be established along other lines than a shared life form. Shared life experience in the context of common work provides a setting in which mutually transforming relationships can be created. Actions that demonstrate a willingness to enter into accountable relationships could prepare the way for solidarity with outsiders established in concrete human relationships. I would argue that the requirement of careful response to outsiders stimulates Christians to understand their distinctive viewpoint and resources in fresh ways. Outside viewpoints present Christians with twin challenges to be faithful both to Christian commitments and to relationships characterized by accountability. When decisions are made together with outsiders, Christians cannot rely on the moral arguments they could make with those who share their life form. Christians feel pressed to find arguments that outsiders might find convincing. It might be best for Christians to simply present those arguments to outsiders that they would present to other insiders and to discuss with outsiders what Christian commitments mean to them when they must decide things together with them. The option to withdraw
from the common work is open to all parties. Exercising it too often might indicate a failure to take the relationship with outsiders seriously.

2.2 Solidarity with Outsiders

Solidarity is closely connected with a shared life form in Hauerwas and McClendon. Where solidarity is recommended with outsiders it must be described in ways that open the possibility of solidary relations with those from other life forms. The general approach that is taken in my authors is to find solidarity along other lines than a shared life form. Roman Catholic social teaching recommends to everyone a conversion of attitude from greed and selfishness to solidarity, a commitment to the good of the other which corresponds to the fact of human interdependence. Exploitation, oppression and annihilation of others are excluded by the attitude of solidarity. "For world peace is inconceivable unless the world's leaders come to recognize that interdependence in itself demands the abandonment of the politics of blocs, the sacrifice of all forms of economic, military or political imperialism and the transformation of mutual distrust into collaboration. This is precisely the act proper to solidarity among nations."31 Sharon Welch approaches the problem through concrete historical relationships, proposing acts of recognition and accountability which will be creative of solidarity in the context of work together.

The Roman Catholic church understands its social teaching as part of its evangelizing mission.32 Solidarity becomes part of the way the church identifies itself in and to the world. The church believes it has a calling to lead

31. John Paul II 655.
32. John Paul II 655.
people to respond to their vocation as responsible builders of earthly society. The leadership role that the church assumes in society should help it to understand God's will for creation. Humankind is imagined as having a common vocation. The church believes that its social doctrine demonstrates "its character as an application of the word of God to people's lives and the life of society as well as to the earthly realities connected with them."  

The Roman Catholic communion accepts a role for itself in society. It recommends practice to society from the standpoint of its membership and in its leadership capacity. The church has a duty to society as an "expert in humanity" "to scrutinize the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel." It has a mission of service distinct from the function of the state. Its critique of the concrete situation of people in the world is understood in the light of the church's mission of service.  

In my opinion expertise and witness, in general, express a common belief in the truthfulness of the point of view of the church expressed in its teaching. The problem of witness and expertise arises when the truth of a particular life form is understood as true for everyone else. Statements that indicate others may be considered disobedient or failing in their clear ethical duty if they do not take certain actions demonstrate a single consequence of this understanding of witness. The assertion of an authoritative claim to truthfulness is another consequence. Outsiders, particularly those who do not enjoy the privilege of education, could not claim an equal measure of expertise. Expertise is another claim that probably should not be asserted with outsiders if the

33. John Paul II 643.
34. John Paul II 644.
35. John Paul II 644.
challenge of outside viewpoints is to be facilitated. It is enough to represent a viewpoint as faithfully as possible and to argue for it.

Developments in the church's social teaching since Vatican II are viewed as a response to the constitution Gaudium et Spes which begins, "The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts."36 The church's interpretations of the signs of the times and of important themes such as development and interdependence borrowed from the sciences are cited as sources of renewal in the doctrinal corpus.37 The biblical narratives provide continuity for the social doctrine of the church. Different stories are given different roles here. Compassion with the anxieties of the people of this age expressed in Gaudium et Spes inspired renewal in the social teaching of the church.

I interpret this compassionate response of the church in a particular way. The requirements of accountable relationships with outsiders, I believe, pressed the church to respond to them with renewal of its social doctrine. This is the kind of relationship I imagine. Apparently the relationship with outsiders is not entirely ruled by the church's natural law understanding of the good.

Men and women of faith will recognize the moral value that the church places on solidarity as "a demand of God's will, the only true foundation of an absolutely binding ethic." Outsiders, it is hoped, "would be convinced that the obstacles to integral development are not only economic but rest on more

36. John Paul II 644.
37. John Paul II 643.
profound attitudes which human beings can make into absolute values.38 It is understood that insiders and outsiders will have different reasons for lending absolute value to solidarity, but they both are capable of perceiving the contribution of solidarity to the common goal of world peace. “Thus one would hope that all those who, to some degree or other, are responsible for ensuring a ‘more human life’ for their fellow human beings, whether or not they are inspired by a religious faith, will become fully aware of the urgent need to change the spiritual attitudes which define each individual’s relationship with self, with neighbor, with even the remotest human communities and with nature itself”. Solidarity is the change in attitude which is recommended to all of society.

The church calls individuals and nations to take steps toward social and international justice in proportion to their power and responsibility in world affairs. “If a nation were to succumb more or less deliberately to the temptation to close in upon itself and failed to meet the responsibilities following from its superior position in the community of nations, it would fall seriously short of its clear ethical duty.”39 The second major path to world peace lies “through the practice of the virtues which favor togetherness and which teach us to live in unity so as to build in unity, by giving and receiving a new society and a better world.”40 Solidarity is described as the “path to peace” and to development.

Roman Catholic social teaching offers a theological investigation of the present world which is supported by rational reflection and the human sciences. Social science and economics reveal the interdependence of people and nations “sensed as a system determining relationships in the contemporary

38. John Paul II 654.
40. John Paul II 655.
world in its economic, cultural, political and religious elements.  

Interdependence dictates that no part of the world can function in isolation. For this reason, "development either becomes shared in common by every part of the world or it undergoes a process of regression even in zones marked by constant progress." The conviction is growing world-wide that human ends cannot be accomplished without the cooperation of the entire human community.

Solidarity is the proper response as a moral and social attitude to the fact of interdependence. It is described as a "firm and persevering determination" to commit oneself to the common good of all and of each individual "because we are all really responsible for all." It is believed that desire for profit and thirst for power are defeating efforts at development world-wide and that solidarity as an attitude should counter the use of persons as means. The virtue should inspire service of the neighbor, rather than his exploitation. As the attitude of solidarity brings about the establishment of more just relationships in society, the interdependence of society is transformed into solidarity.

The theme of interdependence establishes the necessary participation of all humanity in the attitude of solidarity. This is an important difference that the proposal of solidarity with outsiders makes. "Practice with" (common work) either begins to appear together with "practice for" (service) or "practice with" completely replaces "practice for" as in Welch. In this case the common attitude is made obligatory on the grounds of interdependence. The participation of the

41. John Paul II 654.
42. John Paul II 647.
43. John Paul II 654.
44. John Paul II 654.
other in a common project is viewed as fundamental to its success, but the project, its problems and solutions are still defined by the church. Interdependence is a fact; the solution is provided as a service to humanity.

I object to this understanding of factuality. A partial viewpoint is expressed that must be true for everyone. This understanding of factuality does not invite challenge, though I have already shown that the Roman Catholic church is responsive to outside voices. "From the depth of anguish, fear and escapist phenomena like drugs, typical of the contemporary world, the idea is slowly emerging that the good to which we are all called and the happiness to which we aspire cannot be obtained without an effort and commitment on the part of all, nobody excluded, and the consequent renouncing of personal selfishness."45 This is more than a matter of style, I think. It is also a position with respect to the truth that interferes with an open exchange of viewpoints.

The distinctiveness of the Christian life form is not diminished in any way by the commitment of solidarity with outsiders. The discussion of solidarity understood in the light of faith makes this evident. Solidarity is transformed by faith and finds "dimensions of total gratuity" in forgiveness and reconciliation. "One’s neighbor is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit."46 The neighbor seen through faith must be loved. Sacrifice of one’s life may be required. A new model of the unity of the human race is discerned in the light of faith that is compared with the communion of the trinity. Solidarity transformed by faith takes on a new dimension that is not ruled

45. John Paul II 649.
46. John Paul II 655.
by natural law principles but by the demands of love. This love may provide the rationale, I think, for the responsiveness of the church to outside voices inspite of the fact that its authoritative positions and statements do not invite challenge.

Within the church the relations of insiders should reflect the unity of the trinity, the intimate life of God which is one God in three persons. Further, “This specifically Christian communion, jealously preserved, extended and enriched with the Lord’s help, is the soul of the church’s vocation to be a sacrament in the sense already indicated.” The church is described as “a sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race.” The church models solidarity for the world. By being what it is called to be the church in Hauerwas serves the world; the formation of individuals and communities after Christ will serve the world. By guiding humankind to their vocation as responsible builders of society, the Roman Catholic church serves the world.

The canonized saints of the Roman Catholic church are offered as witnesses to solidarity with all others and as examples for humanity. The eucharist is a renewal of Christ’s sacrifice in which Christians are united with the Lord in a bond stronger than any natural union. United, Christ “sends us into the world to bear witness through faith and works to God’s love, preparing the coming of his kingdom and anticipating it, though in the obscurity of the present time.” Communicants discover in the eucharist the meaning of their actions in the world and the strength required for continuing commitment in the imitation of Christ.

47. John Paul II 655.
49. John Paul II 658.
Faith and sacrament in Roman Catholic social teaching open the way to new understandings and relationships, preparing the insider for these new relationships. The function of faith and sacrament with respect to the outsider distinguishes the Roman Catholic understanding of these terms from those of Hauerwas and McClendon. Faith is fidelity to Jesus in Hauerwas, and the Lord’s Supper in McClendon builds the solidarity of the Christian community. Faith and sacrament build the community of God. According to Hauerwas, “We are ‘in Christ’ insofar as we are part of that community pledged to be faithful to his life as the initiator of the kingdom of peace”.

Solidarity as an attitude towards outsiders in Roman Catholic social teaching plays its part in the realization of the divine plan at each level of organization, individual, national, international, apparently having its primary effect upon the neighbor relationship. The church understands itself as a functioning member of society with a leadership role in it and as a witness to the kingdom life. This is the basis of my description of the church as a community folded within society and with definite points of contact with society. The church witnesses to the truth of a particular life form from its standpoint as a member of society, leading society to its proper role and function from the standpoint of participation in it. Its service is a witness.

Roman Catholic social teaching places the church in a “stand beside the poor, to discern the justice of their requests and to help satisfy them.” This commitment creates a relationship in which the church will hear the challenge of marginal voices. The church will judge the requests of the poor by her own standards, but the commitment initiates a relationship in which regular

50. Hauerwas 93.
51. John Paul II 654.
challenge from the marginalized will be heard. Solidarity with outsiders is related to service in this particular way. The church outlines a service relationship in the context of which it will give a hearing to marginal voices through its commitment to the attitude of solidarity with outsiders. This is what I do not find in Hauerwas and McClendon, a structured commitment to hear the challenge of outside or of marginal voices. Hauerwas indicates that Christians should always be open to challenge. Because all forms of the relationship of insiders to outsiders are understood as witness and because accountability is primarily to insiders, challenge by outside voices may require a commitment to relationship with outsiders as well as rethinking of the relationship of witness.

The possibility of solidarity with non-members may also hinge on the ability to legitimate difference. In the section on particular guidelines Roman Catholic social teaching provides directives for action in pursuit of its calling to guide human behavior, and this guidance is considered an aspect of its prophetic role. The social responsibility of persons, peoples and nations is emphasized with particular attention given to a love of preference for the poor. Each person and nation is held accountable to the poor in proportion to position and influence in world affairs. Respect for legitimate differences includes an appreciation for the contribution to the common good "with their treasures of humanity and culture" of "economically weaker countries" which could be enabled through the assistance of the world community.

Sharon Welch writes of solidarity created in the context of common work with others, and considered as the presupposition for consensus. This solidarity is built up relationally in acts of recognition and accountability. "Solidarity has two aspects in this case. (1) granting each group sufficient

52. John Paul II 655-56.
respect to listen to their ideas and to be challenged by them and (2) recognizing that the lives of the various groups are so intertwined that each is accountable to the other.\textsuperscript{53} Both aspects of solidarity are considered to be forms of recognition which function together in the building of mutually transformative relationships.

Welch argues against Habermas that an adequate model of transformative relation must include far more than "the force of the better argument." Many liberation ethicists believe that the search for consensus may be a continuation of the dream of domination. "Even if we accept an understanding of consensus that means a common recognition of social ills and the need for the rectification of those ills, solidarity is presupposed as a prior step.\textsuperscript{54} Proposed are gestures of recognition which promise a universal solidarity of human beings. These gestures indicate an understanding of the way that power is distributed in human relationships and are directed to equalizing its distribution. Recognition of the other that includes acceptance of accountability to her is a first step.

Welch proposes narrative as the criterion of description in discourse rather than the forms characteristic of Western style argumentation. Narrative, here, does not refer to the biblical narratives. These are narratives of oppression and liberation told by the oppressed. It is a form of discourse suggested in recognition that argumentation presupposes a level of education less common among the oppressed than among the privileged. Welch's standpoint epistemology recognizes the important contribution of the viewpoints

\textsuperscript{53} Welch 133.

\textsuperscript{54} Welch 133.
of the oppressed to moral critique. Difference is highly valued. A critical history of Western society written by the oppressed is suggested.

Solidarity in Welch prepares the way for the possibility of consensus and of mutual transformation. "When mutual transformation occurs, there is the power of empathy and compassion, of delight in otherness, and strength in the solidarity of listening to others, bearing together stories of pain and resistance." Work together places privileged and oppressed in contact with one another; the recommended practices enable relationships which should affect both parties. Projects of social transformation will emerge from basic social interaction; the interaction itself is believed to be transformative. Welch gives a stronger place to the participation of outsiders in her thought than is evidenced in Roman Catholic social teaching. Mutuality of relationship is stressed.

Solidarity in Roman Catholic social teaching is an attitude which precedes any concrete action and prepares the way for the just relationships which will establish the solidarity of society. Justice is fair distribution of the goods of creation as defined by the natural law principles of the Catholic tradition. The attitude of solidarity will transform society by bringing about a more just distribution of goods and services. For those communities engaged in the communicative ethics of Sharon Welch solidarity is founded in concrete interactions which should establish more just, transformative relationships. Justice here is established by mutual critique and transformation in the context of common work which lead to political action and social transformation.

Insiders of the Roman Catholic church are required by faith to be converted to solidarity as an attitude. The church would consider itself a
member of society and in responsible relationship to it whether or not society shared this understanding. Service as a form of practice seems to have this character; it does not require the participation of the other. Solidarity among insiders, on the other hand, seems to require reciprocity. Within the Christian church the participation of insiders in its sacramental practices is understood as constitutive of its solidarity. Solidarity with outsiders has a different character from solidarity with insiders in Roman Catholic social teaching. An analogy might be made to the differences between the relations of friends and of acquaintances.

This difference in the character of the relationship with outsiders is not true of solidarity in Welch. The solidarity of the beloved community with those communities engaged in communicative ethics is established by mutually transformative acts. The solidarity of insiders with all others requires reciprocity in the form of acts of recognition and accountability. "Emancipatory conversations are the fruit of work together, the result of alterations in relationships between groups." Foundational interchanges, characterized by acts of recognition and accountability, prepare the way for transformative dialogue. Welch believes that the "intention of solidarity is potentially more inclusive and more transformative" than Habermas' goal of consensus.57

Mutually transformative acts performed in the context of common work in Welch "can move to the conversations that explore the nature of this humanity and the political imperatives it entails." In contrast to Roman Catholic social teaching the nature of reality is to be explored together with others who may be outsiders.58 Acts of recognition place insiders and outsiders in the relations of

56. Welch 135.
accountability and reciprocity proper to solidarity. This solidarity becomes the basis for mutually transformative relationship. "Communicative ethics presupposes and sustains political transformation. The process of dialogue, mutual critique, and political action is dynamic, a spiraling movement in which rudimentary forms of political action enable further critique and evoke more adequate forms of political practice." Welch expects that those socialized into different life forms will be capable of consensus on the basis of human relationships enabled by acts of recognition.

Welch envisions her "beloved community" engaged in communicative ethics on an equal basis with other communities that do not share its form of life. The beloved community holds a common faith in God as the immanent transforming power of human relationships. This community has a religious faith without a personal God or truthful stories of relationship with God.

The solidary practices of Welch are analogous to the sacramental practices which establish the solidarity of the Lord and his disciples at the Last Supper in McClendon. Performance of mutually transformative acts, however, may establish solidary together with any outsider in Welch. While Roman Catholic social teaching describes a sacramental relationship of church and world, the church continues to evangelize the world. Welch formulates solidary practices which involve the outsider as a participant in a common practice that functions like a sacrament in the creation of the solidarity of communities engaged in communicative ethics. Welch would not use the word sacrament; the analogy must be understood as breaking down at that point. The analogy is only intended to convey the difference of her thought on solidarity.

57. Welch 132.
2.3 Models of Solidarity

The reformer is opened to different standards of justice through experiencing the pain of the oppressed in the context of work together with them. Welch's reflections on difference establish its centrality to the goal of communicative ethics, mutual critique. "We can transcend the blinders of our own social location, not through becoming objective, but by recognizing the differences by which we ourselves are constituted and, I would add to Foucault, by actively seeking to be partially constituted by work with different groups." The alienation of class is challenged in the context of work together. Where the differences among people are great, work at a basic level, such as cooking, cleaning, sewing and homebuilding is recommended. The privileged may learn of the physical effort required for sustenance from this common work and of other values, other life forms. In the course of listening and conversation together, in the context of mutual work, solidarity is built in concrete relationships. Objectivity itself requires "openness to the critical claims that history bears and also the ability to learn from others' historical experience". This openness to those outside is a form that accountability takes in her thought. As the privileged work together with the oppressed to end the oppression or discrimination they denounce, trust is established which encourages honest dialogue.

The contribution of difference to the goal of mutual critique is offered as the rationale for solidarity with outsiders in Welch. Solidarity is to be established among the different. Roman Catholic social teaching points to the

58. Welch 136.
59. Welch 151.
interdependence of peoples and nations in arguing for the moral response of solidarity. Interdependence is a moral fact; it is the truth. Outsiders are informed and solidarity with them proposed. Solidarity is to established among the interdependent. In Hauerwas and McClendon a common life form is required for solidarity created in certain common practices. Solidarity is to be established among the same.

Interdependence in Welch and in Roman Catholic social teaching have very different meanings; it describes a certain moral relationship of peoples and nations in Welch developed in opposition to unilateral action as a form of relationship.\textsuperscript{61} The differences in development between peoples and nations create a problem requiring the solution of solidarity as an attitude in the social doctrine of Roman Catholicism. Difference in Welch is a positive resource for the common goal of communicative ethics.

Welch's epistemology of solidarity posits the permanent partiality of all points of view, and she places a positive value on difference.\textsuperscript{62} "From the perspective of communicative ethics, we cannot be moral alone. The discernment of both norms and strategies requires the interaction of different communities."\textsuperscript{63} Modelling a general discursive will formation together with the oppressed, Welch privileges their concerns through a standpoint epistemology. She quotes Harding who "argues that the logic of standpoint epistemologies entails greater attention to the knowledge of those who are oppressed at many

\begin{itemize}
\item 60. Welch 136.
\item 61. Their differences in conceptualization of interdependence will be examined in chapter two.
\item 62. Welch 137.
\end{itemize}
levels -- by reason of gender, sexual orientation (gays and lesbians), race, class, nationality, and degree of physical limitations".64

Welch handles the problem of her community’s stories of liberation in such a way that the narratives themselves may be employed in the common conversation of communicative ethics. They could have value as stories of liberation in this common conversation in which they might be considered to have effects of truth. Because of her particular understanding of truth, these stories are always understood to be of limited value. Their past value is no guarantor of their present liberative power; God is transforming power in her thought. Social transformation is enabled in concrete transforming relationships. "The terms holy and divine denote a quality of being within the web of life, a process of healing relationship, and they denote the quality of being worthy of honor, love, respect and affirmation." 65 The narratives, goals and practices of both the beloved community and of those communities involved in communicative ethics are compatible but differ over the matter of religious faith. Welch’s understanding of the transitory nature of truth, however, should forestall any possibility of witness as a form of relationship. 66 Witness and service are replaced by recognition and common work.

Communities involved in communicative ethics do share a loosely organized life form with her beloved community. "An epistemology of solidarity posits the determination of judgment by concrete, specific relations".67 By defining solidarity relationally, she has given primacy to the concrete human

63. Welch 127.
64. Welch 129.
65. Welch 178.
66. Welch 158.
relationships which establish the solidarity of her communities. She does outline a shared life form. The relationships with other communities are characterized by acts of recognition and accountability. Solidarity is established in mutually transformative relationships. The value of difference to the common work of communicative ethics, moral critique, is extensively explored. The standpoint of the outsider is taken to be essential to the process. Communities support the important work of transformative relationship, resistance to oppression and social transformation. They share dangerous memories and narratives of oppression as the basis for moral critique.

I have proposed that a claim for truthfulness be separated from a claim to the completeness of one’s own viewpoint. This would mean that a Christian community could assert claims for the truthfulness of its point of view and yet require the viewpoints of others. The community would not consider its viewpoint to be complete without the viewpoints of others. If a community makes claims for the truthfulness of its viewpoint and indicates that its viewpoint should be truthful for others as well, opposing viewpoints of outsiders are excluded. In Welch liberating power reveals truth in concrete interactions with outsiders.

Welch does not discuss her theology until the last chapter of her book, and it is in this chapter that she takes up the question of truth. “The criterion of truth is also that which liberates”. 68 Those constructions are true that are liberating. Having established the value of difference to moral critique, Welch places the truths of her beloved community on an equal footing with those of other communities by emphasizing the transitory nature of truth. Theological

67. Welch 137.
constructions are true "for a specific situation, but the same formulation may function oppressively or be ineffective in other situations." Every particular "true" theological construction contains the seeds of its eventual replacement as each new situation presents new challenges and fresh opportunities. The situation is changed with each liberating formulation, making it possible that past formulations will no longer prove liberative in the present. Ideas have effects of truth.

Truth for Welch is liberative, and is disclosed within those interactions that create the solidarity of her communities. Mutually transformative acts place persons in solidary relationships in the context of which truth may emerge. This is a decisive difference with respect to my other authors. The truth emerges in human interactions. It is not an attribute of any particular viewpoint for which authoritative claims could be made. The community is the context in which transformative relationships and resistance to oppression are supported. Her communities that do communicative ethics cannot be considered to be in solidarity with society as a whole, but only with those who participate in the practices considered creative of solidarity.

In Hauerwas and McClendon convictions transform the self to true faith. Transformation of the self through the holding of Christian convictions is essential to truth perception. I interpret this to mean that outsiders would not be able to perceive the truth of their own existence. Doing in Hauerwas follows upon the placement of self and nature into right relationship. The Christian community teaches what intentions are proper to Christians on the way. The wisdom of the community in its appropriation of its truthful narratives is essential.

68. Welch 157.
69. Welch 156-158.
to the formation of character. "Sanctification is the formation of our lives in truth, since only such lives have the capacity for peace." The wholeness and integrity of members is made possible by the truthfulness of the story of Jesus. Through this story insiders learn to be participants in God's community of peace and justice.

The wholeness and integrity of insiders in Welch is built in transformative relationships in which God is transforming power. The truth which emerges in these relationships is so closely associated with concrete interactions that it could be said to have a liberative character but could not lead to the telling of truthful stories or the formation of truthful lives. One could imagine that truthful interactions would be creative of wholeness in Welch in a manner roughly analogous to the way character is formed among insiders in the process of "imaginative challenge" in Hauerwas, but their understanding of what constitutes wholeness would be quite different. Wholeness in Hauerwas is formation after Jesus; in Welch wholeness might be characterized as responsiveness to the persons and viewpoints of outsiders.

In Hauerwas human relationships are enabled by being the right person through formation of human character after truthful stories and truthful lives. Performance of mutually transformative actions places humans in right relationship in Welch. Story challenges our particular understandings of human relations. A story of a liberative interaction might be expected to have an effect of truth in the larger conversation of communicative ethics.

The type of moral action that follows from the solidarity of Hauerwas and McClendon is witness and service. The truthfulness of the life form of the church stands creatively over against the life forms of outsiders, offering a

70. Hauerwas 94.
witness to the truthfulness of Christian convictions. The service of the church in all its forms of charity, forgiveness and presence witnesses to the truthfulness of Christian convictions. The solidarity of the same exists to witness to the truthfulness of a particular life form. In Roman Catholic social teaching moral action likewise is described by witness and service. Interdependence is a fact of moral existence that requires the response of solidarity as an attitude from all others. The solidarity of the interdependent is expected to bring about more just relationships in society and, ultimately, world peace. The church leads men and women to their vocation as responsible builders of society. Outsiders should respond with solidarity. In Welch the solidarity of the different is distinguished by participation and common work. The difference of outsiders contributes to the common work of moral critique. The solidarity of the different exists for the sake of the common work and is created in mutually transforming relationships.

2.4 Conclusions

The relationships of solidarity in our authors define the group which works together. This group is the Christian community in Hauerwas, those churches with origins in the Radical Reformation in McClendon. The solidarity of these groups is defined in opposition to the world and in the holding of a common life form. The church has goals in common with society in Roman Catholic thought, but continues to maintain a discrete form of life. Specific commitments maintain regular contact with outside voices. This is a community with points of contact with the world; these regular connections are expected to initiate renewal in the social doctrine of the church. Solidarity as an attitude is a commitment to the good of the other. In the light of faith it is transformed by love.
Welch’s communities are in direct contact with society, building solidary relationships with any outsider who places herself in accountable relationship. These actions include the outsider as a participant in the work of the community; the outsider joins in the common work.

Acts of recognition are considered in Welch to be anterior to the solidarity of those communities engaged in communicative ethics and vital to it. Practices which enable mutual transformation in Welch establish the solidarity of the religious community in a way that is analogous to solidarity created in the holding of common convictions in Hauerwas and McClendon. Welch’s solidarity does not require the holding of common truthful narratives and convictions. I find this difference suggestive for new lines of thought. Shared life experiences with both insiders and outsiders could become an occasion for solidarity established in practices like forgiveness and presence. These forms would be characteristic of relationship with both insiders and outsiders. Shared life experiences could provide avenues for solidarity at the personal level, while common work could create a context in which those socialized into different life forms might build community together.

Common work with outsiders could be as simple as involvement in our schools, work places and communities. I would invite the churches to view the common situations of life as opportunities to create solidarity with outsiders in friendships. With Welch I would urge listening and accountability between insiders and outsiders.

The dual membership of the church in both the kingdom and in human society of Roman Catholic social teaching invites insiders to understand themselves as members of both groups. This is not configured as an equal relationship. Reading in liberation literature raises consciousness of power distributions. The church takes for itself expertise in humanity and a leadership
role in society. Expertise makes a claim directed to outsiders for the authority of its recommendations. It does not indicate openness to the position of others who could not claim expertise. The marginalized and the oppressed most often could not make such claims. The dual membership, however, indicates a responsibility to both communities and configures two inter-related communities.

Common membership and common work offer possible starting points, I think, for arguments for solidarity founded in concrete relationships. Common membership has problems from the standpoint that outsiders might not consider themselves members in a common community with insiders. A proposal of common work or better yet joining community work in progress indicates a willingness to work together with outsiders.

I suggest that invitation offers much as a form for evangelism. Mother Theresa of Calcutta inspired this approach to witness with her now famous invitation, “Come and see!” It expresses confidence in the truthfulness of one’s own viewpoint at the same time that it respects the ability of the other to respond to the love of God made manifest in human lives. The possibility that witness has connotations of expertise in the domain of the sacred in Hauerwas, McClendon and Roman Catholic social teaching must be broached. It is this connotation in Christian conceptualizations of witness that most concern me. Witness as expertise does not indicate an openness to mutual transformation. Faithful and careful response to outsiders can provide a witness to basic commitments as readily, I believe, as teaching and discipling. With Welch I understand the viewpoints of outsiders as important correctives to my own. I do not believe that my own truthful viewpoint is or may be complete by itself.
3 THE DESCRIPTION OF FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AND THEMES

Authors identify the church or the community and the world or society in their work, describing the fundamental relationships of church and world, of insiders to other insiders and to outsiders. Comparison of our authors is intended to illustrate very different understandings of these fundamental relationships. The possibility of solidarity with outsiders is interpreted as either prepared or placed into question by these descriptions.

The Roman Catholic church has made commitments which will enable regular challenge by outside voices; it views the relationship of church and world as a source of renewal for its social doctrine. It continues to believe that its distinctive life form manifests something in society that society lacks, i.e. society characterized by intimate union with God. The social doctrine of the church functions as part of an evangelizing mission to society; the analysis of social reality and of the solution to social problems provides a service to society. In its relationships with society the church witnesses to the truthfulness of its common life form. It is believed that society has something valuable to offer the church, but the primary forms of the relations of insiders and outsiders, church and world, continue to be witness and service. Solidarity as an attitude will prepare the way for more just and peaceful relationships in society. The solidarity of society lacks the unity considered characteristic of the solidarity of the church.

As a form of relationship solidarity only exists among insiders in Hauerwas and McClendon; the relationship with the world is defined by witness. The church as a social ethic fulfills its evangelizing mission to society by being what it is called to be. The primary form of relationship prior to the establishment of transforming relationship with outsiders in Welch is recognition. From the first contact solidarity as a relational form requires
reciprocity of the outsider. If the outsider does not respond by indicating a parallel interest in accountable relationship, solidarity is not initiated.

The approach that Sharon Welch takes to solidarity with outsiders is suggestive of new directions for thought in theological ethics. Welch considers different life forms a valuable resource for the moral life, but she downplays the importance of a positive tradition.¹ Those who continue to value a positive tradition but who have a post-modern understanding of human relationships have been placed in the unpleasant position of having to choose one or the other. Welch points the way to a solution by proposing solidarity with outsiders established along lines other than a shared life form.

Those communities that argue for solidarity with outsiders develop certain themes that support the argument. The acceptance of these themes from outside sources in itself indicates a relationship with the world in which ideas are shared. Themes such as interdependence and difference identify the relationships of society from the point of view of the community. Interdependence in Roman Catholic social teaching does more than prepare the way for solidarity. The well-developed theme of difference in Sharon Welch enables moral critique, the central work of communicative ethics. A variety of these themes participate in the creation of common ground for moral commitment and practice with outsiders in the literature. They come from different sources in the social sciences, but they are implemented by the religious community as each author inscribes the commitment to solidarity in the stories and themes of the community.

¹. In the next chapter it will be argued that Welch has neglected to provide a positive tradition for her communities. Narrative is largely given the function of challenging viewpoints and does not provide significant continuity for her communities. It is difficult to understand how a distinctive viewpoint would be maintained under the circumstances; the distinctiveness of any life form should dissolve with time.
To begin, those characterizations of church and world, community and society and their inter-relations in our authors will be examined. The description of these fundamental relationships in our authors either prepares the way for the possibility of solidarity with outsiders or places solidarity with outsiders into question. Themes which have become important to establishing common ground with outsiders will be compared in the next part of the chapter. The theme of interdependence has become part of the doctrinal corpus in Roman Catholic social teaching. Interdependence and difference in Welch describe new moral relationships in which mutuality and reciprocity receive emphasis.

3.1 Relationships of the Religious Community with Outsiders

Roman Catholic social teaching refers to the church as a sacrament signifying unity in a fragmented world. This identification makes it particularly useful for comparison with Hauerwas who writes of the church as a foretaste of the kingdom in the world. The unity that the Roman Catholic church prefigures is the unity of the human race with God, and the church is called to be the instrument of this unity. In light of its vocation the church acts to relieve human suffering from all her resources. The resource of its social teaching is intended to guide men and women to their common vocation. The church must take her stand with the poor, judge their requests and help to satisfy them. These requests will be judged in the light of a higher value, the common good, and in church’s capacity as an “expert on humanity”. The requests of the poor are

2. John Paul II 646.
3. John Paul II 652.
4. John Paul II 654, 644.
judged from the position of solidarity with them but by the distinctive convictions of the Roman Catholic Church. The service of the church is provided from the standpoint of solidarity with the poor.

The church offers valuable expertise in the area to society as a service. The social doctrine of the church is "the accurate formulation of the results of a careful reflection on the complex realities of human existence, in society and in the international order, in the light of faith and of the church's tradition". Its main aim is to interpret these realities in the light of the gospel teaching on man and on vocation, to guide Christian and human behavior. The social doctrine of the church gives rise to a "commitment to justice" which is part of her proclamation. The teaching and spreading of her social doctrine together with the condemnation of evils and injustices are part of her evangelizing mission.

The recommendation of solidarity with outsiders has become part of the solidary witness of the church. Roman Catholic insiders will understand themselves as interdependent with all others. The solidarity of society will be established in the concrete just interactions that will be facilitated by the attitude of solidarity. Witness describes a type of relationship in which the insider offers to the outsider something, it is believed, that the outsider lacks. The church offers a service to the world, the path to world-wide peace described in its social doctrine. It promises continuing cooperation with society in the interests of world peace. "In this commitment, the sons and daughters of the church must serve as examples and guides, for they are all called upon, in conformity with the program announced by Jesus himself in the synagogue at Nazareth, to 'preach the good news to the poor...to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the

5. John Paul II 655-6.
acceptable year of the Lord' (Lk, 4:18-19)". The laity will be witnesses and agents of peace and justice. 6

All of the baptized and those who profess the same creed with the church should find in its social teaching "a new invitation to bear witness together to our common convictions concerning the dignity of man, created by God, redeemed by Christ, made holy by the Spirit and called upon in this world to live a life in conformity with this dignity". Fidelity to the common calling of man depends upon God. No achievement on earth is to be identified with the kingdom of God which "becomes present above all in the celebration of the sacrament of the eucharist". "All of us who take part in the eucharist are called to discover, through this sacrament, the profound meaning of our actions in the world in favor of development and peace; and to receive from it the strength to commit ourselves ever more generously, following the example of Christ, who in this sacrament lays down his life for his friends." 7

The appeal of the encyclical is addressed as well to Jews and to all the followers of the world's great religions. Those who understand the importance of union with God, will be best able to receive the appeal, but the church has stated its case in such a way that all persons, it is believed, should be able to perceive the value of its proposed solutions to common problems.

Claims for the distinctiveness of the church in Hauerwas, remind Christians of the radicalness of the gospel. "Put simply, we Christians are not called on to be 'moral' but faithful to the true story, the story that we are creatures under the Lordship of a God who wants nothing more than our faithful


7. John Paul II 658.
service." It is by the gospel that the community is formed, and by virtue of its distinctive narratives, Christians are distinct from the world. The entire Christian community shares this quality. "They are required to be nothing less than a sanctified people of peace who can live the life of the forgiven." They are called to be a foretaste of the kingdom and to be faithful to this task in the world. In faithfulness to the kingdom life Christians become part of what God intends for the whole world: "We are saved by being invited to share in the work of the kingdom through the history God has created in Israel and the work of Jesus". 

The world in Hauerwas and McClendon is the society of all outsiders, and it is characterized as both mendacious and evil and as God's good creation. The church must take a critical perspective on the world in order to "recognize and deal with the challenges presented by our societies and the inherent violence of our world". This perspective is not to be considered a superior one, simply one that is distinct in that it is formed by the gospel which is the true story of creation and redemption. The work of the church is to provide examples and masters for the world, "and if we are without either, the church cannot exist as a people who are pledged to be different from the world". The Roman Catholic church is pledged to be different from society as well, but it accepts responsibility with society. The church of Hauerwas and McClendon does not. The vocation of the church is to be the society of peace in a violent

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8. Hauerwas 68.
9. Hauerwas 60.
11. Hauerwas 63.
world. The church offers a critique of the world by its very existence, showing the world what it should be. The church is a social ethic.\textsuperscript{13}

Hauerwas specifically gives a role to challenge from non-members in his chapter on casuistry, "Christian convictions must remain open to challenge from sources outside the Christian community, since those convictions presuppose that this is God's world".\textsuperscript{14}

It is important to note that Hauerwas proposes no regular way in which this might be accomplished. The church accepts no responsibility with society. Its responsibility to the world is discharged by being the church. Hauerwas makes the development of the peaceable kingdom so central to the social ethics of the church, and the truthful narratives and community of the church so central to personal formation that any challenge from outside must remain marginal. Because the relations of the church and of its insiders with outsiders are understood as witness, it is difficult for me to estimate how effective challenge from an outsider might prove to be.

Through a comparison of the fundamental relationships of church and world in my authors it can be demonstrated how it is that challenge from outside voices can remain marginal to the interests of an ethnocentrically isolated community. An open statement of commitment to challenge by outsiders probably will not overcome the conviction of this community and its insiders in the truthfulness of their common life form. If he is serious about challenge from outside, Hauerwas probably must make regular commitments to relationships with outsiders, analogous to those adopted by the Roman Catholic church.

\textsuperscript{13} Hauerwas 99-102.

\textsuperscript{14} Hauerwas 120.
McClendon's thought develops Hauerwas' under the influence of John Howard Yoder's understanding of Jesus and his mission, "The real Jesus was the eschatological Jesus." The ethics of Jesus is founded in eschatology, and this foundation made it immediately relevant to prevailing social structures. Jesus' "original revolution" is carried on in the Christian community which forms itself after Christ and continues to incarnate his values. McClendon has a stronger sense even than Hauerwas of the "dynamic clash" of disciples and their adversary world. These Christians are obliged to make their social witness in and to a world under alien control. Christians "are commissioned to obedience, faithfulness to the Master, and it is God not we who must bear final responsibility for the strategy of dealing with the world by the way of the cross rather than by the ways of violence and its power". Christians are to be the treasurers of the law in McClendon's interpretation of Matthew; discipline exists as a means of exercising this stewardship. Their mission is to share this stewardship with all through the evangelization of the world.

The life form of the church is opposed to the life form of the world in McClendon, while in Hauerwas the church stands over against the world as an example. In Hauerwas and McClendon the membership of the church is in the kingdom of God. "For as Christians we are at home in no nation. Our true home is the church itself, where we find those who, like us, have been formed by a

15. McClendon 74.


17. McClendon 74. From Yoder, 1972: 110-14. Hauerwas developed a critique of universalizing concepts (Hauerwas, 1983: 59-63) in which it is argued that they create the occasion for violence and abuse of power.

savior who was necessarily always on the move."^19 The ethnocentric isolation of the church is patterned after a particular interpretation of the relationship of Jesus with the world; he was in but not of the world. Insiders are in solidarity with other insiders, those who share a common understanding of the basic relationships. The form of the relationship with outsiders is witness. "The church must learn time and again that its task is not to make the world the kingdom, but to be faithful to the kingdom by showing the world what it means to be a community of peace."^20 The church does not transform the world, but it evangelizes it.

Differences with Roman Catholicism seem to begin with the understanding of the membership of the church. In Hauerwas and McClendon the church is a member of the kingdom and not of the world; Roman Catholicism conceives of the church as a member of both the kingdom and society. Communitarians conceive of the area outside church boundaries as the world. The church is a social ethic. Roman Catholic membership in the kingdom requires the church to take a leadership role in society. Its distinctive witness is conceptualized as expertise in humanity. In Hauerwas and McClendon only kingdom membership is recognized. Those who would enter the kingdom must take leave of the world.

The sacramental character of the church in its relationship with the world in Roman Catholic social teaching distinguishes its witness from the communitarian witness of Hauerwas and McClendon. The sacramental rites of communitarians are performed among insiders and are considered creative of solidarity in their common life. Presence and forgiveness might be considered

20. Hauerwas 103.
solidary practices among insiders in McClendon, but are understood as witness and service to outsiders. As already indicated, faith and the eucharist among Roman Catholic insiders open the way for new relationships with outsiders, strengthening as well their resolve and commitment. The faith and the sacramental rites of the church prepare insiders for solidarity with outsiders. Faith in Hauerwas is finding our "true life within the life of Christ."  

"The goal of communicative ethics is not merely consensus but mutual critique leading to more adequate understandings of what is just and how particular forms of justice may be achieved. When such critique occurs we may well find that more than our definitions of what is just are challenged; the prerequisites of acting justly may be challenged as well."  

Welch clears the way for challenge through her conceptualization of the transitory nature of truth. Each particular theological construction carries "the seeds of its eventual replacement" as new situations call for new formulations. The truthful narratives and theological constructions of the beloved community might be expected to have effects of truth in the larger discourse. They do not rule action in the present. I have in mind McClendon's baptist vision in which the church of the gospels is the church now. His truthful narratives provide examples which are imitated in the present. Stories in Welch may provide challenges or loose guidelines but not examples to be imitated.

This distinction marks an important difference with Roman Catholic social teaching and the thought of Hauerwas and McClendon. Members of the beloved community, understanding the transitory nature of truth, should be

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22. Welch 129.  
23. Welch 158.
more open to challenge than those communities whose relationships with outsiders are defined by witness to the truthfulness of a particular life form. Welch, in addition, places a high value on difference to the common work of mutual critique. "The condition of overcoming ideology is difference, a mutually challenging and mutually transformative pluralism."24 The different viewpoint of the outsider is valuable in the common work of the community; it makes a positive contribution. This viewpoint does not lack something analogous to salvation or intimate union with God.

The theological truths of Welch’s beloved community enter the common discourse of communicative ethics on an equal footing with the truths of other communities with which solidarity has been established. Through her conceptualization of the transitory nature of truth, the true stories and theological constructs of the community are made directly available to discourse.25 This is an accomplishment that is very difficult to evaluate in terms of loss to her communities of a positive tradition. Welch’s communities should prove more open to outside viewpoints than those communities that conceive of their ethnocentric position as truthful. Truth in Welch is uniformly understood as having a liberating character. Understandings of truth should be quite compatible among all the communities involved in communicative ethics. The common work of social transformation places these communities in transformative relationship with society.

Sharon Welch joins Adrienne Rich in dreaming of a common language—“the ability of women to speak in words that reflect our deepest hopes for life, to speak in a genuine openness to each other as survivors of a deadly system of

24. Welch 151.

oppression”. 26 Her community joins in a “celebrative retelling of stories of solidarity and defiance”, a creative response to life’s intrinsic limits and challenges, finding the divinity at work among them. The dance with life described by Welch includes an acknowledgment of contingency, of belonging to a web of life. The dance is complex, challenging and wondrous, good in itself. “The beloved community names the matrix within which life is celebrated, love is worshipped, and partial victories over injustice lay the groundwork for further acts of criticism and courageous defiance.” 27 Importantly, the beloved community is involved in empowering persons to work for justice. “Without the joy and support that comes from acknowledging the mutuality of responsibility, from experiencing being loved as well as loving, the will for fundamental change cannot be sustained.” 28 Both love for others and love from others empower work together for justice.

This community is opened to both internal and external criticism through the revolutionary character of its love. “To the extent that love remains strong, a movement is open to internal critique and is able to recognize the validity of the experiences of all people,” Welch states. Love is both self-affirming and affirming of others; it is from this stance that it denounces injustice. Love heals the wounds of exploitation. It builds a community of strong individuals through the establishment of transformative relationships in which God is transforming power. This love is demonstrated through working with others rather than for them. 29 “Errors in assessing both the needs of others and of how those needs


27. Welch 160-1.

28. Welch 164.

could best be met inevitably follow from the patronizing stance of working for others rather than working with them. 30 This is the basic stance of the community with respect to all others.

The beloved community is in solidarity with those communities engaged in communicative ethics but not with society as a whole. Welch describes a society characterized by oppression, control and oppressive relationships. The beloved community exists to provide the oppressed a place in which insiders may expect to be enabled for the struggle to resist oppression. Those who are willing to recognize the presence of the other and to place themselves in accountable relationship are those with whom communication and community are possible in the larger society. All these groups in solidarity interact as equals in the common work of communicative ethics.

Descriptions of the fundamental relationships of the religious community and the world, of insiders and outsiders, I argue, prepare the possibility for solidarity with outsiders. More than that, they configure those moral relationships. I believe that witness to the truthfulness of a particular position does not indicate openness to outside viewpoints. If Christians are serious about inviting challenge, as Hauerwas is, and about meeting with the oppressed and hearing them as Roman Catholic social teaching is, they must rethink these fundamental relationships. Perhaps outsiders would be better served by friends and coworkers than by examples and masters. Examples and masters of the Christian life form are for insiders. In relationships with outsiders commitment to relationship must be proved in concrete interactions. Outsiders have little reason to trust insiders. Solidarity with them, if it can be established at all, will not be granted on the terms of the church.

30. Welch 164.
I would argue that religious communities serious about inviting the challenge of outsiders must imagine a welcoming posture, an invitation to common life and work. Insiders would place themselves in working relationships with outsiders. Instead of representing the truth, they would listen and enter into accountable relationships. They would express their viewpoints when asked, and invite outsiders to join in the common life of their communities. They would place themselves in relationships with outsiders and would learn about what it is to be outside. They would walk together with outsiders, sharing with them such gifts of the life form of Christians as presence and forgiveness. Their presence and their forgiveness would demonstrate their commitments to their form of life. In social relationships they would decide together with outsiders on a equal basis, surrendering the power to determine common action by means of their truthful viewpoints. When in good conscience they could not agree with a proposed common action, they would indicate the nature of their disagreement and either contest the action or withdraw from participation in it.

One of the many things I have found stimulating in Welch’s work is the surrender of the power of truth to determine discourse. I think this can be accomplished in other ways than a proposal of the transitory nature of truth. One way is to envision a fresh understanding of witness and of the fundamental relationships of church and world. I have already indicated that I find the proposal of a common membership in society rather presumptuous. Outsiders are unlikely to view themselves as members of any group of insiders. Joining work together with outsiders on projects already in progress seems to me to be a fruitful way for members of religious communities to build transforming relationships with outsiders. The proposal of a special project or new
community with them draws attention and could be interpreted as the latest fad of the white middle class.

3.2 Themes of Interdependence

This theme is strongly developed in Roman Catholic social teaching. Problems in industrial enterprises or in worker’s and union movements cross the boundaries of particular countries and nations, so that these problems can no longer be considered isolated within countries and regions. Development has not succeeded in the underdeveloped countries for many reasons in the past twenty years, in part, because of conflicts in the Northern Hemisphere between East and West that were often carried on in the South in different forms of neo-colonialism. Both sides are guilty of imperialistic tendencies. Funds marked for development were sometimes diverted to pay for wars in the Southern Hemisphere. A variety of reasons are cited for the failure of programs of development, but the church, among others, is beginning to understand that economies and cultures no longer exist in isolation from one another. Nations and peoples are interdependent. “Either all the nations of the world participate or it will not be true development.”

Peace in the world is not possible so long as individuals and nations pursue their own interests at the expense of others, “in a different world, ruled by concern for the common good of all humanity or by concern for the ‘spiritual and human development of all’ instead of by the quest for individual profit, peace would be possible as the result of a more perfect justice”. People are

31. John Paul II 647.

32. John Paul II 645.
beginning to realize that they are linked together by a common destiny and that they cannot hope to obtain the good or happiness without the cooperation and commitment of all. Personal selfishness must be renounced. Interdependence "in itself demands the abandonment of the politics of blocs, the sacrifice of all forms of economic, military or political imperialism and the transformation of mutual distrust into collaboration. This is precisely the act proper to solidarity among individuals and nations." 33

In Welch interdependence is understood as a form of moral relationship conceptualized in opposition to unilateral action by powerful nations as an exercise of control over events. Characteristic of unilateral action is the confidence that certain persons or peoples have in the rightness of their own views. "There is no recognition here that all perspectives are partial and that the creation of a moral vision and a strategy of moral action requires by definition the counterbalance of other groups and individuals. A single actor cannot be moral." 34 Interdependent relationships between nations are conceived analogously to the solidary relationships among her communities.

Welch lists as "dangerous tendencies" a resistance to accountability for actions and a resistance to the notion that actions determined to be moral according our best understandings may have evil effects. Genuine interdependence would require interaction in which the demands of all parties were recognized and adjustments were required by all. In Roman Catholic social teaching "Christians have the moral obligation, according to the degree of each one’s responsibility, to take into consideration in personal decisions and decisions of government this relationship of universality, this

33. John Paul II 655.
34. Welch 38. Emphasis hers.
interdependence which exists between their conduct and the poverty and underdevelopment of so many millions of people". Christians should consider themselves in accountable relationships with the poor who are outsiders. Here Roman Catholic social teaching is aligned with Welch. She goes on, however, to describe interdependence with insiders. In Roman Catholic thought the church is considered a model of solidarity which does not exist in society. "This supreme model of unity, which is a reflection of the intimate life of God, one God in three Persons, is what we Christians mean by the word communion." Interdependence must be transformed into solidarity, based upon the principle that the goods of creation are meant for all." I think solidarity and not interdependence is considered characteristic of the community of insiders. Interdependence is characteristic of relationships outside the church.

Welch takes up the theme of interdependence again in her section on the communal matrix of resistance. Responsible action is participation in a communal work that lays the groundwork for "the creative response of people in the present and in the future". Action that is considered responsible requires a commitment to changing what can be changed and to providing inspiration for further resistance. Partial resolutions of problems and not final ones are "sustained and enabled by participation in a community of resistance." Long

35. John Paul II 645.
36. John Paul II 655.
37. John Paul II 654.
38. Welch 74-81.
39. Welch 75.
and short-term goals are developed that work for as much change as is possible in the present.

A heritage of love and resistance is built among those who struggle for justice. Self-respect is maintained and dignity encouraged in the matrix of the community that resists. The empowering and enabling for future work is considered an important communal work. As friends, insiders are aware of the costs of resistance to one another, and choose their battles carefully. They strive to be understanding when others participate as they are able. The ability to resist is sustained by the creation of alternative structures, one of which is the beloved community.

Welch envisions interdependence in opposition to what she has defined as an ethics of control in which action is directed to final resolutions of problems. The much smaller scale of problem resolution required by interdependence is unacceptable among those who must control events. The recommendation of tiny steps towards the resolution of large problems emerges from the black experience of resistance to oppression in the United States.

Roman Catholic social teaching considers the problem of the interdependence of nations and peoples as a fact requiring solidarity. The relationship of interdependence describes relationships outside the church communion. Welch takes a different approach to ethical relationships, interdependence, in which nations and peoples go slowly together into the future. Both authors imagine peoples and nations solving problems in concert and on an equal basis. Roman Catholic social teaching refers to the U.N. charter as an example of fundamental equality “which is the basis of the right of all to share in the process of full development”.40 Solidarity creates the

40. John Paul II 652.
conditions for interdependence in Welch through recognition of the dignity of
the other and respect for and accountability to her. The reliance of each on the
others supports the work of resistance in the beloved community, moral critique
among those communities involved in communicative ethics, and social
transformation at the level of peoples and nations.

I do not think that outsiders would find an argument for solidarity with
everyone based on an analysis of society persuasive. If, however, church
members began to work with them, learning from them, mutually transforming
relationships might grow in shared life experiences. Working with others on an
equal basis may wear away at social hierarchies and prejudices as we learn
what is important to one another. Interdependence in Welch offers a good
outline, I believe, for these relationships. Within these relationships our
commitments will be shown in such practices as presence and forgiveness.

3.3 Themes of Difference

Welch is involved in a politics of solidarity and difference which
deliberately sets out to avoid universalism, “the impartial observer of normative
rationality is led, by necessity, to the exercise of thinking that is reductive or
exclusive of difference”.41 Welch restores the viewpoint of the different to the
center of thought by a number of devices. Her epistemology of solidarity is
partial, immersed in a particular historical and cultural milieu. It posits the
determination of judgment by concrete, specific relations. All points of view are
partial; Welch resists the notion of a singular feminine identity or that anyone

41. Welch137.
may assume the mantle of universality. All points of view contribute to the work of moral critique. We cannot be ethical alone. "The affirmation of particularity tends to a type of universality, universal accountability, that precludes universally true interpretations of the human condition or final strategies for social change". 42 We become accountable for the limits of our vision and the damage caused; we become a different community.

"One of the challenges facing liberation movements is the maintenance of love and solidarity in a form that enhances differences." 43 Pressures from outside can make differences appear threatening, but Welch values them for their contribution to moral critique, citing difference as the condition for overcoming ideology. 44 Welch recommends a "mutually challenging and mutually transformative pluralism" in which we "actively seek to be partially constituted by work with different groups". Moral discernment occurs as we act and think together; she agrees with Foucault that foundational moral critique requires difference. "In order to determine which interests or positions are more just, pluralism is required, not for its own sake, but for the sake of enlarging our moral vision." 45 We can transcend our own partial viewpoint, not through objectivity, but through a recognition of difference.

Roman Catholic social teaching addresses the importance of difference by carefully describing a social milieu in which differences in development lead to worldwide imbalances and injustices. It seeks to preserve legitimate differences, particularly cultural differences, but political differences must also

42. Welch 139.
43. Welch 145.
44. Welch 151.
45. Welch 126.
be respected. Forms of imperialism and neo-colonialism are exposed and denounced. The church stands with the poor who have always been at the margins of society. Cultural differences are to be preserved for all of society; underdeveloped nations contribute their irreplaceable cultural richness to human society. "The economically weaker countries, or those still at subsistence level, must be enabled, with the assistance of other peoples and of the international community, to make a contribution of their own to the common good with their treasures of humanity and culture, which otherwise would be lost forever." 46 Concern here is for lives and life-styles that are being lost in the conflict of East and West as resources are diverted into the making of war and preparations for it. Hope is extended to those persons and cultures that are being lost.

Difference is valued here for other reasons, but it seems to me that some positive value must be placed on difference for the sake of solidarity with outsiders. The understanding of the relationship of the community with the world has an important effect on the relationship with outsiders. Are the different conceptualized as lacking something which the church may supply? Where the viewpoint of the outsider has positive value in the common work of the community, her viewpoint adds to the community. In a sense the communities of Welch lack the distinctive viewpoint of the outsider and seek to include it in their liberative work. Roman Catholic social teaching has come to value difference, but it does not go so far as to believe that its viewpoint lacks the important contributions of outsiders. It opens itself to renewal through its commitments to solidarity with outsiders. The relationship with outsiders is given a place, but not an equal one.

46. John Paul II 654.
Outsiders are perceived as different as a result of our commonly held conceptions of who and what we are. If one is white, black skin color is different. If one is white, English-speaking and privileged, Spanish-speaking, brown-skinned, marginalized people are different. Acts of recognition and accountability with others may reduce the effect of difference in human relationships. Practicing the same courtesies with the different that we would with those like us may overturn some of the negative effect of difference. I am describing a practice that is intentionally deconstructive of social hierarchies. Welch describes actions which create solidarity. I believe that actions that deconstruct social hierarchies might free the oppressed and marginalized to think of themselves in new ways. If outsiders wish to enter into relationships, these same actions might be considered creative of solidarity.
4  THE ROLES OF NARRATIVE

This chapter will seek to answer three questions on the role of narrative in four Christian communities. What is narrative in each author and how does he/she understand interpretation? What narratives are considered to be normative in each author and how is the authority of narrative conceived in each case? What effect does each understanding of narrative have on solidarity with insiders and/or outsiders?

Formation in Hauerwas brings human life into alignment with the truthful biblical narratives of the church. Narrative is the form of God's salvation. These narratives are interpreted in the characters of insiders. Both the biblical narratives and the Christian community are considered normative for Christian formation. The authority of the biblical narratives is established by God's gift of himself in history. We may only know God and the truth of our existence through the power of narrative to locate Christians in the story of God.

McClelland describes a way of interpretation called the baptist vision in which the church of the first century is understood as the church now. The gospel narratives identify Jesus Christ, his disciples and the coming kingdom. The Old Testament narratives might identify the covenant relationship of Israel with God. The biblical narratives are normative for Christian life and action. Their authority is humbly accepted.

Solidarity is only established among insiders in Hauerwas and McClendon. Narrative formation has a role in establishing solidarity among insiders. Claims for the truthfulness of the Christian narratives make outsiders of those not formed after them. Because no canon within the canon is proposed, it is assumed that the canonical narratives are all considered to be truthful. Formation after stories that cast women or those from other races in
subordinate roles would probably block the possibility of solidarity with outsiders, if Hauerwas was interested in it.

In Sharon Welch narratives challenge the blindness caused by partial viewpoints and self-interest. Interpretation occurs together with those socialized into other life forms in the context of transforming relationships. Narratives of the oppressed are considered to be normative. Their authority rests in the difference of outside viewpoints. These are required by the common work of moral critique. Solidarity with insiders and with outsiders is facilitated in every act of recognition.

Roman Catholic social teaching has different roles for different narratives. Mentioned are the biblical narratives, the doctrinal corpus and stories, themes and experiences received from society. It is the duty of the church to read events in the light of the gospel narratives. The biblical narratives, the doctrines of the church, and the natural law tradition are normative. The authority of the biblical narratives for interpretation is greater than that of the doctrinal corpus containing the natural law tradition. The authority of the biblical narratives is found in God's call to us. They are referred to as God's word. Stories from outside may bring about renewal of the social doctrine of the church. The church makes commitments to relationships which place it in a position to hear and be influenced by outside voices.

I am interested in preserving a positive tradition and in opening the position of the church to challenge by outside voices. I separate a claim to the truthfulness of the Christian viewpoint from a claim to its completeness. In addition, the viewpoint of outsiders is considered corrective of the viewpoint of insiders. A more or less equal relationship is configured.
4.1 Narrative in Hauerwas and McClendon

Narrative in Hauerwas is the primary grammar of Christian belief, necessary to understanding of the inexplicable aspects of existence -- God, self, world.¹ It formally displays our existence as contingent beings, and is the form of our awareness of ourselves as historical beings. “We know who we are only when we can place our selves -- locate our stories -- within God’s story.”²

Hauerwas understands narrative as a reality-making claim, and refers to doctrine as a tool which helps us to better tell the story of God’s redemptive activity in creation. Display of the interrelation of God, self and world takes the form of a narrative “in which we discover that the only way to ’know’ God, the world, or the self is through their history”.³

McClendon moves in a different direction in his discussion of Hans Frei’s suggestion that the gospels identify Jesus Christ. The gospel of Mark is treated as an extended speech act describing the life of Christ. There are other characters in the story, his followers. Jesus’ disciples are identified along with a narrative world, the coming kingdom. These three identifications are joined together by the gospel story which has identifying, representative and affective force as a speech-act.⁴ The linguistic role of the gospels and epistles as “identity-documents requires that they shall be veridical, factual, actual history”.

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4. McClendon 337-44.
We come to know ourselves as we learn to tell our stories. Christians learn to grow into the story of Jesus as the form of God’s kingdom.⁵ Christian convictions are “displayed ethically by a certain character and/or particular virtues”.⁶ As I understand Hauerswas, the biblical narratives are interpreted in the character of Christians and of the Christian community. The character of insiders in created in a process of “imaginative challenge” by the biblical narratives and other insiders. Christian identity is formed through challenge by the biblical narratives, relationship with insiders and with those who have gone before us.⁷

Initiation into the story and the sustaining of insiders in the story depends upon “others who have gone before and those who continue to travel with us”.⁸ Insiders have an important role in the development of character through their expectations of other insiders. Initiates must learn to trust other insiders because they are the ones who will challenge them, requiring their formation after the story.⁹ “Thus the kind of community in which we encounter another does not merely make some difference for our capacity for agency, it makes all the difference.”¹⁰ The Christian community is essential to the formation of a capacity for agency.

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6. Hauerswas 34.
7. Hauerswas 121.
8. Hauerswas 45.
10. Emphasis his.
Sin in Hauerwas is caused by resistance to the training of the gospels.\textsuperscript{11} Sin "consists in our allowing our character to be formed by the story that we must do everything (pride) or nothing (sloth)".\textsuperscript{12} Sin is formation by the wrong story.

Narrative encompasses past and present in such a way in Hauerwas that every action is understood in the context of a purposive narrative. The continuous narrative of a single life formed by the biblical narratives and in the process of challenge by insiders, he believes, creates a form of moral reflection in which ethical decisions are not so much made as lived in the context of a Christian story.

McClendon develops a hermeneutic that relates human experience to the Scriptures. The stories of Christian lives are intimately related to the stories of Israel, of Jesus, and of the church. "More generally, the vision should show how a people’s identity is construed via narratives that are historically set in another time and place but display redemptive power here and now."\textsuperscript{13} The baptist vision of McClendon is a form of interpretation he describes as a mystical and immediate shared appreciation of the present Christian community as both the primitive church and the eschatological community.\textsuperscript{14} The claim is asserted that this church now is that primitive church, that Jesus’ commands then are directed to his followers in the present. McClendon points to a regular motif in biblical literature as grounds for this claim in which language

\begin{itemize}
\item 11. Hauerwas 47.
\item 12. Hauerwas 48.
\item 13. McClendon 34.
\item 14. McClendon 31.
\end{itemize}
appropriate in one context is applied under divine guidance to another set of events and circumstances.

The parallels to Habermas' description of conventional morality are striking I think. In this case the morality of the primitive Christian community is taken as a "horizon in which the various concrete duties and norms still refer to corresponding typical roles and situations." The placing into question of typical roles and situations in the post-conventional period has little affected the use of narrative in McClendon's community because it is a commonly held conviction that these narratives are truthful and effective in the formation of the character of persons and communities. Theology provides the common language of "dwellers in the household of faith", and without this common language humane dialogue cannot be conducted on equal terms.

"The nature of Christian ethics is determined by the fact that Christian convictions take the form of a story, or perhaps better, a set of stories that constitutes a tradition, which in turn creates and forms a community". In Hauerwas the story of Jesus is the form of God's kingdom. Hauerwas states, "the essential nature of narrative as the form of God's salvation is why we rightly attribute to Scripture the truth necessary for our salvation". The biblical narratives together with the community that attempts to live faithful to the story of God help Christians to develop disciplined skills for envisioning the

15. Habermas 50.
world. The role of the community in the formation of Christian character is considered as normative as the biblical narratives themselves. We can only act rightly in the world we can see. The biblical narratives and the Christian community help Christians to envision the world rightly. God has revealed himself narratively in the history of Israel and in the life of Jesus.\textsuperscript{20}

"Not only is knowledge of self tied to knowledge of God, but we know ourselves truthfully only when we know ourselves in relation to God."\textsuperscript{21} We know who we are when we locate ourselves in God's story. "To know our creator, therefore, we are required to learn through God's particular dealings with Israel and Jesus, and through God's continuing faithfulness to the Jews and the ingathering of a people to the church."\textsuperscript{22} The authority of the biblical narratives is demonstrated in their power to locate Christians in the story of God.

McClendon includes biblicism in his list of the marks of the radical reformers. This is understood "not as one or another theory of inspiration, but as humble acceptance of the authority of Scripture for both faith and practice."\textsuperscript{23} The biblical narratives are normative through humble acceptance of their authority.

The church of Hauerwas carries in its truthful convictions and practice the salvation of the world. Interaction with the biblical narratives in the context of a Christian community builds a common life form for Christians. They learn together to see the world truthfully.\textsuperscript{24} God, self and world are brought into right

\textsuperscript{20} Hauerwas 28-9.
\textsuperscript{21} Hauerwas 27.
\textsuperscript{22} Hauerwas 28.
\textsuperscript{23} McClendon 28.
relationship in the context of the community. "We can only know God by having our lives transformed through initiation into the kingdom."25

Sinners, non-members and the world resist the truth in Hauerwas and this is their disobedience, their sin. Hauerwas refers to the biblical narratives as a challenge to both members and non-members. "Thus the story requires transformation as it challenges the presumption of our righteousness and teaches us why we so badly need to be reborn through the baptism offered by this new community."26 As creatures we cannot return the gift of salvation, but we can respond with a willingness to receive it.27 "Therefore, Christian ethics must assert that by learning to be faithful disciples we are more able to see the world as it is, namely God's creation."28 If we are to be truthful, the self must be transformed.

Hauerwas excludes outsiders of the church from the ability to perceive the truth of their existence or to know God. They resist God's generous gift of salvation. They cannot be truthfully. In his section "Casuistry as a Narrative Art" from The Peaceable Kingdom Hauerwas gives a role to outside sources. They will and must challenge Christian convictions in a process similar to that by which Christians are formed by the narratives and in community. I would argue that Hauerwas's theory of Christian formation after the truthful narratives does much to exclude outsiders from the possibility of making a truthful challenge. He is not interested in solidarity with outsiders, and the participation in the

24. Hauerwas 34.
27. Hauerwas 27.
formation of character of insiders that outsiders might have made has been limited.

4.2 Narrative in Sharon Welch

Welch, aided by narratives of resistance written by the oppressed, develops both a critique of the "Western ethics of control" and proposes an "ethic of risk". "The function of telling particular stories of oppression and resistance is not to find the 'one true story' of subjugation and revolt but is to elicit other stories of suffering and courage, of defeat, of tragedy and resilient creativity." Stories contribute both to the common work of moral critique and to the ability of her communities to resist oppression as they bear the pain of oppression together. These stories should "serve as an impetus for all of us to recover, create and tell stories." Collective storytelling is the foundation for seeing and then challenging patterns of systemic injustice. Welch believes that insiders are blinded by their particular perspectives and interests unless they are challenged by stories of oppression. Conversion requires seeing the sin, turning away from exploitative habits of action and thought.

"Particular stories call us to accountability. As dangerous memories of conflict, oppression, and exclusion, they call those of us who are, often unknowingly, participants in structures of control to join in resistance and

29. Welch 139.
30. Welch 128.
31. Welch 108.
32. Welch 55.
transformation.\textsuperscript{33} Stories are told against other stories, and stories of oppression are privileged in discourse. These stories are told to reveal the sin of insiders and outsiders so that they may turn away from exploitative habits. The oppressed place themselves in accountable relationship with the privileged by telling their stories of oppression. Storytelling is an act of accountability that may contribute to solidarity between oppressed and privileged. Stories of oppression and resistance save our lives, offering "the insight we need to stop our collective self-destruction, the abuse of power that threatens all life."\textsuperscript{34}

Since Welch withholds a positive tradition from her community, it is not clear to me how these stories are interpreted. Narrative is offered as the criterion of description. The criterion of strategies is "those projects that create the most possibilities for further emancipatory response."\textsuperscript{35} "It is quite possible to have a radically different view of otherness, seeing in difference the seeds of a tension that although painful, can and does produce growth, seeing in the differences of the other a much needed corrective to the biases of one’s own social faction."\textsuperscript{36} Stories are interpreted together with men and women socialized into other life forms. The process of interpretation is, apparently, painful but creative of mutual transformation.

Argument requires developed viewpoints and draws upon a Western tradition of discourse. Welch provides a new norm for discourse, as I see it, without providing means for developing positions in the discourse. It is a game without enough rules. An analogy might be made to describing the game of

\textsuperscript{33} Welch 139.
\textsuperscript{34} Welch 18.
\textsuperscript{35} Welch 132.
\textsuperscript{36} Welch 35.
chess without the rules for movement of pieces. Welch believes interdependence will be a rather chaotic relationship. It is the fertile matrix of human creativity. Interdependence characterizes a form of human relations in which no tradition or set of narratives comparable to the biblical narratives predominates. There are no commonly held truthful stories or convictions in Welch.

From stories Euro-Americans can learn to resist oppression, those values which enable resistance, an ethic of risk defined as responsible action within the limits of bounded power. Welch assumes that each person will be socialized into a tradition. She opens moral discourse between different groups for the sake of moral critique and of social transformation.

Welch writes of the stories of African-American women, "Not written for us, but indicting us and our power, they offer the insight we need to stop our collective self-destruction, the abuse of power that threatens all life." The damage caused by this abuse of power can only be healed as the conditions are created for transformation in confrontation with the abuse. These are not stories of the Euro-American middle class, which tend to reinforce their own way of life. They are stories of outsiders, the marginalized and the oppressed. With Foucault, Welch understands that the blinders of social location can be overcome, not by objectivity, but by the acknowledgement of the differences "by which we ourselves are constituted". She goes beyond Foucault by urging that we actively seek "to be partially constituted by work with different groups".

"From the standpoint of such a critical history, there is an epistemological privilege of the oppressed. Those of us who are oppressed, while not having

37. Welch 18.

38. Welch 151.
an ontologically given primacy, do have a point of view essential to moral
critique."39 Greater attention is paid to the knowledge of those oppressed at
many levels. Stories of oppression are normative for discourse. The authority of
these stories is established in two ways. The contribution that these stories
make to the common work of moral critique and social transformation lends
authority to these stories, but they also may heal the blindness caused by self-
interest. They promise healing in transformative relationships.

"The solidarity with those who work for justice in the present is enhanced
by learning from those who have lived before and working for the ability of
children and youth to continue the struggle in the future in new, unimaginable
ways."40 These stories by healing blindness should make insiders and
outsiders better able to enter into accountable relationships and thus into
solidarity. Welch's communities do have a heritage composed of those stories
which have proven liberating in the past. Each generation tells these stories to
the next.

Welch specifically chooses narrative as the criterion of descriptions as an
act of recognition. Western-style argumentation presumes a level of education
not generally available to the oppressed, but a body of resistance literature
already exists. All the acts of recognition she describes have the potential to
initiate solidarity with outsiders. These include her standpoint epistemology, a
critical history written by the oppressed, etc.


40. Welch 22.
4.3 Narrative in Roman Catholic Social Teaching

"On the one hand it (the doctrinal corpus) is constant, for it remains identical in its fundamental inspiration, in its "principles of reflection", in its "criteria of judgment", in its basic "directives for action" and above all in its vital link with the Gospel of the Lord." 41 The social doctrine of the church is understood as an application of the word of God to people's lives. It offers principles for reflection, criteria of judgment and directives for action. 42 The biblical narratives and the doctrinal corpus, including the natural law tradition, are narratives which are particular resources of the church as it interprets for society. The church also receives stories, experiences and themes from its relationship with society. An experience of compassion with the poor described in the constitution of Vatican II spurred an analysis of the social situation which has appeared in subsequent encyclicals by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II. Themes like development and interdependence have been adopted from the social sciences into the doctrinal corpus.

The biblical narratives have a role in an overall interpretive project in which the church "reads events as they unfold in the course of history". 43 It is the duty of the church to study the signs of the times like interdependence and underdevelopment and to interpret them in the light of the gospel. The centrality of the biblical narratives is clearly established. All stories, analyses and themes are interpreted in the light of the gospel message. 44

41. John Paul II 643.
42. John Paul II 644.
43. John Paul II 643.
44. John Paul II 644.
As the Genesis account says (cf. Gn. 2:15), "he (man) is placed in the
garden with the duty of cultivating and watching over it, being superior to the
other creatures placed by God under his dominion (cf. Gn. 1:25-26). But at the
same time man must remain subject to the will of God, who imposes limits upon
his use and dominion over things (cf. Gn. 2:16-17), just as he promises him
immortality (cf. Gn. 2:9; Wis. 2:23)." The bible is understood as telling men and
women things directly or as immediately challenging persons. "Indeed, the
Lord Jesus himself, in the parable of the talents, emphasizes the severe
treatment given to the man who dared to hide the gift received"...It falls to us,
who receive the gifts of God in order to make them fruitful, to 'sow' and 'reap'. If
we do not, even what we have will be taken away." 45

The biblical narratives are normative for the church in its interpretations.
Interpretations of the signs of the times enabled by study in the social sciences
and of the human situation of underdevelopment, supported by rational
reflection, bring about renewal in the social doctrine of the church. Solidarity is
argued for on the grounds of a natural law principle, i.e., the goods of creation
are meant for all. 46 The Genesis account reveals the shared nature of human
existence and the proper subordination of the possession, dominion and use of
created things to man's vocation to immortality. 47 Different roles are described
for different stories. A subordinate role for themes and challenges from outside
the tradition is created. It seems that the biblical tradition is considered most
normative, followed by the doctrinal corpus.

45. John Paul II 651.
46. John Paul II 654.
47. John Paul II 651.
"For believers, and especially for Christians, these (moral) decisions will take their inspiration from the principles of faith with the help of divine grace." Faith in God commands what is good and forbids evil. God requires attitudes of people that express themselves in actions or omissions toward the neighbor. God is offended against and the neighbor hurt when people fail in these attitudes and actions.\textsuperscript{48} Authority derives from God and his call to men and women to be responsible builders of society.

The renewal of Roman Catholic social doctrine represented by the encyclical \textit{Populorum Progressio} was in direct response to the appeal of Vatican II found in its constitution \textit{Gaudium et Spes}. "The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts."\textsuperscript{49} Compassion was the motive of the document from Vatican II, and it spurred an investigation of the social situation supported by study in the social sciences and rational reflection on the problems of underdevelopment in the Southern Hemisphere. The church receives stories, analyses and experiences that may influence its social doctrine from society. Interdependence and development are themes that originated in the social sciences. A stance with the poor is described in which the church will hear their requests. Specific commitments are made to relationship with society and with outsiders. Challenges to the position of the church arise from these commitments which may become a source of renewal for the social doctrine of the church.

\textsuperscript{48} John Paul II 653.

\textsuperscript{49} John Paul II 644.
4.4 Conclusions

Hauerwas wrote, "Though some may find my position at some points quite conservative and at others very liberal, I have no real interest in the labels and hope merely to say what I believe to be true to the character of the God who would have us live as a people of truth and peace in a violent world".50 I do not believe that theology when rightly done is either Catholic or Protestant. The object of the theologian's inquiry is quite simply God -- not Catholicism or Protestantism. The proper object of the qualifier 'catholic' is the church, not theology or theologians. No theologian should desire anything else than that his or her theology reflect the catholic character of the church. Thus I hope my theology is catholic inasmuch as it is true to those Protestants and Roman Catholics who constitute the church catholic.51 I do not believe that Hauerwas is conscious of himself as having a particular position that is different in important respects from those of other interpreters of a common Christian tradition. Hauerwas's understanding of the narrative character of human existence does not allow abstraction from narrative context, and I wonder if this understanding obscures the particularity of his truthful point of view. Christian interpreters who understand narrative and interpretation differently might find themselves outside the community of Hauerwas.

If the "truthful" narratives of a human community describe subordinate positions for persons of a certain gender or race or condemn homosexuality, and these narratives are understood as directly formative of persons and of society, the persons who occupy those subordinate or condemned positions

51. Hauerwas xxvi.
may be fixed in them. The church is not free to move on to understanding persons and relationships in different ways than those offered by its truthful narratives. Martin Luther, who favored the literal interpretation of the biblical narratives, proposed a canon within the canon of the truthful narratives of the church. He did not choose to believe that all of sacred scripture was equally truthful. Since the biblical narratives are the form of God's salvation in Hauerwas, and no exceptions have been made, it could be said that all of the canon is considered to be truthful. If Hauerwas were interested in solidarity with outsiders, his understanding of narrative formation would likely prevent solidarity with many of the marginalized and the oppressed.

In Welch, as I interpret her, the importance of a common tradition in the development of standards for interpretation is simply not recognized. She has given such a high value to difference and to moral critique in her thought that it is hard for me to believe that truth could be permanently located in particular narratives or communities as it is in Hauerwas and McClendon. She has chosen narrative as the norm of discourse and so must make the narratives of outsiders as closely equal to those of her own community as possible so that the challenge of outsiders in discourse will be genuine. Stories of oppression and exclusion privileged in the conversation of communicative ethics and authoritative for the community may or may not be truthful. This, I believe, marks a decisive difference with Hauerwas and McClendon.

I think that the distinctiveness of human life forms would eventually be lost in Welch's communities because there are no narratives which are believed to have enduring truthfulness. I have stated that Welch proposes a game with too few rules. A positive tradition offers standards for choosing among stories. I argue that a positive tradition becomes a problem when the truthfulness of a particular position is understood as true for outsiders as well. If interpreters
separated a claim for the truthfulness of their own position from a claim to its completeness, a positive tradition might be maintained that was open to challenge by outsiders. If, in addition, the viewpoints of outsiders were conceived of as important correctives, the relationship with outsiders might be made approximately equal. The position of the church would be made responsive to outside viewpoints.
5 NEW DIRECTIONS FOR SOLIDARITY WITH OUTSIDERS

Authors characterize the fundamental relationships of insiders and outsiders, of church and world in such a way that solidarity with outsiders is either prepared or placed into question. In its descriptions of its fundamental ethical relationships the religious community provides a context for the proposed solidarity. One may begin to imagine how relationships with outsiders might be configured. Common membership in society and/or work with outsiders can provide a rationale for seeking solidarity with them. Themes are developed by religious communities that validate work together with outsiders and are descriptive of basic relationships. Interdependence and development have this function in Roman Catholic social teaching, interdependence and difference in Sharon Welch. The religious community formulates ways in which it will be related to the larger community with which it is in solidarity.

Hauerwas and McClendon have indicated that solidarity among those socialized into the same tradition should be characterized by an intimacy that the relations with outsiders could not approximate. It is believed that solidarity can only be created among those who share a common life form. Sharon Welch has suggested other ways in which solidarity may be created through acts which recognize the outsider and demonstrate accountability to her. She has opened the discussion of alternate pathways to solidarity in and through concrete relationships. By emphasizing the part that mutuality of relationship has in transforming relationships, she has suggested a new way of thinking about the relationships of insiders of the religious community with outsiders. She points to something new, a relationship with outsiders that is not characterized by witness or service but by mutual relationship and participation.
Roman Catholic social-scientific analyses are statements of "moral fact" founded in an objective analysis of reality.¹ The church's understanding of social reality is believed to be true for everyone. It is in this sense that witness to the truth of a particular viewpoint continues in Roman Catholic social teaching together with a commitment to solidarity with outsiders. The obligation to commit to development "is an imperative which obliges each and every man and woman as well as societies and nations".² The theological diagnosis of social evil offered by the church is intended "to identify precisely, on the level of human conduct, the path to be followed in order to overcome it".³ The church does not indicate that it understands the partiality of its own viewpoint.

Outsiders may be considered disobedient or fail in their "clear ethical duty" if they do not respond to the truthfulness of a particular viewpoint in the manner required.⁴ This implication of witness has little to do, I think, with the faith indicated by the statement "I believe". "I believe" has the power in the Christian tradition to transform a single human life when joined with faith. If what is sought from outsiders is participation in a common work, the assertion that outsiders are in the wrong when they do not believe as the church does or refuse to follow certain recommendations for action is, I think, out of place. I find this position authoritarian. It does not show outsiders that they will be allowed a position of their own.

Outsiders may learn how our commitments shape our lives in the context of long-term relationships. If we demonstrate care for them, they may wish to

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1. John Paul II 645.
2. John Paul II 652.
imitate us. If we are open to them, we may learn from them. If we interact with them in a way that demonstrates an uncommon courtesy, social hierarchies might be deconstructed. The proposal of solidarity with outsiders, as I imagine it, promises mutual relationship and participation with outsiders in the context of shared life and work. Solidarity, itself, would grow in concrete relationships.

If the true membership of the church is in the kingdom of God and not in any nation, and the church conceives of itself as independent of society instead of interdependent with society, the church may describe itself as separate from society, with independent goals and practices. Few accommodations are made for difference in Hauerwas and McClendon because the church has described its relationships in such a way that outsiders must be resocialized in order to enter into solidarity. The possibility of solidarity with outsiders is excluded.

It is from the standpoint of this understanding of the ethical relationships of Hauerwas and McClendon that the challenge of outside voices for this way of thinking is questioned, particularly in the light of the several ways that Roman Catholicism has set about structuring renewal into its doctrinal corpus. It has given a regular place to the study of the signs of the times, taken a stand with the oppressed that entitles them to a hearing, described the social situation in such a way that each part is considered interdependent and in ethical relationship, with the church claiming a specific role for itself. By taking a leadership role in society, the church accepts some of the responsibilities with it. The church is present with society in Roman Catholic social teaching and for it at the same time. In Hauerwas and McClendon the church is present for society, accepts no responsibility with it.

Those who understand the partiality of their own viewpoints and the importance of other viewpoints as correctives to their own may need to rethink the fundamental relationships of their religious communities. Witness to the
truth of a particular life form does not, I believe, invite the participation of the
other in dialogue. This is the basis of my argument with Hauerwas and
McClendon. Either witness and service need to be reconfigured or structures
analogous in function to those adopted by the Roman Catholics instituted, if
Hauerwas is serious about facilitating regular challenge from outsiders.
Solidarity in Welch is a form of human relations in which reciprocity is required.

Welch breaks new ground for the fundamental relationships of the
religious community and points the way to future studies in which mutuality of
relationship could be explored. Her notion of the transitory nature of truth
establishes an initial equal value for all the narratives in discourse. She makes
the distinctive narratives of her communities directly available to the common
discourse. This last is an achievement that deserves further study. The
continuity that "truthful" narratives provide to a traditioning community is almost
lost, I think, in Welch. Her work does indicate that truth is a central issue where
solidarity is proposed with outsiders. Witness to the truth of a particular life form
suggests that outsiders lack something which the community provides in its
witness. I understand service as a parallel form. The community provides
something, as service, which outsiders lack. Welch emphasizes the positive
contribution of the viewpoint of outsiders. The latter position would invite
participation and mutual relationship, I believe, in ways that the former would
not. Welch indicates that solidary relationships should be characterized by
reciprocity.

The section of the thesis on narrative was intended to show how the four
authors understand narrative, its interpretation, how it is normative, and its
authority. The role of narrative and story in the creation of solidarity within
communities and with outsiders was explored. It was argued that the
community that has no common tradition has no standards by which an action
could be judged. I want Welch to do more with narrative and discourse. Haurowas understands very well the problems that different conceptions of the truth cause for moral argument. He argues that one must have a common life form in order to settle moral questions. Both recognize that different life forms hold different convictions with respect to the truth. They have proposed opposing solutions to the problem.

Comparison of Welch's work with the Christian authors suggests that Christians expect the relationships with outsiders to have a different character than those with insiders. Belief in the truthfulness of a particular tradition may hinder our receptiveness to outsiders and their viewpoints. Our traditions offer us standards by which to interpret our own and other stories, but as interpreters we should be able to amend them. Roman Catholics have been able to do so. Welch manages to establish the valuable contribution of the outsider together with a near surrender of a common tradition. It has been argued that it is likely that the distinctiveness of different life forms would disappear as a consequence. If we are all inevitably socialized into particular life forms, we must not undermine their validity.

I argue that a positive tradition only poses a problem for relationship with outsiders if the truthful position of the religious community is believed to be true for everyone. If the community separates a claim for the truthfulness of its own viewpoint from a claim for its completeness, it might maintain a positive tradition and still open its position to outsiders. If, in addition, the religious community conceived of the viewpoints of outsiders as corrective of their own, a roughly equal relationship might be enabled.

Study of the gospel of John has made me very sensitive to the blindness and deafness of insiders. "And the Father who sent me himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his
word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he has sent. I interpret the passage as a warning to all insiders, particularly Christian ones. The outsider could be the one he has sent. Indeed, in John Christ is the outsider par excellence.

Roman Catholic social teaching is attempting a delicate balance between preservation and renewal. Witness as a doctrinal form expresses the belief of insiders in the truth of their common convictions. This belief need not be surrendered if one is to recognize the truth of other life forms. This is an understanding received from Stanley Hauerwas. I have argued that his descriptions of the fundamental relationships of his community do not facilitate recognition of the truth of other life forms. There is no question that he would like to find outsiders challenging to the life of the church. It is argued that he has not succeeded in moving the truth of other life forms from the margins of consideration in his peaceable kingdom into the center. Welch has paid particular attention to the issue of moving marginal concerns right to the center of communal discourse and opens new possibilities in the consideration of common ground for solidarity with outsiders.

Where the viewpoint of the other is considered vital to common work, solidarity with the outsider may be created along lines other than a commonly held form of life. Solidarity may be founded in actions that convey to the other the unique importance of her life form. The context of a common work allows the importance of different viewpoints to emerge in dialogue and in concrete interactions. Common membership in society prepares church members to understand society as that environment in which insiders work together with outsiders. Where the viewpoint of the outsider is understood as making a

contribution to the common work, acts of recognition and accountability with her should invite and incorporate her viewpoint. Stories of how different viewpoints contribute to the common work could circulate among those working together. Common work cannot properly be regarded as a service. Challenge by an outsider could be viewed as a fresh opportunity for mutually transformative dialogue and fresh interpretation of the tradition. I favor long-term cooperative interaction rather than the finding of final solutions for outsiders.
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