

It seems clear that the call to the general ministry of the church includes both a constant and a variable aspect—or, as one may also say, both a general and a special aspect. Although no one called to the general ministry is thereby called to any particular special ministry, one so called is called to some special ministry. In this sense, one's general ministry includes a variable or special aspect.

Question: Could one say, mutatis mutandis, that the original call to be human includes a variable, or special, as well as a constant or general aspect, in that, in being called to be human, one is eo ipso called to be religious in some way, even if not in any particular way? Is one called, in other words, to some explicit re-presentation of the implicit call to be human that is presented in and with one's very existence as a human being?

If the answer to this question is affirmative, there is a parallel between being human and being religious (in some way), on the one hand, and being Christian and being (some kind of) a Christian minister, on the other. Just as one can't live out the call to be Christian without exercising some call to special ministry, so one can't live out the call to be human without exercising some call to be religious. There would appear to be the further parallel, however, between being religious and being Christian, on the one hand, and exercising some kind of a special ministry and being a representative Christian minister, on the other. (F. D. Maurice may be thought to say exactly this when he holds that "the priest's ordination reveals the truth of every man's vocation: 'every one of us is a servant or minister in this [Christ's] kingdom. Some of us have the name of Ministers. That is not that we may be separate from our fellows, but that we may give them a sign what Christ would have them be. All of us are ministers. Every father is a minister of Christ to his children. Every mother is a minister of Christ to her children. Every brother and sister is a minister of Christ to his brothers and sisters. Wherever we are going, whatever we are doing, in a house or in a field, we are ministers of Christ. That is our calling. We may be faithful or unfaithful ministers; but He is our Master, and He has sent us to wait upon some or other,

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upon more or fewer.' . . . the office of the priest is a visible sign which proclaims how each man is to understand his own calling . . ." [*The Divine Order*: 92-93].)

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