alone at worship! I and “we” participate as best we can, alert not only to the awesome presence of God but also to the others in the pew(s) and of the opportunity therein for celebration and community.

This has been no easy transition. Many worshippers, Catholic and Protestant, have seen an apparent contradiction in the expectation that they recognize both God and man in worship. Traditional Christians have a reputation for being solemn, even mournful in worship. Yet joy is a prime Christian virtue! Not that a continuous ripple of laughter is an ideal, but certainly there could be a more relaxed spirit of Christian fellowship in the service, not only after it. Dietrich Bonhoeffer seems to indicate that “fellowship” is more than the after-service coffee, punch and cookies. He doesn’t apologize for speaking of “Word, fellowship, and Sacrament.” Fellowship springs from the word and finds its completion in the Lord’s Supper because “the whole common life of the Christian fellowship . . . begins and ends in worship.” 12

Someone has pointed out that children and lovers are supposed to laugh a lot. The Christian worshipper could (should?) be a bit of both. One need not blush if in worship he or she mirrors the simplicity of the child or the security of the lover. Indeed, it would seem that the heart and voice could (should?) therein be lifted in joy. Yet, a balance must be sought between reverence for God and community spirit, between awe and celebration.

The casual reader might find what follows difficult to understand, yet it is a fact that not only emotional and rational, but even moral barriers prevent many from any real celebration in worship. As priest and pastor, and as investigator into liturgical communication, I have discovered that many Catholics and Christians of all persuasions must be convinced of the non-sinfulness of in-church interaction! The traces of the Church’s reaction to Arianism still exist and remain deep. An honest, deep seated awe or fear in God’s presence remains a continued barrier to liturgical interaction. Were this mentality and resultant conduct passed on merely through the parochial or Sunday school or from the pulpit, perhaps less time and effort would be required to alter thinking and action. As it is no doubt true, however, the major teaching mode in this matter is parent to child, not a few years but generations might be required to achieve a spirit of somewhat relaxed community in Christian worship. For centuries past, the distinguishing mark of a Catholic, and, I suppose, of most Christians, has been reverence in church. The present urging towards a balanced recognition of God and one’s fellowman is combatting a cultural trend of centuries.

Yet, progress is being made. The ideal is there, and increasingly recognized. “Alleluia’s” are being sung more and more often. “Amen’s” are being voiced even in so-called liturgical congregations as if what has preceded is truly recognized and agreed with. The exchange of the