different kinds of activities which do not easily fall into an orderly pattern." In a multi-staff urban parish he may be strictly "on call" only one day a week, and during the rest of the week he may have the mobility and privacy that make it easy for him to cover up his drinking. In this way he is similar to the heavy-drinking executive in business corporations who also "has no time clock to punch, no supervisor watching his comings and goings."  

Obviously, the clergyman, in spite of the complaint that "you can't make a move without the parishioners knowing it," is not subject to the kind of supervision lower echelon employees have. Indeed, he may have people who "cover up" for him, a sympathetic housekeeper or secretary, fellow priests who are unwilling to delate him to higher superiors, parishioners who want to protect him from scandal; perhaps even the bishop feels that a change of assignment will help the priest to "straighten himself out."

This description of the characteristics of American Catholic clergy is not meant to be an "explanation" of their drinking habits, or of potential alcoholism among priests. It simply provides the setting in which some priests develop a drinking problem and in which the overwhelming majority of priests do not become alcoholics. The publicity in recent years surrounding the question of alcoholic drinking leads to the impression that the incidence of alcoholism is rising in all areas of living, including that of the clergy. Since we have no reliable earlier data with which we can compare contemporary findings these interpretations must remain impressionistic, and are probably false.

MORE THAN SANCTIONS ARE NEEDED

The significant difference over the past quarter-century—dating approximately from the time when Ralph Pfau and Austin Ripley began to have an apostolic impact—is the development of programs of education and prevention of alcoholism, and especially of official policies for therapeutic treatment. From the point of view of rehabilitation a central factor is the determination, especially by ecclesiastical authorities, that the problem drinker in the clergy must be confronted with something more than a punitive sanction.

At the NCCA convention in 1967 the memorialist of Father Pfau looked into the past to say that "all the ecclesiastical penalties hurled by the best-intentioned bishops against the best-intentioned priests in the world could not effect a cure. In fact grief over such penalties could induce despondency and despair that might lead to heavier alcoholic

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36 Ibid., p. 159.