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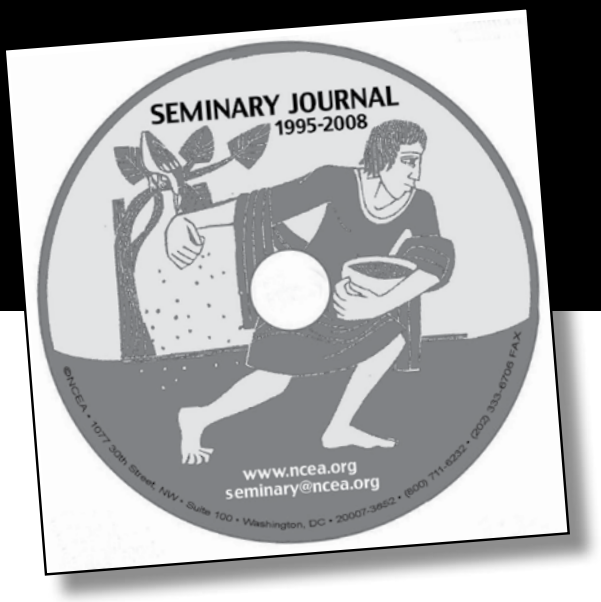

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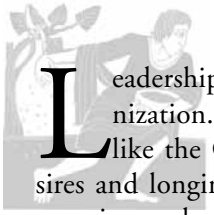


Leadership is an indispensable skill for any organization. It is particularly critical for institutions, like the Church, that attend to the deepest desires and longings of the human family for ultimate meaning and purpose. This component is identified in the *Program for Priestly Formation* (fifth edition) as one of the central dimensions or pillars of priestly training.

The *Seminary Journal* has been blessed with such a wealth of articles on this theme that we are devoting two issues of the journal to the topic.

In this issue, Mark Fischer, who has written extensively on the role of parish councils, shares his insights based upon his long career of teaching at St. John's Seminary, Camarillo, California. I was pleased to serve with Mark as a colleague on St. John's faculty, and I think his essay highlights important ways in which the seminary curriculum and the overall program of seminary formation can enhance leadership capacities in the seminarians. Rather than adding a course to an already heavily laden curriculum, Dr. Fischer suggests creative insights to help students integrate classroom learning with the spiritual, human and pastoral goals of the *Program for Priestly Formation*.

Kevin O'Neil, CSsR, long-time professor of moral theology at the Washington Theological Union in Washington, DC, provides a very perceptive and timely essay on the nature of professional preparation for ministry. Kevin brings to this reflection the perspective of a wise theological educator. Readers may also be attracted to the excellent volume he co-edited with Sr. Katarina Schuth, OSF, and Dr. Victor Klimoski, *Educating Leaders for Ministry, Issues and Responses* (Liturgical Press, 2005).

George Schultze, SJ, spiritual director and professor of moral theology with a specialization in social justice at St. Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park, California, shares the benefits of the experience of community organizing for the preparation of future priests. Not only does this training equip priests for leadership in social justice ministry, but it also equips them for the day-to-day work of parish ministry.

Anne Garrido, director of field education at Aquinas Institute, St. Louis, Missouri, contributes a savvy assessment of supervised field education with a particular focus on the official ecclesial documents related to ministry formation. Readers will find her observations especially useful for helping students to become effective leaders and for growing more deeply in their spiritual formation.

Analyses of long-term trends in the U.S. Catholic Church, including studies produced by CARA and the Pew Charitable Trust, document the sea-change in demographics that is underway. Allan Deck, SJ, who has joined the faculty at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles after distinguished service as a staff member at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, examines the demographic data and pastoral need for culturally competent ministers. He reflects on how seminaries might integrate into the curriculum the intercultural guidelines issued by the USCCB.

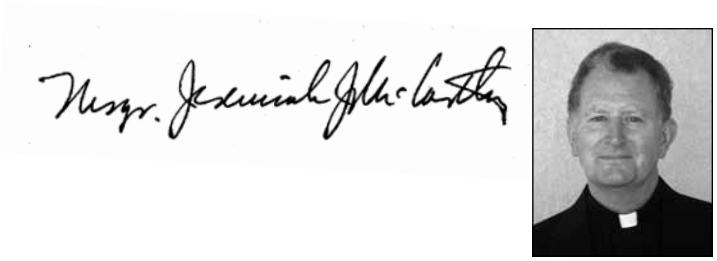
Brett Hoover, now a visiting professor at Loyola Marymount University, helps us understand that task-orientation and ministerial isolation are powerful cultural influences that negatively impact parish ministry – and the clergy and lay ecclesial ministers working in parishes. He reflects on ways that the seminary can teach leadership skills to cope with these influences.

F. K. Marsh, who serves on the faculty at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland, discusses findings from her study of seminarians. She used the NCEA resource *In Fulfillment of Their Mission* to design her research protocol. Readers will find her results intriguing for its implications for the seminary formation program.

Finally, Eugene Hemrick reviews Steve Rosetti's new book, *Why Priests are Happy: A Study of the Psychological and Spiritual Health of Priests.* Gene, a happy priest himself, draws upon his own experience as a re-

searcher and teacher to comment on the book.

The Spring 2011 issue will continue the leadership theme, and it will come shortly after this issue. As always, I hope that you will consider writing for *Seminary Journal.* Submissions may be sent to seminaryjournal@ncea.org.



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Very Rev. Tom Dragga
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Wickliffe, OH 44092-2527
(440) 943-7648 (office)
tmd@dioceseofcleveland.org

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401 Michigan Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20017
(202) 756-5535 (office)
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Conception Seminary College
P.O. Box 502, Conception, MO 64433-0502
(660) 944-2810 (office)
samuel@conception.edu

Sr. Katarina Schuth, OSF, Ph.D.
Endowed Chair for the Social Scientific Study of Religion, Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity
2260 Summit Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105
(651) 962-5066 (office)
kmschuth@stthomas.edu

Very Rev. Dennis J. Lyle
Rector/President, Mundelein Seminary
1000 E. Maple Avenue, Mundelein, IL 60060
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Rev. Justin Matro, OSB (East Coast Rectors)
Rector, St. Vincent Seminary
300 Fraser Purchase Rd.
Latrobe, PA 15650-2690
(724) 532-6600 (office)
justin.matro@email.stvincent.edu

Rev. Leon Hutton
Director of Human Formation
St. John's Seminary School of Theology
5012 Seminary Road
Camarillo, CA 93012-0637
(805) 482-2755 (office)
lhutton@stjohnsem.edu

Rev. Tom Knoebel
Vice Rector, Sacred Heart School of Theology
P.O. Box 429
Hales Corners, WI 53130-0429
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tknoebel@shst.edu

EX-OFFICIO

Dr. Dan Aleshire (ATS)
Executive Director
Association of Theological Schools
10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275
(412) 788-6505 (office)
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Executive Director, USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations
3211 Fourth Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017
(202) 541-3033 (office)
smcknight@usccb.org

STAFF MEMBERS

Msgr. Jeremiah McCarthy
Executive Director, NCEA Seminary Department
1005 N. Glebe Road, Suite 525
Arlington, VA 22201
(800) 711-6232 (office)
jmccarthy@ncea.org

Kathy Schmitt, M.Div.
Administrative Assistant, NCEA Seminary Department
1005 N. Glebe Road, Suite 525
Arlington, VA 22201
(571) 451-2881 (direct to desk)
(800) 711-6232 (office – receptionist)
kschmitt@ncea.org

Dr. Karen Ristau, Ph.D.
President, National Catholic Educational Association
1005 N. Glebe Road, Suite 525
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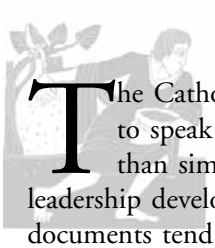
(800) 711-6232 (office)
kristau@ncea.org

Preparing Seminarians for Pastoral Leadership

Mark F. Fischer, Ph.D.



The Catholic Church's official documents prefer to speak of the priest as a good shepherd rather than simply as a leader. Instead of calling for leadership development at the seminary level, ecclesial documents tend to speak of seminarians learning to imitate the good shepherd, Jesus Christ. By contrast with secular management textbooks, which define leadership as the ability to influence followers in the accomplishment of tasks,[1] Catholic church documents on priestly formation emphasize the assimilation by priests of Christ's mission. Through their life and ministry – in short, through their identity with Christ – priests allow God's incarnate Word to teach, sanctify, and guide the community so that its members may also make the mission of Christ their own.[2] This distinguishes pastoring from leadership.

At the same time, official documents of the Church do speak of priests as "leaders," albeit in a somewhat muted fashion. Vatican II, for example, stated that the priest "leads" the brothers and sisters of God as a family.[3] The priest is not merely influencing followers to accomplish a task but is also allowing God to lead through him. Similarly, John Paul II described the priest as "encouraging and leading the ecclesial community;" in his view, the priest is able "to coordinate all the gifts and charisms which the Spirit inspires in the community."[4] More than influencing others, priestly leadership includes calling forth the gifts of the Christian people. The United States Bishops also speak of the necessity for leadership formation in their *Program of Priestly Formation*, 5th edition. To be sure, they subordinate leadership training to the assimilation by seminarians of the mission of Christ. But the *PPF* clearly states that seminarians must acquire the "skills for effective pastoral leadership."[5] The priest is more a shepherd than a leader, at least in ecclesial documents, but his ability to lead is essential.

Through their life and ministry – in short, through their identity with Christ – priests allow God's incarnate Word to teach, sanctify, and guide the community so that its members may also make the mission of Christ their own.

A publication in 2008 of the National Catholic Educational Association, *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*, has affirmed the importance of leadership from a practical point of view.[6] The publication describes the nine "duties" of the Catholic priest, of which the fourth is to "lead" parish administration. Administration encompasses eleven distinct tasks, including the leadership of pastoral and finance councils, the oversight of planning ministry, and stewardship, and the supervision of staff, property and communication. While "good shepherd" may be the preferred description of the Catholic pastor, "leadership" is one of his essential duties.

Given the Church's endorsement (however modest) of the concept of leadership, it is disappointing to see so little attention paid to leadership in the seminary curriculum. The *PPF* states that the pastoral formation program "should provide opportunities" for seminarians to acquire "the skills of pastoral leadership,"[7] but the nature of these opportunities remains vague. Nowhere does the *PPF* require a course in leadership as it requires courses in Holy Orders (no. 202) and in Ecumenism (no. 216).

Seminarians are supposed to learn how to be effective pastoral leaders, says the *PPF*, but the primary means to accomplish this is through "an initiation to various practical, pastoral experiences, especially in parishes."[8] In other words, seminarians are invited to observe leadership at the practical level, understand it, and then assimilate it. One might conclude that education in leadership has been relegated to on-the-job training.

To help seminary educators avoid this false conclusion, this essay will elaborate what ecclesial documents say about leadership development. While most of the *PPF*'s treatment can be found under the heading of pastoral formation, the *PPF* also hints about leadership in the pillars of human, spiritual and intellectual formation. The essay will retrace aspects of the treatment of leadership within the Church's official documents about the formation of priests under the following headings:

- **Human Formation**. Under this pillar we will see how the Church connects leadership to obedience. Official teaching offers an implicit critique of any kind of leadership that is not obedient to the spirit of Christ.
- **Spiritual Formation**. This pillar affirms the teaching that priestly power does not grant the priest an automatic right to be obeyed, but rather stems from his assimilation of the servant-mission of Christ, possibly creating what John Paul II called a "missionary tension" between serving the community and obeying the bishop.
- **Intellectual Formation**. Not just the courses on priesthood and spiritual theology, but even the core courses in the pre-theology curriculum (our examples are epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics) can explore the philosophic bases of leadership.
- **Pastoral Formation**. Seminarians reflect on their experiences of leadership in courses guided by pastoral field educators, and seminarian interns who consult their parishioners gain an experience akin to leading a pastoral council.

By drawing out the hints about leadership within all four of the pillars of formation, educators can enhance the seminary's capacity to form priestly leaders.

Human Formation: Learning Leadership through Obedience

The PPF, in its section on human formation, hardly speaks of leadership. It does say, however, that human formation takes place "when seminarians learn to accept the authority of superiors, develop the habit of using freedom with discretion, learn to act on their own initiative and do so energetically, and learn to work harmoniously with confreres and laity."[9] All of these belong to leadership. Before one can be a leader, one must be able to accept the leadership of others. The seminarian must learn to see the exercise of leadership as essential to the Christian community. Utopians may criticize leadership as authoritarian and incompatible with true human equality, but in no society is everyone on an absolutely equal footing.[10] The well-being of every community depends on wise leaders and intelligent followers. Seminarians aspire to leadership when they see it exercised wisely.

The well-being of every community depends on wise leaders and intelligent followers. Seminarians aspire to leadership when they see it exercised wisely.

The passage from the PPF simultaneously extols obedience and freedom. The seminarian, it says, must learn both to obey and to use freedom with discretion. Why are these terms linked? Pope John Paul II's *Pastores dabo vobis*, in its section on human formation, gives us a clue. There we read that "human maturity, and in particular affective maturity, requires a clear and strong *training in freedom* which expresses itself in convinced and heartfelt obedience to the 'truth' of one's being."[11] The passage affirms that freedom is not the antithesis of obedience. In fact, true freedom means a liberation from everything that would hinder the person from seeing reality (including the reality of God) and acting in accord with it. True freedom is lived in obedience to genuine authority, whether we call that authority "the 'truth' of one's being" or the Word of God.

We can discern the relevance of this insight to the concept of leadership in another passage from *Pastores dabo vobis* that links obedience to ecclesial authority and responsible freedom. The priest should not obey his bishop (nor the seminarian his rector) in a blind and unreflective way. Speaking of the priest's obedience to

his bishop, Pope John Paul II wrote:

"The 'submission' of those invested with ecclesial authority is in no way a kind of humiliation. It flows instead from the responsible freedom of the priest who accepts not only the demands of an organized and organic ecclesial life, but also that grace of discernment and responsibility in ecclesial decisions which was assured by Jesus to his Apostles and their successors."[12]

The priest or seminarian obeys because he accepts the reality of the Church, but this is not servility or a merely pragmatic assent to those in power; it is also "discernment and responsibility." The obedience of the Christian is not blind but thoughtful. It acts, not by dumb reflex, but after consideration of the truth.

That is why obedience and leadership are linked. One obeys an ecclesial authority just as one obeys the truth of one's being. Obedience is an expression of insight. By obeying, one acknowledges the goodness and the superior insight of the leader or authority. For that reason, John Paul II wrote that learning obedience prepares a person for leadership. "Only the person who knows how to obey in Christ," we read, "is really able to require obedience from others in accordance with the Gospel."[13] Leadership, whether defined in terms of the good shepherd or in terms of influencing others to achieve a task, necessarily invites obedience. The priestly leader invites obedience in good faith because he already knows how to obey "in Christ." The leader receives obedience from those who hear God's Word in the invitation to obey.

The goal of this essay is to help educators understand the Church's call for leadership development within the pillars of seminary formation. The first pillar, human formation, links the development of the future leader to obedience and to human development. Seminarians manifest their growth in self-awareness by showing a capacity for leadership.[14] The link between human formation and leadership has two practical consequences, which we can treat as follows:

- **Obedience and Leadership**. Formators should invite seminarians to regard responsible obedience as essential to achieving the seminary's goals and purposes. They should reflect on the challenge of offering obedience in the present and relate it to the challenge of inviting obedience in the future.
- **Opportunities for Leadership**. When officials (e.g., directors of students) invite seminarians to exercise leadership, the officials should support them during their work and afterwards reflect with them about how well they did. Human formation means not just shaping seminarians, but allowing them to be leaders.

Being a follower is not a sign of humiliation but of obedience to the leader's superior insight. Becoming a good follower is the seminarian's first step on the way to becoming a good leader.

Management textbooks commonly treat leadership as the ability to influence followers. The Church's official documents about seminary education remind educators that all leaders were once followers. Being a follower is not a sign of humiliation but of obedience to the leader's superior insight. Becoming a good follower is the seminarian's first step on the way to becoming a good leader.

Spiritual Formation: Leadership and Pastoral Charity

Leadership development also takes place within spiritual formation. The seminary aims at helping the student to identify with Christ as the unifier of the Christian community. The sacrament of the Eucharist signifies this unity. It makes tangible the spiritual reality of communion.

The communion between the priest and the lay Christian poses a delicate challenge to seminary formators. On the one hand, their task is to help seminarians assimilate Christ, the one to whom they will be conformed in the sacrament of Holy Orders. Both *Lumen gentium* and *Pastores dabo vobis* speak of the ontological bond that exists between Christ and the priest.[15] At the same time, however, formators must avoid any suggestion that the priest, who is configured to Christ in a sacramental way, is thereby superior in status to other Christians, who are configured to Christ in a general way.[16] The ontological difference between the ministerial and the common priesthood is no excuse for clericalism. Nor is it an adequate basis for the priest's leadership of

the community. Formators should insist that the ordination of a priest does not automatically make him a leader who commands obedience.

The obedience that belongs to the priestly leader is not rooted in the difference between priest and people but in the love that unites them.

The obedience that belongs to the priestly leader is not rooted in the difference between priest and people but in the love that unites them. The *PPF* states that spiritual formation and pastoral formation reinforce one another and that seminarians are called to love God and neighbor. "When they respond positively to this invitation and grow in that love, they find the basis for pastoral and ministerial outreach that culminates in pastoral charity."[17] The leadership of the priest must be exercised in love if people are to respond to it in love.

John Paul II affirmed this insight in his discussion of how the priest is configured to Christ. He began by acknowledging the "spiritual power" of the priest, a power defined as "a share in the authority with which Jesus Christ guides the Church."[18] But lest anyone misunderstand this "power" as an authority based on rank, John Paul immediately linked it to service. The priest's spiritual power, said the pope, belongs to Christ who heads the Church "in the new and unique sense of being a 'servant.'" Unlike other leaders who lord it over their subjects, the Christ-like priest manifests pastoral charity. Quoting St. Augustine, John Paul called the priestly office an "amoris officium."[19] It is an office, yes, complete with its own rank, trappings and privileges. At its heart, it is an office of love. In the pastoral office, the priest commits himself to the Church's own goal for itself: green pastures and flowing waters. He leads the flock where the flock itself, possessing the mind of Christ, wants to go.

At the same time, however, experience proves that the flock does not always possess the mind of Christ. The Church does not oblige the pastor to obey the flock but instead insists upon his obedience to the bishop. With the bishop, wrote John Paul II, the priest is in "hierarchical communion." That does not simply mean that the priest obeys blindly (see endnote 11). He does not merely obey the bishop and lead the flock where the bishop decides it must go. No, John Paul II linked the idea of hierarchical communion with unity. The priest obeys his bishop in order to build up the unity of the flock, inviting its members to follow their vocations and put their gifts at God's service. The priest's ordained priesthood is meant to promote the laity's baptismal priesthood. Tension may arise between the priest's duty of obedience to the bishop and his service to their people. John Paul II called it a "missionary tension."[20] It is an unavoidable aspect of the mystery of the Church as both a diversity and a unity.

Obedience and service help to explain the continued relevance of the term "servant leadership" coined by Robert K. Greenleaf.[21] The servant leader serves followers by helping them achieve their goals. Such a leader presupposes that followers already know in general where they want to go. The servant leader facilitates the followers' growth and goal-oriented activity. Greenleaf's concept of leadership is akin to the so-called "path-goal" theory of leadership from the 1970s. In that theory, followers have a goal, and the good leader serves them by showing them a path to reaching it.[22] The pastor who is a servant leader helps his people achieve their goal of union with God. He aids them by clarifying it, focusing his people's attention on it and helping them achieve it.[23] Obedience to the bishop, which may exist in "missionary tension" with service to the community, is an essential part of clarifying the community's goal.

Partisans of servant leadership may be tempted to overstate their case. Some may say that it is a form of leadership uniquely suited to the Christian community and superior to other leadership styles.[24] It might be better to view servant leadership not so much as a leadership style as a set of attitudes that good leaders embrace. Good leaders serve their followers by helping them to achieve their goals and those of the organization. Leadership styles, in contrast to the attitudes of servant leadership, are adopted by leaders depending on the situation they face.[25] There is no one preferred leadership style (e.g., highly directive or *laissez-faire*) but a continuum of styles, each appropriate depending on the level of the followers' readiness. Wise leaders (and even servant leaders) change their styles depending on what the situation demands.

Despite this criticism, the servant-leader concept successfully blends secular leadership theory with the

Christian concept of the good shepherd. It is not so much a style as it is a set of attitudes. Good leaders do not merely influence their followers to accomplish a task but affirm their dignity and help them achieve their own goals insofar as they are also the goals of the Church. This has consequences for the spiritual formation of seminarians:

- **Leadership and Unity**. Formators should teach seminarians that leadership of Catholics by priests is never simply a direct consequence of the ontological difference between the ordained and the laity as if ordination made priests leaders. Leadership by priests in the Catholic community is properly exercised when they invite lay Catholics to freely assimilate the mission of Christ.
- **Priestly Spiritual Power**. Spiritual formation should identify the spiritual power of the priest with the concept of service as expressed by Jesus Christ. The future priest exercises legitimate spiritual power when the Christian community recognizes in his words and deeds the invitation of Christ.
- **Bishop and Community**. Formators must help seminarians to see that obedience to the bishop and service to the community are not alternatives but belong together in missionary tension. The priest servant-leader obeys the bishop in order to help clarify the goal of the people and help them reach it.

Spiritual formation assists in the development of priestly leaders by helping them to see the nature of leadership in the Christian community. Such leadership is not the ability to command obedience due to an ontological difference between the leaders and the led.

On the contrary, it is the capacity for service, for inviting people to assimilate the mission of Christ, and for building up the Christian community.

The priest's ordained priesthood is meant to promote the laity's baptismal priesthood.

Intellectual Formation: Leadership and Practical Wisdom

Although the seminary curriculum does not require a course in leadership or parish administration, it does offer many opportunities to study those subjects. Courses in the theology curriculum (e.g., priesthood and spiritual theology) will certainly teach the kinds of lessons about leadership that we have sketched above under the headings of human and spiritual formation. Even the courses now taught in the college seminary or pre-theologate enable students to encounter the philosophical roots of leadership in epistemology, metaphysics and ethics. Let us examine the link between the philosophy curriculum and leadership development.

In order to see the link, consider the duties that a priest exercises. Among the nine duties treated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission* (see endnote 6), the fourth states that the priest leads parish administration. Within that duty, he has the task of leading the pastoral and finance councils. The leadership of councils is an art with its own philosophic dimensions.[26] Canon Law ascribes to these councils a consultative-only vote. The priest leads them by consulting them and is not obligated to follow the councils' advice. At the same time, however, his consultation of them implies an obligation. Common courtesy and intellectual honesty oblige the priest to consult in good faith, sincerely seeking the wisdom of those on his council. We shall examine the consequences of this under the headings of epistemology, metaphysics and ethics.

Epistemology

Official documents speak of philosophy courses as if they had nothing to do with leadership. The *PPF*, for example, regards the course on epistemology as the basis for drawing "objective and necessary truths" from the study of "contingent reality."[27] Here epistemology is presented as the antidote to skepticism and relativism, yet that hardly exhausts its contribution. Epistemology aims not solely at objective and necessary truths, but also at contingent truths as they emerge in dialogue. Paul VI spoke of dialogue as "the mental attitude which the Catholic Church must adopt regarding the contemporary world."[28] Dialogue, in which human beings struggle to reach agreement even about contingent truths, also belongs to epistemology. The course provides an opening in the seminary curriculum to teach the capacity for dialogue as essential to the leader.

A few examples should make this clear. Epistemology usually includes an examination of the Platonic dialogues. In them, we witness the search by Socrates for the essences of the moral virtues. Plato presented Socrates as the one who distinguished between examples of justice in the world and justice as an ideal form. This may be what the *PPF* alludes to when it speaks about drawing objective and necessary truths from contingent reality.

Important as this lesson is, the Platonic dialogues also provide the earliest example of the search for truth in dialogue – an essential skill for the priest who must make the right decision in a contingent situation. As a searcher for truth, the priest must first adopt the attitude of Socratic ignorance (*Apology* 21a sq.), acknowledging that his knowledge is limited. That is his motive for consultation, namely, to gain the wisdom of his parishioners. He must lead the conversation, guiding others in the search for truth. Socrates compared this process to the office of a midwife (*Theaetatus* 149 sq.) who helps others give birth to insight. Plato's portrayal reveals Socrates to be not the one with all the answers, but the one committed to a truth that the community itself must bring to light. There is no better literary example of leadership through dialogue.

Professors in the college seminary or pre-theologate must not only teach the difference between contingent and necessary truths, but they should also employ the Socratic dialogues to introduce seminarians to the importance of dialogue as a tool for leadership. Socrates saw that in order to discern what wisdom demands there is no better way than to put forward an argument and subject it to scrutiny. One must have "recourse to theories," he said (*Phaedo* 99e). Theories, i.e., *logoi*, are the expressions of thought in language. We express them so as to examine them. In dialogue, the leader invites a variety of viewpoints so that the best opinion will reveal itself. The relevance of this

practice to priestly leadership should be made explicit in the study of epistemology.

Metaphysics

A second example of the relevance of the philosophic curriculum to leadership training is the course on metaphysics. It is easy, however, to overlook this relevance. The *PPF* states that metaphysics gives seminarians "the structure and ability" to discuss theology.[29] In other words, metaphysics is viewed primarily as a preparation for theological studies. John Paul II's encyclical *Fides et ratio* amplifies this viewpoint. It says that metaphysics provides a "horizon" so that students can move "beyond an analysis of religious experience," that is, "from *phenomenon* to *foundation*."[30] Without metaphysics, the seminarian might not be able to understand what lies behind (or better said, what expresses itself through) phenomena. Unfortunately, however, the course on metaphysics may be so preoccupied with the distinction between phenomena and foundations that it overlooks the link between the two. The phenomenon of language is not separate from metaphysical truth, for it moves the thinker from appearance to reality.

Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* brings this out in a revealing way. There Aristotle distinguishes between "pure science" (knowledge or *episteme*) and "practical wisdom" (*phronesis*). Both are a way of obtaining truths, he wrote, but they differ regarding (1) the types of knowledge at which they aim, (2) their method and (3) the intellectual gifts they require. The distinction between scientific knowledge and practical wisdom is essential. Scientific knowledge, on the one hand, aims at necessary truth, proceeds by demonstration and requires abstract reasoning. Practical wisdom, on the other hand, has to do with action or the correct thing to do in a given situation. To gain this wisdom, one engages in dialogue with others about the goal to be achieved. The intellectual skill required for practical wisdom, said Aristotle, is the ability to deliberate well (*bouleusis*). Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* constitutes a veritable primer for the seminarian who aspires to lead Christians in the search for practical wisdom.

The course on metaphysics undoubtedly must distinguish between a phenomenon and the unseen reality which it expresses. Such a distinction, by itself, though, may pose a temptation for students to believe that they have more practical insight than others. The course on metaphysics should avoid that false implication. In order to prepare seminarians for pastoral leadership, it should introduce another, complementary distinction: the distinction between the realms of knowledge. By distinguishing between science and practical wisdom, Aristotle helps the seminarian to see that he cannot learn practical decision-making from a textbook. The good leader makes wise decisions about how to act, not in isolation, but by conversing with those who are skilled in deliberation.

Metaphysics can show the seminarian the realm of knowledge in which consultation is essential, namely, practical wisdom. One does not pursue it as one pursues the scientific knowledge of objective and necessary truths. Practical wisdom is about how to act rightly in a contingent situation. This is precisely what the priest seeks by consulting his people. He asks others to deliberate with him about a course of action. By highlighting this realm of knowledge and exploring the art of deliberation, the course on metaphysics can prepare the seminarian for pastoral leadership.

Spiritual formation assists in the development of priestly leaders by helping them to see the nature of leadership in the Christian community. Such leadership is not the ability to command obedience due to an ontological difference between the leaders and the led. On the contrary, it is the capacity for service, for inviting people to assimilate the mission of Christ, and for building up the Christian community.

Ethics

The course on ethics provides a final example of the relevance of the philosophic curriculum to leadership training. The *PPF* speaks of the course in terms of

decision-making. It enhances ethical decision-making by giving seminarians "a solid grounding in themes like conscience, freedom, law, responsibility, virtue, and guilt" as well as "the common good and virtue of solidarity as central to Christian political philosophy."[31] This statement is to the point, but two examples show the potential for misunderstanding. The first group of terms, including conscience, freedom, and virtue, may be understood individualistically. They may suggest that if I guard my conscience, my freedom, and my virtue, I can create within me an ethical fortress, secure from invasion. Other people, those apart from me, may threaten my conscience, obscure my freedom, or weaken my virtue – so I isolate myself. That is the danger of individualism.

The second group of terms, "common good" and "political philosophy," can also be misconstrued. The concept of the common good, essential to Catholic social teaching, has consequences for economic life. Because of these consequences, however, students may be tempted to associate the common good with economic matters alone. They should be led to see its relevance to wider realms, including parish governance. Something similar can be said for the concept of solidarity. It is so closely identified with political questions that its relevance to parish leadership can be overlooked. So teachers of philosophic ethics face a challenge. It is the dual challenge of presenting moral decision-making in a way that is not individualistic and of discussing the common good and solidarity without confining them to the spheres of economy and politics.

One aspect of the internship at St. John's Seminary that deserves special attention because of its importance for leadership development is the Intern Advisory Board (IAB). The board is a group of parishioners who advise the seminarian-intern. Although the supervising pastor names the IAB members, it is the seminarian's responsibility to convene and consult them. The tasks of convening and consulting offer the seminarian an experience akin to the pastor's formation of pastoral and finance councils.

Here we begin to see the application of philosophical ethics to pastoral leadership. St. Thomas illuminates it in his discussion of prudence in the Second Part of the *Summa Theologica*. Prudence, he says in Question 47, is thought applied to action (art. 1). The pastoral leader wants to act prudently. Such prudence is not concerned with purely theoretical issues but focuses on action (art. 2). Questions about how to act cannot be decided on abstract principles. The principles must be applied to the case at hand. The question of application has to do with the disposition of means or resources. Prudence does not aim at an ideal but at the limited good that can be accomplished with the means at the leader's disposal (art. 7). In searching for a sound course of action, the wise leader consults those with prudence, defined by St. Thomas as an intellectual as well as a moral virtue (art. 4). The prudent decision is not correct in the abstract. It is correct because prudent people understand it and affirm it.

St. Thomas' discussion of prudence illustrates the relevance of philosophical ethics to leadership. From the course on ethics, students can learn how wise pastors reach sound decisions. They do so by consulting prudent parishioners, by working with the parish's resources, and by cultivating an understanding of the issues faced by the parish. The ethics course is rightly meant to prepare students for decision-making, but such preparations can be misunderstood individualistically or restricted to the economic or political realm. The teaching of St. Thomas shows the kind of knowledge that pastors aim for in discussions with prudent parishioners.

Despite the fact that the seminary curriculum lacks a course on leadership, the existing courses on epistemology, metaphysics and ethics can provide seminarians with leadership's philosophical foundations.

- **Dialogue**. Epistemology introduces seminarians to dialogue as the Church's "attitude to-

wards the world" (Pope Paul VI), an attitude that invites conversation as a way of holding up thoughts to intellectual scrutiny.

- **Practical Wisdom**. Metaphysics, with its distinction between scientific knowledge and practical wisdom, helps seminarians identify the realm of contingent truth within which communal deliberation is essential.
- **Prudence**. Philosophical ethics is not solely about the individual's cultivation of private virtues, but is also about the virtues shared by the community, such as prudence. The prudent pastoral leader considers with his parishioners the disposition of the Church's means in order to reach practical ends.

The ordinary courses in the college or pre-theological curriculum provide ample opportunities to prepare seminarians for leadership. The courses can show them how it emerges in dialogue, pertains to contingent truth, and results in prudent decisions.

Pastoral Formation: The Practice of Leadership

The fourth pillar, pastoral formation, emphasizes leadership more than the other three pillars. The PPF states that leadership development is an "essential element" of pastoral formation. Such development takes place as "various practical, pastoral experiences, especially in parishes" (endnote 7) initiate the seminarian into an understanding of leadership. So leadership experiences occur mainly in the field. The off-campus locations may create the false impression that leadership development is consigned primarily to on-the-job training, independent of the seminary.

The success of pastoral field education in U.S. seminaries belies that false impression.[32] Although seminarians learn about leadership primarily through practical experiences in parishes and other off-campus locations, pastoral field educators ensure that seminarians reflect on their experiences in a formal way. The typical seminarian, engaging in practical experience off-campus, is simultaneously enrolled in an academic course that invites theological reflection on the experience. Such courses usually include discussions under the guidance of a professor. Topics for discussion include the seminarian's recollection of experiences in the field as well as the written comments of off-campus supervisors. The seminarians' disciplined reflection with others led by a professor complements their practical experience. It would be false to say that leadership development is simply on-the-job training apart from the seminary.

The Catholic priest is expected to lead parish administration, especially through finance and pastoral councils. For this reason, it is important for seminarians to experience consultative leadership.

In addition to field education in hospitals, schools and other institutions, most seminarians also have a parish internship. At St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, for example, the parish internship, which lasts for an academic year, is a full-time exercise of ministry under the supervision of a pastor. The seminarian receives academic credit and must successfully complete the internship to earn the M.Div. degree. Success is measured in terms of the goals defined by the intern, the field education office and the pastor-supervisor. The seminarian makes a "contract," promising to undertake certain responsibilities at the parish (e.g., preaching, presiding at graveside services, teaching at the parochial school, etc.). The pastor-supervisor promises to help the intern achieve his goals.

One aspect of the internship at St. John's Seminary that deserves special attention because of its importance for leadership development is the Intern Advisory Board (IAB). The board is a group of parishioners who advise the seminarian-intern. Although the supervising pastor names the IAB members, it is the seminarian's responsibility to convene and consult them. The tasks of convening and consulting offer the seminarian an experience akin to the pastor's formation of pastoral and finance councils. If the leadership of such councils is one of the principal duties of the Catholic priest, the formation of the IAB initiates the seminarian into a similar form of leadership. Let us consider for a moment the purpose of the IAB, the job description of members and the intern's aim in consulting the group.

The priest would be no leader if he acted as if he were entitled to obedience. On the contrary, the priest becomes a leader to the extent that he serves the community.

Purpose of the Board

The purpose of the Intern Advisory Board resembles the purpose of parish councils, namely, to share the members' wisdom with the one who consults them. This apparently simple fact, however, is far from simple, because the word "consultation" does not make explicit the motives of the intern or of the board members. Interns consult the IAB because they are looking for a specific kind of help. On a trivial level, one could say an intern consults the board in order to satisfy a seminary requirement. If that were the intern's sole motive, though, he would not benefit much from the board. The deeper motive for consulting the IAB is not to prove to the seminary that the intern can go through the motions of consultation but rather for the intern to gain wisdom. The consultative intern, then, must approach the board with a question. He has learned from a study of the Platonic dialogues that his knowledge is limited. He wants to know how well he is accomplishing the goals stipulated in his learning contract. He believes that the IAB can help him.

The board members, for their part, are motivated by love for the Church and a desire to help the intern. They are not experts in homiletics, liturgy or education, but they can tell when the intern preaches, presides and teaches well. By acquainting themselves with the intern's learning contract, moreover, they can help him see whether he is meeting his goals. Consulting the IAB can be a challenge to the intern. On the one hand, he comes to the IAB as a learner. He consults them to profit from their insight. On the other hand, he leads the consultation. He has to help the IAB members understand the terms of the learning contract, and he has to formulate questions that will invite reflection and honest dialogue. In doing so, the intern discovers that leadership is not just influencing followers to accomplish a task. It means helping followers – the board itself – achieve their goal of providing wise counsel to a future priest.

The Board's Job Description

The Intern Advisory Board is like a parish council, first of all, in that it meets monthly and follows an agenda. The intern prepares it before the initial meeting. He is, after all, consulting the members. For example, he may want to know about his preaching, or about his work in the parish office, or about his teaching skill. At the opening of each meeting, he asks the members to propose topics for discussion. Part of effective consultation is giving the IAB a say in forming the agenda. The intern leads by asking questions and guiding the conversation. He is inviting the board members to show him how to be a better pastoral minister. This is not something that can be demonstrated in an experiment (as Aristotle might have said); rather, it emerges in a process of deliberation.

The IAB is also like a council in that it requires individual effort by the members between meetings. If the intern wants feedback on his homilies, for example, he will have to request that board members attend the Masses in which he is preaching. If he wants to know how well he is teaching at the parochial school, he will have to invite members to observe him. The intern is consulting the board just as a pastor consults his council. He has to help the board see what the seminary and the pastor expect of him. He should not be shy about asking board members to read his learning agreement or to witness his performance of ministerial duties.

At the end of the internship, the IAB evaluates the intern. Members have to complete a questionnaire and write their impressions of him. In this way, the IAB differs from a council. Councils usually are not expected to evaluate pastors. But the IAB's evaluation of the intern need not distort the relationship between the two. Its evaluation does not mean that the board is supervising the intern. The pastor remains the supervisor. Rightly speaking, the intern is asking the board to help him gauge his ministerial abilities. Even though the board evaluates him, he is still the one consulting the board. He is inviting the board's wise counsel, and that is an essential aspect of leadership.

The Goals of the Intern-Leader

Consulting with an Intern Advisory Board can provide the seminarian with an experience of servant leadership. This is the kind of leadership that presupposes well-motivated followers and a generous leader.

The leader (in this case, the intern) helps followers (the IAB) to achieve their goal of providing wise counsel to a future priest. The board members are motivated because the Church wants good priestly leaders. It is not always easy, though, for the IAB to give advice. Board members may be unfamiliar with what the pastor and the seminary expect of the intern. They may be unsure of their role. They may be afraid of hurting the intern's feelings. The intern becomes a servant leader when he gives clear directions, develops a straightforward agenda, formulates questions and invites honest dialogue.

Ultimately, the intern seeks self-knowledge. He wants to learn about his readiness for priestly ministry. He wants to improve his ministerial skills. He wants to hone his ability as a leader. Those are his goals. In order to achieve them, he has to appreciate the situation of his lay collaborators. They may not know what kind of help he wants. They may not know what the seminary expects. The intern has to understand that, although he is asking them for help, he remains a leader. He leads the group by eliciting, pondering, and integrating its opinions. He has to invite specific feedback, even about matters which are potentially embarrassing to him (e.g., his mannerisms and blind spots). By showing the board that he wants their frank advice and wise counsel, he reveals himself as a servant leader. He leads by helping the group achieve the Church's mission and their own.

The Catholic priest, in summary, is expected to lead parish administration, especially through finance and pastoral councils. For this reason, it is important for seminarians to experience consultative leadership. Parish interns from St. John's Seminary learn about this by convening an Intern Advisory Board. Convening such an advisory group provides experience in leadership in general and group facilitation in particular.

- **Consultative Leadership**. By asking pastoral interns to consult a representative group of parishioners, formators give the interns an experience of leading a dialogue that aims at practical wisdom and prudent knowledge.
- **Group Facilitation**. By developing agendas, guiding conversations and seeking the advice of a representative body of parishioners, seminarian-interns learn how to form a group, focus a conversation and invite reflection.

The consultative intern asks the board to help him judge how well he is meeting the goals of internship. Although he is not asking the board to supervise him, he does request that they evaluate him. In so doing, he learns an important lesson in leadership, namely, that the good leader asks followers to commit themselves to the truth. However painful it might be to hear that truth, it remains the ultimate basis for unity in spirit.

Leadership development has become more important in recent years as the number of priests has declined and as the time between ordination and the first pastorate grows shorter.

Conclusion: The Potential for Leadership Development

One reason why the *Program for Priestly Formation* does not require a course in leadership development is that the term is ambiguous. When such development can mean so many different things, from being a "servant leader" to "influencing followers to accomplish a task," it is easy to understand why the Church is wary of it. Undoubtedly, the Church desires priests who are leaders, but it prefers to speak of priests who are good shepherds in imitation of Christ.

An examination of the pillar of human formation reveals a tacit criticism of secular theories of leadership. Christ-like leaders are not merely tools of higher production, capable of influencing followers to perform a task. They are rather the ones who become leaders by learning obedience. Seminarians must obey their superiors. Such obedience is neither servility nor a subordination of one's own will to the demands of ecclesial life. No, it is the thoughtful and discerning acknowledgment of a superior's goodness and insight. One does not obey a Christian leader merely to achieve a quota but because such a leader can help people align their will more closely with God.

Our consideration of the spiritual formation of seminarians revealed some of the difficulties of conceptualizing leadership, even within the Christian community. The Church's great esteem for the priest, described in language that distinguishes him from the laity, in fact expresses its great esteem for Christ as he speaks through him. The priest would be no leader if he acted as if he were entitled to obedience. On the contrary, the priest

becomes a leader to the extent that he serves the community. Seminarians in spiritual formation undoubtedly must learn about the unity of the Church and especially the duty of obedience to the bishop. The priest's communion with bishop and people, though, exists, we saw, in a missionary tension. His mission to this people at times may create tension between him and the bishop. It is as unavoidable as the tension between unity and plurality within God, and spiritual formation should consider it.

Leadership development does not seem to play a large role in the process of intellectual formation as reflected in the Church's documents, but courses in the theology curriculum, especially the courses in priesthood and spiritual theology, are the proper locale for the teaching about Christ as a servant leader. Philosophy courses in the pre-theology curriculum, moreover, should invite students to consider the conceptual bases of leadership. Too often these courses preoccupy themselves with the dangers of skepticism and relativism and run out of time before the professor can explore the topic of leadership. In Plato's teaching about dialectic, in Aristotle's doctrine of practical wisdom, and in St. Thomas' exploration of prudence, however, seminarians can gain a solid understanding of consultative leadership. These topics deserve their place under the philosophical sun.

The Church's documents speak most about leadership development under the heading of pastoral formation. The documents may seem to suggest that acquiring leadership takes place exclusively in practical experiences far from the seminary campus. Thanks to pastoral field education, we can see that this is a misconception. Acquiring leadership skill demands reflection as well as practice. Parish internships offer seminarians an extensive practical exposure to ministry, and an innovative feature of these internships is the advisory board composed of parishioners. The board gives them an experience very similar to the pastor's leadership of parish councils. The topic of consultative leadership is difficult to teach in the classroom where consultation at best can be mimicked through role playing. When an intern, however, has to consult a group of parishioners about how well he is fulfilling the terms of his learning contract, the situation becomes vividly real. Interns must learn how to ask boards for advice and how to guide a consultation. This is the seminarian's best possible introduction to consultative leadership.

Leadership development has become more important in recent years as the number of priests has declined and as the time between ordination and the first pastorate grows shorter. By exploring the potential for leadership development within the existing seminary curriculum, professors and formators can promote this aspect of formation. It is not treated in great detail in the Church's official documents, but it will loom ever more important.

Mark F. Fischer, Ph.D., is Professor of Pastoral Studies at St. John's Seminary, Camarillo, California.

Endnotes

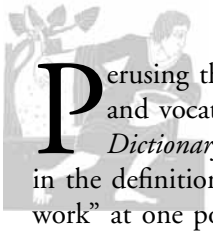
1. See, for example, Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*, sixth edition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), 94. "Most management writers agree that leadership is *the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation*."
2. Vatican II, "Decree on the Training of Priests" (*Optatam totius*, 28 Oct. 1965), trans. by B. Hayes, S.M.; S. Fagan, S.M.; and Austin Flannery, O.P., in Vatican II, *The Vatican Collection*, vol. I: *The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents*, new revised edition, General Editor Austin Flannery, O.P. (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., fourth printing, 1998), no. 4, p. 710. "The whole training of the [seminary] students should have as its object to make them true shepherds of souls after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd."
3. Vatican II, "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests" (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, 7 Dec. 1965), trans. by Joseph Cunnane, revised by Michael Mooney and Enda Lyons, in Vatican II, *The Vatican Collection*, vol. I: no. 6, p. 872. "In the name of the bishop they [the priests] gather the family of God as a brotherhood endowed with the spirit of unity and lead it in Christ through the Spirit to God the Father."
4. John Paul II, *I Will Give You Shepherds: On the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day*, an official translation of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, March 25, 1992 (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1992; third printing, 1997), no. 26, p. 70.
5. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on Priestly Formation, *Program of Priestly Formation*, fifth edition (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006). See the section on pastoral formation, esp. no. 239, pp. 77-82, p. 81 cited here.
6. Joseph Ippolito, Mark A. Latcovich, and Joyce Malyn-Smith, *In Fulfillment of Their Mission: The Duties and*

Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest: An Assessment Project (Washington, D.C.: The National Catholic Educational Association, 2008). The book describes the leadership of parish administration on pp. 38-43.

7. *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 239, p. 81.
8. *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 239, p. 79. In practical experiences, we read, "the student first enters the scene as an observer, then raises questions to understand what is happening, and finally relates it to his other formation" (p. 80).
9. *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 80, p. 34.
10. The utopian call for a discourse on purely rational grounds (in which authority plays no role) can be found in Jürgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, translation and introduction by Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), 8-20.
11. John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 44, p. 121. The passage contains a footnote reference to *Gaudium et spes* 24, where we read: "If man is the only creature on earth that God has wanted for its own sake, man can fully discover his true self only in a sincere giving of himself."
12. *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 28, p. 73.
13. *Pastores dabo vobis*.
14. "Such growth [i.e., human development] may be demonstrated by . . . a capacity for courageous and decisive leadership." USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 86, p. 36.
15. The ontological difference was affirmed in a distinction between the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood (*Lumen gentium* 10). It was reaffirmed in Pope John Paul II's *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 11, p. 31.
16. *Pastores dabo vobis* affirms that all Christians are configured to Christ: "He, the Spirit of the Son (cf. Gal. 4:6), configures us to Christ Jesus and makes us sharers in his life as Son" (John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 19, p. 50).
17. USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 114, p. 48.
18. John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 21, p. 53.
19. *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 23, p. 58; and again at no. 24, p. 63.
20. In *Pastores dabo vobis*, John Paul II emphasized the community's "diverse vocations, charisms and services" (no. 16, p. 42) as essential to the "hierarchical communion" (no. 17, p. 43) that the priest has with the bishop. A "missionary tension" (no. 12, p. 32) exists, however, between the Church's communion and the priest's apostolate of service to his people. Priests are sent forth by God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in order to live and work by the power of the Holy Spirit in service to the Church. Such "communion in tension" is analogous to the distinctiveness and unity of the Trinity.
21. Robert K. Greenleaf's essay of 1970, "Servant Leadership," has been reprinted in Greenleaf, *The Servant Leader Within: The Transformative Path*, ed. Hamilton Beazley, Julie Beggs, and Larry C. Spears (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2003). The 1970 essay became in 1977 a book, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977), which recently appeared in a 25th anniversary edition (Paulist, 2002).
22. R. J. House and T. R. Mitchell, "Path-Goal Theory of Leadership," *Journal for Contemporary Business* (Autumn 1974), 81.
23. Dan R. Ebner, *Servant Leadership Models for Your Parish* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2010), 11-12.
24. Daughter of Charity Margaret John Kelly has recently claimed that "there is considerable agreement" that Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership "draws on and develops the best within individuals and within organizations." Kelly, "Leadership," Chapter 1 in *A Concise Guide to Catholic Church Management*, edited by Kevin E. McKenna, compiled by the Vincentian Center for Church and Society (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 2010), 8.
25. This is the "situational leadership" theory of Hersey and Blanchard, *Management*, chapter eight.
26. Mark F. Fischer, *Making Parish Councils Pastoral* (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2010).
27. USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 156, p. 59.
28. Paul VI, *Ecclesiam Suam*, *Encyclical on the Church*, August 6, 1964, no. 58.
29. USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 156, p. 60.
30. John Paul II, *Fides et ratio,* Encyclical Letter *On the Relationship between Faith and Reason*, text and format from the Libreria Editrice Vaticana (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1998), no. 83, p. 123.
31. USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, no. 156, p. 60.
32. Katarina Schuth, *Reason for the Hope: The Futures of Roman Catholic Theologates* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1989), 191.

Job, Career, Profession, Vocation: What Exactly Am I Doing in Theological Education?

Rev. Kevin O'Neil, CSsR, S.T.D.



Perusing the descriptions of career, job, profession and vocation in the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* highlights divergence and convergence in the definitions.[1] While a job is called "a piece of work" at one point, it overlaps with profession when described as "part of one's occupation or profession." A career marks "a course or progress through life or history" and is a "profession engaged in as a life-work." The third definition of a profession is "a vocation, a calling, *esp.* one requiring advanced knowledge or training in some branch of learning or science, *spec.* law, theology, or medicine." Finally, a vocation is defined as "the fact or feeling of being called by God to undertake a specific (*esp.* religious) career, function, or occupation; a divine call to do certain work; a strong feeling of fitness or suitability for a particular career." Although one finds some commonality in these terms, there appear to be unique characteristics to the last term, vocation.

Distinctive in the definition of vocation is its religious dimension ("called by God") and its reference to a feeling of fitness or suitability for a career. A further definition describes it as "a mode of life or employment regarded as requiring dedication." Is it too much to suggest that what distinguishes a vocation from a job, a career, and a profession is its necessary hold on both the heart and the head of the one who is called by God? Without suggesting that the other terms are essentially devoid of this heart-head connection and religious dimension, it would seem that one's vocation necessarily involves reasoned passion. One's vocation, by definition, appears to encompass the whole person in a way that career, job and profession do not. One's vocation seems to be more deeply rooted in the identity of a person.

Our vocation marks the convergence of God's design and our discernment of the gift . . . [and] is grasped by attention to our deepest desires, to our true self where God speaks.

I will examine this notion of vocation more thoroughly, relying principally on two short works: Parker Palmer's *Let Your Life Speak. Listening for the Voice of Vocation*[2] and Herbert Alphonso's *Discovering Your Personal Vocation. The Search for Meaning through the Spiritual Exercises*.[3] I will then raise the issue of the appropriateness of calling one's work in theological education a vocation.

Vocation: a Call?

The Latin root of vocation (*vocare* = to call) points us to the most common understanding of vocation. The dictionary definition cited above states it clearly: "The fact or feeling of being called by God . . . . The work or function to which a person is called." Called in what way, however?

Sacred Scripture is replete with stories of the two-fold dynamic of call and response – consider Abraham and Sarah, Moses, the prophets, Mary, the apostles, Paul. God calls, ordinarily with a particular task in

mind, and people struggle to respond. "The notion of *call* is not peripheral to the Scriptures but fundamental to the Bible's understanding of human existence before God."[4] Before all else, this call from God is "to holiness and the fullness of life itself."[5]

Listening to the Inner Voice

As central as the notion of an external call is to our understanding of vocation, Parker Palmer affirms, "Vocation does not come from a voice 'out there' calling me to become something I am not. It comes from a voice 'in here' calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfill the original selfhood given me at birth by God."[6] Our vocation marks the convergence of God's design and our discernment of the gift. It reminds me of the line of Eric Liddell, a young Scottish minister in the movie *Chariots of Fire*, who says: "God made me fast. And when I run I feel his pleasure."

The inner voice arises from who one is. Palmer points to the danger of willing oneself into a particular vocation without attending properly to one's selfhood. "Our deepest calling is to grow into our authentic selfhood."[7] So, vocation is grasped by attention to our deepest desires, to our true self where God speaks.

Palmer's focus on the "inner voice" finds resonance in Herbert Alphonso's work, *Discovering Your Personal Vocation*. Alphonso describes the personal vocation as "the secret of unity and integration at the heart of a whole life *precisely* because it is the unique God-given meaning in life."[8] Alphonso examines the theme of vocation from a religious perspective, highlighting the uniqueness of every single life and, consequently, every vocation. This line of thinking calls to mind Paul's first letter to the Corinthians where, while recognizing the diverse gifts of the Spirit in the community, he states: "The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all" (1 Cor 12:7). As unique and necessary as is each piece of a mosaic, so too is each individual in her or his personal vocation.

Alphonso gives examples of personal vocations which we might find surprising and, perhaps, confusing at first glance. He tells the story of a middle-aged Jesuit priest who had grown dry in his relationship with God. In his retreat and spiritual direction, the man came to realize that what seemed to arouse spontaneously a sense of union with and gratitude to God was his reflection on how good God had been to him in his life. After further consultation, Alphonso and the priest identified "the goodness of God" as the personal vocation of this particular man. As general as "the goodness of God" is as a vocation, it is specified and concretized in this particular individual. Other examples of a personal vocation are "I am with you," "patient love," "unconditional acceptance."[9] Discernment of one's personal vocation, however, requires attention to one's relationship with God and the movements of one's own heart.

Discernment of one's personal vocation . . . requires attention to one's relationship with God and the movements of one's own heart.

Both Palmer and Alphonso emphasize attention to oneself, the inner voice, to learn one's vocation. This task consists of listening to one's desires and discerning the movement of the heart toward God. This attention to the inner voice yields insight into one's vocation.

Attending to the Outer Voice

Does Palmer draw too sharp a line between an external and an internal voice? How might he be right, and how might he overstate his point?

I believe that Palmer is correct in asserting that our vocation is not imposed on us from outside ourselves. Some notions of the will of God conjure up images of an objective reality separated from the inner self. I picture a book in the heavens with everyone's name in it. There, laid out in black and white, is the story of our lives, who we should be and become. Our task is to peek somehow over God's shoulder and find out what the divine plan is for each one of us. So, our vocation is predetermined. If this is what Palmer has in mind, then surely our vocation does not come from a voice "out there."

My experience, however, and I suspect that of others, is that the discernment of and growth in(to) our vocation occur by listening to voices from both outside and inside. The voice from outside is not that of an interventionist God who moves us around like pawns on a chessboard. It is, rather, the voice of God through the community, whether family, friends, church, institution, or one of many networks of relationships in which we live. Palmer writes that "our lives lay down clues to selfhood and vocation."[10] These clues are read by us and

by others. We are aware, I am sure, of blind spots in our ability to see ourselves as we truly are; at the same time, we have surely been surprised at the keen insights that others have about us. A comment as seemingly insignificant as "you're a good listener" may give us a hint of qualities that we were not aware that we possessed. Quite simply, we learn about ourselves and our vocation through dialogue between internal and external voices, between our sense of self and a community's perception and formation of us as well. Both are sources in the discernment of God's call and direction.

Our vocation is a call, a call from God discerned through reflection on our deepest selves and on the voices of those who have come to know us. Fidelity to vocation fosters integrity and meaning in our lives and contributes to the common good in a uniquely personal way.

We learn about ourselves and our vocation through dialogue between internal and external voices, between our sense of self and a community's perception and formation of us.

A Vocation within a Vocation

Palmer and Alphonso lead us away from narrowly defining our vocation in terms of a job, profession or career. They remind us that our vocation is much more about who we are than what we do. How then are we to understand a profession or career in theological education? In what sense can we speak of the vocation of a theological educator?

We can speak of work in theological education as a vocation only in a secondary sense or, as Dr. Hal Sanks has called it, "a vocation within a vocation." Alphonso points out that a Jesuit priest has four levels "of a hierarchically structured vocation: the Christian, the priestly, the religious, and the Jesuit."[11] Where does one's personal vocation enter here? Not as a fifth vocation, says Alphonso. One's personal vocation is, rather, "*the spirit* that animates every one of the four mentioned levels."[12]

I would prefer to speak of my role as a theological educator as an expression of a deeper personal vocation. There are at least two reasons for suggesting this approach. First, I am convinced that our personal vocation is primarily about a way of being in the world rather than what we do. A particularly critical problem that we encounter in American culture is how easily the dignity of persons is linked to their productivity and contribution to society. We tend, perhaps without thinking, to speak in terms that suggest that dignity is somehow conferred on people according to their status in society or the substance of their contribution. We might unconsciously breathe in this philosophy of life unaware of its consequences. I recall hearing of a man who was very ill and was told by his doctor that he would never work again. Having four relatively young children, he received this news as devastating. The man went into a depression and was never quite himself for the last two years of his life. Perhaps over-identifying himself with his work and rightly concerned for the welfare of his family, he missed the significance of his presence as father in the home to his children. Over-identification of one's vocation with what one does can lead to personal disaster when expectations are not met or when life deals one a devastating blow. Prioritizing "being" over "doing" focuses our attention on one's personal vocation, on the particular way in which one is to incarnate God in the world, and seeks new ways to do so when doors close to previous opportunities.

The second reason for viewing work in theological education as a vocation in a secondary sense is that one may well find the energies and spirit that animate one's life moving toward a different and new expression of one's personal vocation. This shift may occur because of external circumstances or by a person's own initiative. It seems, however, that limiting a vocation to a particular expression, such as teaching or medicine or administration, runs the risk noted above of equating vocation with profession or career. They are not the same.

Significance for the "Vocation" of the Theological Educator

How might these two concerns, that is, prioritizing being over doing and recognizing diversity in manifestations of our personal vocation, play out in the life of the theological educator? Why might we insist on the personal vocation as prior to a vocation within theological education?

Prioritizing Being over Doing

One of the blessings and curses of the world of technology is email. Rapid communication with people around the world makes everyone seem a bit closer. On the downside, junk mail abounds. Not too long ago, I received an email that I expected to be trash material. The email urged the reader either to try to remember the recipients of the Oscar Award for best actor over the past ten years or to name a recipient of the Nobel Prize from each of the past ten years. After one or two more questions like these it asked, "Could you do it?" The email continued: Now, name a teacher who influenced you when you were growing up. The author of the email presumed, rightly in my case, that while I could not name the best actor for the last ten years or the recipients of the Nobel Prize, I would have no trouble recalling a teacher whose influence in my life I still treasure. Perhaps the second presumption of the email is that the teacher's memory stays with me because he was a fine person whose expertise in theological education went far beyond the material presented in class. Like many colleagues, he brought his faith to the classroom in a way that provided a context for our theological inquiry without impeding our academic efforts. His manner of dealing with students reflected a man in touch with his primary vocation to incarnate God in the world, whether in the classroom or on a basketball court. There is no question in my mind that he lived coherently his personal vocation and that of a theological educator.

I am convinced that our personal vocation is primarily about a way of being in the world rather than what we do.

There are dangers, as I have suggested, when doing supercedes being. Experiences of theological educators in the early years of their careers are often tales of demands from various fronts: performance in the classroom, committee work, pressure to publish, contribution to professional societies, making tenure and the like. Overidentifying themselves with their tasks can wreak havoc

in their lives. Poor student evaluations, tensions among colleagues, rejected manuscripts and so forth offer substantive challenges to junior faculty members and could threaten their very sense of dignity and worth.

Discernment of one's personal vocation is the fruit of listening attentively to God in one's deepest self and the voices in the communities to which one belongs. Ultimately, one's personal vocation arises from one's uniqueness, a gift of the Spirit.

Middle faculty could fall victim to unmet expectations regarding their careers in theological education. Comparing themselves to colleagues may prompt feelings of inadequacy and failure. At a time in their lives when they ask "what have I done with my life so far?" those whose whole lives are defined in terms of their career in theological education alone may find themselves disappointed with the course of their profession and fail to see the gift that they are and the service they have yet to offer.

Senior faculty members who have identified themselves virtually exclusively with their careers in theological education run the risk of not knowing when their career as theological educators has reached its conclusion and of continuing on to the detriment of themselves, their colleagues and their students. Faced with the prospect of retirement they may be driven more by fear of what will be than by confidence in the same Spirit who graced them with their personal vocation from the beginning. Both middle faculty and senior faculty could see an extension of their vocations in being quiet mentors to younger faculty, offering their wisdom subtly so as to sustain the junior faculty members and draw them deeper into their personal vocation.

For all three groups, prioritizing being over doing reminds them that their fundamental vocation is to incarnate God in the unique way in which the Spirit has graced them. Locating their meaning only in a career in theological education undermines the fullness of life to which they are called and impedes the full flourishing of their personal vocation.

Changes in Expression of One's Personal Vocation

Discernment of one's vocation, we mentioned, is the fruit of dialogue between inner and outer voices, with God's will being manifest in the deepest self and the communities to which one belongs. This conversation continues throughout one's life. At times, this ongoing movement in life may prompt a change in the expression of one's vocation. Changes may occur on one's own initiative or through the promptings of the community. Frederick Buechner describes a vocation as "the place where your deep gladness meets the world's deep need,"[13] a place of encounter between the inner and the outer voices.

It may be that one's gladness is no longer aroused by one's involvement in theological education. I remember a comment made early on in a program called "Theological Teaching for the Church's Ministries," a project for corporate faculty development. Someone remarked that teachers should leave theological education if they did not love their students. Perhaps this is true of all teaching. It strikes me as all the more true for theological education, however, because of the intimate connection between one's personal calling to incarnate God in a unique way, one's call to the fullness of life, and the particular expression that this vocation might take in life. Risking a kind of death in one's inner life one ought rather to seek another expression of her or his personal vocation so as to continue to find integrity and meaning in life.

On the other hand, it may well be the world's need that invites us to change the expression of our personal vocation. Faculty members are called to administrative positions, administrators are invited to participate in projects beyond the walls of their own institution and so on. Critical in this regard is attention to consistency between one's personal vocation and the new expression to which one is called. Alphonso says that "the personal vocation . . . becomes *the criterion of* discernment for every decision in life."[14] Once again, attention to inner and outer voices is necessary in order to proceed with integrity.

Conclusion

This brief essay has examined the question of the vocation of the theological educator in the context of

the broader notion of one's personal vocation. Discernment of one's personal vocation is the fruit of listening attentively to God in one's deepest self and the voices in the communities to which one belongs. Ultimately, one's personal vocation arises from one's uniqueness, a gift of the Spirit. Arguing that one's personal vocation resides primarily in being over doing, I have proposed the vocation of the theological educator as a "vocation within a vocation" or, more explicitly, as an expression of one's personal vocation. Avoiding the pitfalls of over-identifying with their career and recognizing a variety of manifestations of their personal vocation, theological educators may advance through significant moments in their careers, developing their personal vocations more profoundly and incarnating God in the world.

In the final analysis, living one's personal vocation is, in the words of Palmer, "something I can't not do."[15] To the extent that a career as a theological educator manifests one's personal vocation it is to be pursued; to the extent that it distracts one from the work of the Spirit, it should be abandoned. Poet William Stafford asks, "Ask me whether what I have done is my life."[16] When all we have done manifests our personal vocation, we reply with a resounding "Yes."

Rev. Kevin O'Neil, CSsR, S.T.D., is Associate Professor of Systematic and Moral Theology at Washington Theological Union, Washington, DC.

Endnotes

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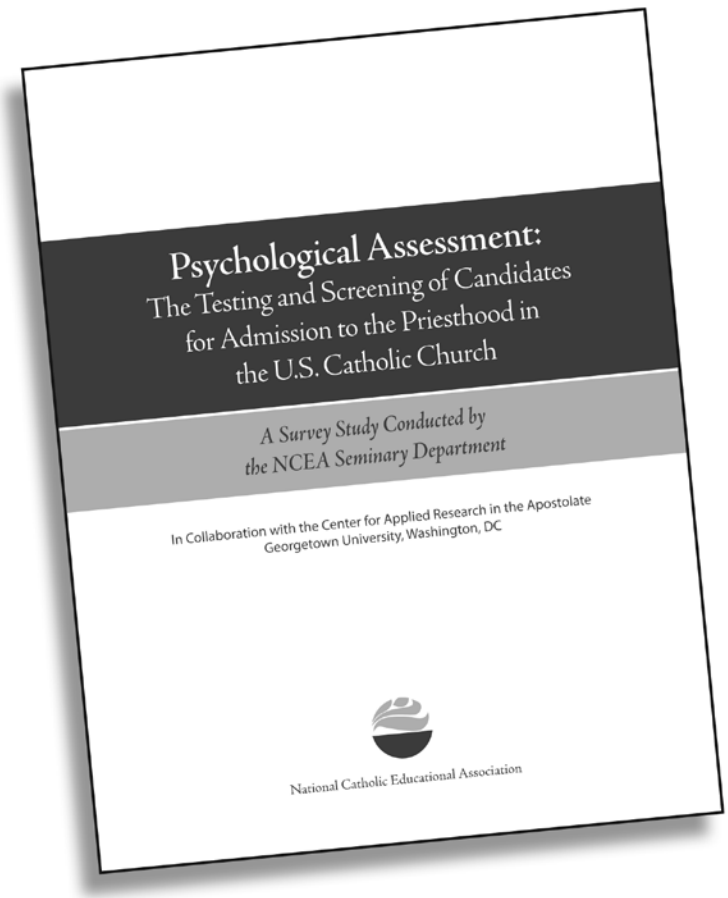

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Community Organizing and Seminarian Leadership Development

Rev. George E. Schultze, SJ

President Barack Obama is wont to say that he learned more working as a community organizer in Chicago than he learned as a student at Harvard Law School. Through his organizing, he learned to see, judge and act in classical Catholic Action fashion, and he also grew as a leader. Who is a leader? And how might the faculty and staff of seminaries further assist seminarians in their development as leaders in the promotion of justice through community organizing? Faith-based community organizing is a useful source of leadership training for seminarians. Seminarians and their formators must always evaluate the organizing itself from the perspective of Catholic social doctrine.

Leaders have talents, mentors, knowledge, opportunities, allies and most importantly followers. While President Obama's faith background is relatively fluid and not as clearly defined as some would like, he is unquestionably a world leader, a person who has shot like a comet through the sky of national and international politics. Community organizing played a major role in his leadership development through the mentoring of Greg Galluzzo, a former Catholic priest and the former director of the Gamaliel Foundation (a national organizing network), and the political strategizing of Marshall Ganz, a 1960s civil rights organizer, a past lieutenant to Cesar Chavez in the United Farm Workers (UFW), and now a lecturer at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. President Obama's "Yes We Can" campaign motto was simply a translation of Cesar Chavez's "Si Se Puede" rallying cry. The president's rise to world leadership is rooted deeply in the history and tradition of community organizing in the United States. Although one must acknowledge that his family and education contributed to his social awareness and charisma, he would not have become the leader he is today without his training, work and experience in community organizing.

Faith-based community organizing is a useful source of leadership training for seminarians. Seminarians and their formators must always evaluate the organizing itself from the perspective of Catholic social doctrine.

The training of modern day labor and community organizers is traced to such historical figures as Terrence Powderly of the Knights of Labor, Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor, John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, and Lewis' protégé Saul Alinsky. Today, this organizing heritage is commonly made available to clergy, religious, churchgoers, unionists and small business owners through such organizing networks as People Improving Communities through Organizing (PICO), the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and the Gamaliel Foundation. These national organizing networks offer one-day, weekend and ten-day training sessions with the longest training sessions dedicated to significant leaders whose sponsoring institutions help cover their costs. The leaders/trainees learn how to direct meetings, build relations with one-to-one meetings

and gather information in research actions. They also attend sessions with academics and others to analyze and discuss public policy concerns and community needs. At many ten-day trainings, the organizers and leaders from the local affiliate will have organized a public action that has two purposes: 1) to gain some public benefit (e.g., after school programs in a community) and 2) to hold a meeting led by regular people, attended by a large number of concerned citizens and filled with civic drama. It is an event that educates and motivates the leaders who are attending the training.

Community organizing focuses on middle class and low income people, groups that require organized social power because they have inadequate political and/or financial power to achieve change as individuals. The organizing is not driven by a particular issue or special interests but by the common needs.

Faith-based community organizing is multi-religious and multi-ethnic. Catholic parishes and dioceses are significant financial contributors to the networks and are by far the greatest single source of participants. For example, People Acting in Community Together (PACT), the San Jose, California, PICO affiliate, counts as member institutions twelve Protestant Churches (six denominations), four synagogues, two Islamic associations and nine Catholic parishes. PACT has 50,000 members who are associated with these faith communities. Given the United States' bishops call for faithful citizenship, faith-based community organizing provides a non-partisan outlet to promote the common good. Neighbors, friends and family are recognized for their participation in civic affairs in an era when citizens have lost their civic spirit and even fail to avail themselves of their right to vote. Many seminarians, religious and priests have already grown as leaders with the training, organizing opportunities and mentoring offered by these networks.

In *Upon this Rock: The Miracles of a Black Church,*[1] Samuel G. Freedman chronicles the influence of community organizing in the life of Baptist minister Johnny Ray Youngblood and the reorganizing of the St. Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn. Protestant seminaries and community organizing workshops have included the book in their curriculum. In part, Youngblood rebuilt his failing congregation by tenacious relationship building focused on the self-interests of the local people, which is community organizing in its purest form. By means of his personal experience, scripture study, liturgical life and social concern, he increased his church's membership and positively influenced the local community. In part, Johnny Ray Youngblood has recognized that his training with the IAF and leadership role in East Brooklyn Churches, his IAF affiliate, contributed to the growth and success of his church. The mentoring that he and his members received from IAF organizer Michael Gecan made them legitimate leaders in Brooklyn. East Brooklyn Churches is probably best known for the building of 3,000 affordable homes in Brooklyn through their Nehemiah Project organizing efforts. Community organizing groups around the United States have similar stories to tell about leadership development and tangible improvements made in their sponsoring churches.

Seminarians will benefit from an academic and pastoral introduction to the world of community organizing because it has a history of success in developing leaders. The faculty, spiritual directors, vocations directors and ultimately the bishops and religious superiors who mission the seminarians to organizing efforts need to provide ongoing guidance and support from a Catholic perspective.

I was introduced to community organizing in a seminary class in the early 1990s and then as a seminarian participated in a summer-long training in PICO's San Jose, California, affiliate, PACT. Challenged by lead organizer David Mann, I conducted more than 100 one-to-one relational meetings during a summer while living at the rectory of the largely Hispanic Sacred Heart Parish. After house meetings, research actions and table talks with then-pastor Mateo Sheedy, I came to appreciate the leadership development and training that is the real purpose of community organizing. It was an education. By the end of the summer, the members of PACT and their allies—more than 300 people in attendance—heard the city's redevelopment chief agree to set aside

funds for after school programs and gang prevention, the first such use of redevelopment funds in the state of California. We learned that we, too, had the faith and strength of a Moses, a Micah and a Mary. At its best, community organizing links scripture, liturgy, the spiritual life and the sacraments to the challenges that the Church and families face today. Community organizers frequently remind their listeners that although Moses was a poor public speaker, God chose him to lead the Israelites. And while St. Peter was a mumbling and bumbling erstwhile fisherman, he was the rock upon which the Church was built.

Paul Osterman at the MIT Sloan School of Management points out three challenges that every leader finds when organizing—inertia, the free rider and powerful counter forces to success, e.g., power-grabbing and outside opponents.[2] Community organizing focuses on middle class and low income people, groups that require organized social power because they have inadequate political and/or financial power to achieve change as individuals. The organizing is not driven by a particular issue or special interests but by the common needs that people raise in multiple one-to-one relational meetings, small group meetings or "house meetings" in a particular area. The organizing is across ethnic, racial and special interest lines; in other words, it is broad-based. The participants are also working across denominations, faith traditions, ages, political parties, cultures and gender. The organizing committee by its nature reflects the socioeconomic make-up of the locale.

At times, leaders in the Church and civil society have to motivate timid, fearful, and/or apathetic people and they will often use the pain people feel in their lives as a motivator. This pain is the grief born of hardship, suffering and experiences of injustice. If you can touch a person where he or she feels pain or suffers, you can agitate that person and constructively direct the person's anger. An elderly husband and wife may isolate themselves in their home, but a leader, developing a relationship with them through multiple one-on-one meetings, learning that their property and family have been affected by area crime, can agitate them out of their home and into communal action. The inertia is broken.

Community organizers believe self-interest drives people, and organizers encourage men and women to look for the interests of their families and communities. This motivation is not a crude self-interest, or the *reductio ad absurdum* form of self-interest as found in Ayn Rand's objectivism. It is an enlightened self-interest that is still tempered by Christian love of neighbor.

In their Catholic social doctrine class, reading the social encyclicals, seminarians learn that the Church supports associations that work to improve people's lives, encourages the ownership of private property for the well being of families and places value on self-starting, entrepreneurial initiatives. The iron rule of community organizing is this: "Never do for people what they can do for themselves." In the community organizing world, parishioners and neighbors out of self-interest work to improve the lives of children and safeguard the family. The understanding and acceptance of self-interest, moreover, leads to an environment of accountability that limits the free-rider phenomenon. In most urban centers, seminarians inevitably encounter faith-based community organizing in their field education and pastoral year assignments. Supervised participation in the work with reflective evaluation of the experience will contribute to their leadership development.

The iron rule of community organizing is this: "Never do for people what they can do for themselves."

Community organizers also teach about power, a fundamental element in the work. Saul Alinsky, the father of today's community organizing, believed that power was the essence of life, and this belief is one of his legacies in organizing. In our Catholic tradition, we have power by virtue of our human dignity, having been made in the image of God. Professional organizers teach church people that there are two kinds of power at work in the world as it is: money (wealth) and people (numbers). While a few people may harness great earthly power through wealth, less well-off people acting together in solidarity can still engage opponents and defeat unjust power grabbing.

Community organizers look to parishes and other mediating institutions for potential leaders and train them to become confident and effective public figures. The leadership development is transferable to other areas of parish life or ministry as shown by Johnny Ray Youngblood's reorganizing and revitalizing of his church community in Brooklyn. The greatest boon to ministerial leadership with regard to power is learning the importance of the power of relationships. Long-term,

accountable relationships lead to positive change, and one-to-one meetings are a means of building those relationships.

The experience of community organizing will help a seminarian become a leader, but it requires a mentoring that consistently holds to the faith and does not reduce it to a social ethic.

President Obama gained his understanding of Catholic social teaching as a community organizer, and he has publicly expressed respect for the Church's tradition of social thought. The organizing work, pursued by an invested participant, can quickly provide leadership skills and present a path for leadership development. Looking at the professional organizers in the various organizing networks, one finds many Catholic and non-Catholic clergy, religious and seminary graduates who have gravitated into full-time community organizing.

A significant number of seminarians and priests, however, have unfortunately found the challenge, meaningfulness, and effectiveness of organizing as a path right out of the religious life. Women religious have also found mentors, career opportunities and meaning in the social justice efforts of these groups that they failed to find in other roles within their vocations. It is exciting work that can lead to challenging self-reflection and personal growth. Although many of the local affiliates of national organizing networks have sponsoring Catholic parishes and the support of dioceses, they are in fact parachurch institutions as compared to the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Worker or other similar Catholic associations. The organizing committees receive financial capital, social capital and indirectly spiritual capital from the Catholic Church, but they are truly non-denominational and ecumenical entities. They have no canonical standing. Catholic participation provides legitimacy for the organization in eyes of many people and helps credential the leaders when they first schedule one-to-one meetings.

The parachurch nature of the community organizing networks can, nonetheless, pose at times valid obstacles to the participation of Catholic seminarians and clergy. While seminarians and clergy may want to engage the nation's pluralistic and diverse social milieu, they also recognize the rejection of some Catholic social doctrine by other denominations, religions and secular institutions (e.g., labor unions). To maintain the broad-based nature of their work, community organizing groups as described here will not take positions on respect for life or the protection of marriage between a man and a woman. These issues from a Catholic view, however, are basic to the Catholic understanding of social justice whether in the case of protecting defenseless and innocent human life or the stability of the family, the vital cell of society according to Catholic social teaching.

Sociologist Richard Wood in *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America* described PICO's belief system in this way:

> Participants use a variety of culture elements to express their understandings of what faith-based organizing is all about. In this sense, the beliefs underlying PICO's organizational culture represent less a unified whole than a rope of many fibers. But two main cultural traditions intertwine to form the main cords of the culture of faith-based organizing: the civic and political traditions of grassroots democracy and the ethical traditions of religion. Each cord, in turn, is made up of several related cultural strands.[3]

While community organizing at its core develops leaders, its ethical reflection can be insufficient or blunted. Church sponsors and religious participants have to hold the professional organizers and their networks accountable for the time and energy they put into both instrumental politics to win social goods *and the ethical reflection about what is the good*. Practicing Catholics who have participated in faith-based community organizing will question organizing committee leaders about the leveraging of faith communities to develop relationships with politicians who continually reject a Catholic understanding of life and marriage but may support health and immigration reforms.

Some seminarians are already well aware of this tension, but other seminarians will need to have their formators point out to them that Church teaching con-

nects a good society with the protection of life in all its stages and the protection of marriage between a man and a woman. A leadership role will require lifting up the Church's teaching in its entirety and at times feeling the rejection of others or perhaps seeing their conversion. *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI's recent social encyclical, points out that Catholics cannot separate charity and social justice efforts from what the Church teaches as the truth. Faith-based community organizers assume that participants know their church's doctrine and avoid taking up issues in which faith traditions/denominations conflict in their teaching. Formators have the responsibility of pointing out this lacuna from a Catholic understanding of truth and evangelization.

As Richard Wood has observed, faith-based community organizing is dependent on the "civic and political traditions of grass roots democracy and the ethical traditions of religion." These "two cords," moreover, are made up of other "cultural strands." No one would deny that United States political and civic traditions are influenced by utilitarian philosophical thought and that like Machiavelli, community organizers are more focused on how people live than how they ought to live. In addition, as one becomes more familiar with community organizing, one finds strands of Friedrich Nietzsche's understanding of the will-to-power (e.g., reason itself as a will-to-power) and value relativism (e.g., passionate commitment without a belief in truth).[4] Such mistaken thinking requires at the minimum an acknowledgement and promotion of the ethical traditions of religion, or the work of community organizing will end in failure. Pope Benedict XVI writes in *Values in a Time of Upheaval*:

> We have lost sight of truth as such…what we take to be a direction is not based on criterion that is itself true but only on our decision, and that means, in the final analysis, on utilitarian considerations. In this kind of "relativistic" context, teleological or consequentialist ethics becomes ultimately nihilistic, even if it is unaware of this.[5]

One should not solely criticize professional organizers for these negative strands because they are found in the culture at large, including Catholic parishes at times. Given the philosophical and ethical tensions at play in community organizing, although President Obama has become a world leader, his community organizing experience only gave him a partial understanding of Catholic social thought.

At St. Patrick's Seminary and University in Menlo Park, California, the seminarians receive a solid intellectual formation that enables them to trace the philosophical roots of both Catholic and non-Catholic social initiatives and their ethical premises. On a daily basis they also hear the word of God and receive the Eucharist in the midst of stained-glassed depictions of the Prophets, the Holy Family, the Apostles and the Doctors of the Church. The chapel itself answers the question, "Who is a leader?" The seminarians are looking up to them. Spiritual leaders are in the end the directors of our material lives, and it is their world view inspired by God that leads to change. The experience of community organizing will help a seminarian become a leader, but it requires a mentoring that consistently holds to the faith and does not reduce it to a social ethic.

On the one hand, a seminarian and his formators will at times need to challenge others within the community organizing world and civil society. With the support of his bishop and priest-mentors, the experience will help the seminarian recognize the complexity of the world, improve his pastoral leadership and encourage him to confront the ethical relativism that is the bane of our world today.[6] On the other hand, his experience of community organizing will unquestionably contribute to his leadership in the Catholic community. Whether it is leading a parish or supporting Catholic organizations like the Knights of Columbus and St. Vincent de Paul, the seminarian will know how to motivate, support and above all listen to others. His followers in turn will become Christian leaders for others.

Rev. George E. Schultze, SJ, Ph.D., is a spiritual director and lecturer in Catholic social ethics at St. Patrick's Seminary and University in Menlo Park, Calif. He studied labor relations at Cornell and graduated from the Haas Business School at UC Berkeley.

Endnotes

1. Samuel G. Freedom, *Upon This Rock: The Miracles of a Black Church* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994).
2. Paul Osterman, *Gathering Power: The Future of Progressive Politics in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 38.
3. Richard L. Wood, *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, And Democratic Organizing in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 171.
4. See Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987).
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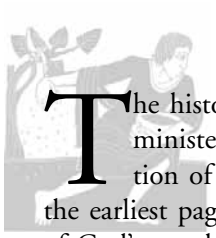
A Catholic Vision of Theological Field Education: Glimpses from the Ministry Formation Documents

Ann M. Garrido, D.Min.



The history of field education as a means of ministerial formation precedes the inauguration of Christianity itself. Searching through the earliest pages of scripture, we already find images of God's prophets and leaders being prepared for their work through close mentoring relationships with fellow prophets and leaders. Consider Moses and Joshua journeying through the desert together or Elijah and Elisha in the shadow of King Ahab's palace. When Jesus appears in the Gospels, it is only natural that he will form his successors through a pattern of discipleship well embedded in the Jewish imagination. Jesus does not lecture to the twelve in classrooms or pass out how-to manuals; rather, he invites them to travel alongside as he heals and preaches, afterwards reflecting on their experiences with them: What does the parable mean? Who are people saying he is? Of what should they beware regarding the Pharisees?

In stories from Acts and the epistles, we see the model of mentorship thrive in Paul's relationship with Timothy and Silas, and in Priscilla's and Aquila's relationship with Apollos. Such mentorship continues through the early centuries of the Church. Urban candidates for the emerging ministerial priesthood were formed in the context of the cathedral, living with the bishop and older presbyters, progressing through a variety of minor orders, their duties gradually increasing, until they were ordained priests themselves. Augustine of Hippo was the first to formalize a communal mentoring relationship in the creation of a *monasterium clericorum*, a house next to the cathedral where priests could live with and learn from one another. Candidates in rural settings received more individualized mentoring if they were able to receive mentoring at all.

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While there were many advantages to mentorship as the primary means of ministerial formation, there also proved to be difficulties. Over time, uneven mentoring and the lack of a consistent, theologically substantive formation led to a good deal of ill-informed preaching and pastoral care within the church, contributing to the emergence of the Reformation in the early 16th century. One of the more sweeping changes that the Catholic Church undertook in the Council of Trent was in the area of ministerial formation. Charles Borromeo, among others, led the way in ushering in a far more academic model of formation taking place within the context of seminaries. Protestant communities, too, chose to place a high priority of the education of their ministers, often affiliating with or creating universities to promote rigorous theological training. In the U.S., some of the first universities – including Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Dartmouth – were all founded originally as divinity schools with the aim of assuring highly trained ministers for the fledging nation.

In the centuries following the Reformation, however, both Catholic and Protestant traditions discovered that just as field learning alone is not sufficient, neither is academic learning. Quality ministry demands both a sound intellectual basis and practical, pastoral wisdom that can only be gained through ministerial experience.

Contemporary documents on ministerial education, emerging both from Rome and the USCCB, highlight the importance of a fulsome, well-rounded formation that takes place not only within the classroom context, but in other contexts as well. In this essay, I want to briefly introduce four key documents from the past two decades that illumine the Catholic Church's expectations around ministry formation. I then want to highlight common threads in these documents that suggest a contemporary understanding of field education in Catholic circles. These threads should be considered by seminaries and other formation programs when establishing and evaluating the field education component within their curricula.

A Survey of Recent Documents

The most significant document on ministerial formation emerging from the Vatican in recent decades is John Paul II's apostolic exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (PDV), dated March 25, 1992. It was written following a 1990 synod of bishops devoted to looking at the priestly vocation in the modern age. The document proposes a comprehensive approach to priestly formation grounded in the vision of the Second Vatican Council. For our purposes, section #58 is of special relevance. Although the language of field education is not specifically used, the intent is clear.

The *Program for Priestly Formation*, fifth edition (PPF5), is the response of the U.S. Catholic Church to PDV, establishing guidelines for seminaries in designing holistic programs of formation for future priests, especially diocesan priests. Issued November 15, 2005, the document follows the lead of PDV in identifying four major pillars of formation: human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral. The references to field education in PPF5 fall largely under the pastoral formation section (#236-257). Field education is identified as one of the key methods of pastoral formation for parish life. Key references to field education include #239-240 and #248-250 in PPF5.

The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States (NDPD) was released by the USCCB on December 26, 2004. The NDPD establishes norms for the formation of permanent deacons. Like the PPF5, it encourages the practice of placing ordination candidates in a variety of settings to gain pastoral experience during their formation. In contrast to PPF5, it highlights non-parish versus parish sites. Pastoral formation for the deacon, it emphasizes, should focus on *diakonia* – liturgy, charity and justice. Paragraphs #126-133 and #219-221 are especially relevant as regards field education in the NDPD.

Quality ministry demands both a sound intellectual basis and practical, pastoral wisdom that can only be gained through ministerial experience.

Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry (CWV) was issued by the USCCB in November 2005. Unlike PPF5 or NDPD, CWV does not establish norms or particular law, but it does offer substantive reflection on what has been learned regarding best practices in the formation of lay ecclesial ministers in the US Church. Based on the same four-pillar structure as the PPF5 and NDPD, the document locates field education under pastoral formation. While it does not speak about where field placements should take place, or who should supervise them, it does strongly support field education experiences for lay ministry candidates. Pages 42 and 49-50 of CWV are particularly important for our effort in this essay.

What Can We Glean?

From these four ecclesial documents, we can learn a great deal about how the Church understands the role of field education at this moment in its history and learn its hopes and expectations for the experience. I want to lift up nine key insights that weave through the documents:

Field education is the not the same as field work

Field education directors are often barraged by calls from parishes, schools and other social service

Volunteerism is a noble thing, to be highly encouraged, but it is not the same as field education. In volunteerism, it is the needs of the site that form the primary focus. In field education, the primary focus is the growth of the student.

agencies looking for volunteers. Volunteerism is a noble thing, to be highly encouraged, but it is not the same as field education. In volunteerism, it is the needs of the site that form the primary focus. In field education, the primary focus is the growth of the student. While the needs of the ministry and the growth of the student go hand-in-hand during field education, the shift in emphasis is significant. Field education begins not with an assessment of what the site most needs, but rather with what the student most needs in order to become the kind of minister the Church desires. PPF5 states very succinctly: "Whatever the setting, it is necessary that it facilitate learning" (#239, par. 7).

Field education needs supervisors

One of the things that distinguishes field education from field work is the presence of a supervisor – an experienced minister who serves both as a mentor and evaluator of the student's ministerial potential and growth. The supervisor is responsible for crafting the environment and kinds of opportunities that will most help the student reach his/her learning goals. PPF5 highlights the three most essential qualities in a supervisor as experience, competence and generosity (#239, par. 7). NDPD similarly emphasizes "competent, objective, and supportive supervisors" (#219). The documents in general lift up the importance of careful discernment and preparation for this role (see esp. PPF5 #240, NDPD #219).

Field education needs reflection

A second factor that distinguishes field education from field work is the practice of conscious reflection on the work. Experience alone does not always produce learning. We have all known persons who have many years experience working in a profession but remain much the same persons as when they first started. It is only when we pause and look back, ask questions and seek connections, that we gain real pastoral wisdom. The documents place great hope in the power of regular theological reflection, anticipating that the habit will "provide an opportunity for personal synthesis, clarification of motivations, and the development of directions for life and ministry," "enrich spiritual life," "help the development of pastoral skill," "interpret pastoral experience…in light of scripture, church teaching, personal faith, and pastoral practices" and "lead… to a lifelong effort in reflecting on his ministry in light of faith" (PPF5 #239, 248, NDPD #133). Time for theological reflection is never considered optional in the documents but is a firm expectation.

Field education teaches skills for ministry

As noted above, many ministerial skills are not learned best in a classroom environment but in the field. The documents offer long lists of skill sets that the Church hopes future ministers will acquire as part of their pastoral formation – ranging from conflict management to administration, from cross-cultural sensitivity to preaching. The list is so lengthy that a decade of field education experiences still might not provide time to get more than a taste of the desired range (see PDV #58-59, CWV p. 47-49, PPF 5 #236-238, NDPD #126-131). A reasonable range of different opportunities, however, helps the student to achieve "a genuine confidence in his own ability – a realistic sense of achieving the knowledge and skills required for an effective ministry" (NDPD #128).

Field education develops ministerial identity and authority

True ministry, however, is more than the application of skill. It requires a quality of character and vision consonant with one's new role in the community. Ministerial candidates need to become comfortable being in the public eye and cognizant of how their behavior is being observed within the community at all times, not only when performing ministerial tasks. They need to become aware of how many will perceive their speech and actions as representative of God or the Church, not simply their own personal opinion. They must develop an eye for the good of the whole community rather than show preference or bias for particular persons or agendas. John Paul II wrote persuasively of this dimen-

sion of ministerial development when he argued that pastoral formation cannot be "reduced to a mere apprenticeship aiming to make the candidate familiar with some pastoral techniques" but rather should be designed to "initiate the candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd" (PDV #58).

Field education assists integration

In former times, field education was sometimes referred to as applied theology and placed at the end of students' programs as an opportunity to go out into the field and apply what had been learned in the classroom. In the documents, though, field education is recognized as serving a two-directional purpose. Field education is a place to test out ideas from the classroom in the field, but it is also a place to surface questions and insights that can be brought back into the study of theology. Field education, then, interweaves theology and real-life questions bringing about a more cohesive formation experience. The NDPD notes that pastoral field education "fosters a general integration in the formational process, forging a close ink between the human, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions in formation" (#126).

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Field education assesses future ministers

Field education not only helps the student develop new skills, foster a ministerial identity and integrate academic learning, but it also helps the Church learn *about* the student's skills, identity and integration. Field educa-

tion is where the Church is able to get a snap shot of its future ministers in action. It provides a picture of the candidate that observation in a classroom alone never could. Many times, the picture field education reveals is an affirmative one – the person's gifts are well-suited for the ministerial life. Often, though, field education makes clear the areas of growth necessary to thrive in ministry. At times it helps the Church to recognize that a particular candidate's gifts would be best engaged outside official ministry. The documents understand that supervisory feedback and evaluation of a candidate's readiness for ministry are essential elements of the field education experience. This is part of the reason they insist on using the language of supervision rather than only mentorship. PPF5 considers the assessment dimension of field education so valuable that it lists it as one of the three necessary components of an effective program – along with theological reflection and supervision (#248).

Ministers with a broader experience of Church will be able to serve as bridges between their local church communities and the universal Church.

Field education expands vision

Every ministry candidate begins his or her formation for ministry with a particular vision of church in mind, based on his or her own journey in Catholicism. Often this vision is just a sliver of the whole reality that is the Catholic Church. Field education seeks to expand this vision, offering lots of different tastes of the Church at work in the world, wearing many different faces. The documents speak of the importance of students being placed in interreligious, multicultural and economically diverse settings. They advocate for lots of parish experience but also encourage field placements beyond the confines of parish life – in prisons, hospitals, schools and social service settings (PPF5 #239 & 246, NDPD #126). The documents suggest that ministers with a broader experience of Church will be able to serve as bridges between their local church communities and the universal Church.

Field education nourishes ministerial spirituality

Developing a ministerial spirituality implies developing the capacity to find God's hand at work in the day-to-day experiences of ministry – in the person who rings the doorbell looking for a listening ear and a sandwich, in the clogged toilet in the parish gym, in the parish council meeting that runs over, in the family arriving to baptize their newest member or bury their oldest one. Ministry invites us into ordinary moments, but also into very sacred, vulnerable moments in peoples' lives, where outsiders generally dare not tread. Field education does not race future ministers through daily ministerial life but instead invites lots of time to pause and reflect on where God was in a particular moment, instilling a habit of asking the kinds of questions that will sustain a healthy ministerial spirituality. CWV speaks of reflection in ministry formation as assisting students "to recognize the movement of God in their lives and ministry" (p. 42). PPF5 anticipates students will emerge possessing "a better inner sense of direction because of an enriched spiritual life" (#239).

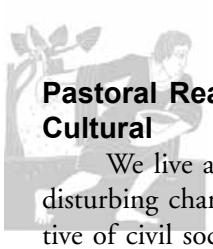
Conclusion

In surveying the ministry formation documents of the contemporary U.S. Church, it is clear that the Church's understanding of field education has evolved significantly in recent decades. The documents propose a rich, nuanced vision of what field education can do within a holistic ministry formation program. They articulate so many hopes and expectations regarding field education that it may be difficult for any one field education program to fully realize all of them. Various programs will necessarily be forced to emphasize one aspect of the documents' vision over another based on resources, capacities and the context of the program. By not dictating specifics – the number of hours in the field or the educational background of a supervisor – the documents provide a comprehensive set of values that field education programs can aspire to engage whatever the setting. They seek to assure that the Church of the future is well-served by healthy, skilled ministers who blend theological acumen with pastoral sensitivity.

Ann M. Garrido, D. Min., served as director of field education at Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, Missouri, for seven years before moving into other administrative positions at the school. She is the author of *A Concise Guide to Supervising a Ministry Student* (Ave Maria Press, 2008). This article is based on the first chapter of her book.

Intercultural Competence and the Priestly Vocation

Rev. Allan Figueroa Deck, SJ, Ph.D., S.T.D.



Pastoral Realities: Demographic, Social and Cultural

We live at a time of exhilarating and sometimes disturbing change. This is true from both the perspective of civil society and the Church. Of the many factors that contribute to the pace of new developments in society and the Church, the movement of peoples, migration, is a major one. For the Church in the United States this has meant a shift – demographic, social, cultural and economic – from the middleclass stability that it achieved in the middle of the twentieth century to a new period characterized by reorganization due to a rising Catholic immigrant population, a declining middleclass European American cohort and a declining number of priests and religious.

The tragic scandals regarding the sexual abuse of minors by clergy had several consequences, one of them being the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars that could have been used to fund an emerging new configuration of parishes and Catholic institutions. The disappearance of more than 2,000 parishes over the past two decades as a result of closures and/or clustering of parishes is one highly visible change in church life. Migration and high natural birthrates for Hispanics is also dramatically affecting church life. As the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate's 2011 study titled *Emerging Models of Parish Leadership* reports, fully one third of today's parishes are multicultural, that is, shared among two or more distinct cultural and language groups. Often they are shared by several cultural groups, and the number of such parishes is rising. Perhaps equally significant, the social class status of today's U.S. Catholics is bifurcated between an upwardly mobile but aging European-American cohort and a relatively youthful, struggling working class of immigrants and their children.

It is time to take a long, hard look at one of the central challenges facing priests and all pastoral agents today: the integration of intercultural competencies into formation programs.

The coming disappearance over the next 10-15 years of thousands of priests and religious due to retirement and death will intensify the changes taking place in parishes, schools and Catholic organizations of every kind. Fewer parishes, priests and religious will be ministering to more numerous diverse communities. The rising number of deacons and laity who are taking up the slack will find themselves challenged as never before.

In this article, I wish to put our feet on the ground and reflect on these dramatic new circumstances that demand adaptations in the way we think about ministerial formation, especially that of priests. The suggestions I make here are consistent with what the Magisterium has been saying for decades and with the vision proposed by the *Program of Priestly Formation* (PPF).

Practical realities make it imperative that we pay attention to and acknowledge the urgency of our pastoral landscape. It is time to take a long, hard look at one of the central challenges facing priests and all pastoral agents today: the integration of intercultural competencies into formation programs. Every ecclesial minister

Perhaps Catholics got used to that expansive kind of success and came to view as normative the Church – and the priesthood – as an accepted, prosperous, and rather middle-class institution. Those days have certainly come to an end.

beginning with the priest must be prepared to work in and with today's cultural, language, and social contexts. The growing cultural diversification of the U.S. Church is surely a hopeful reality as the Church becomes more *catholic* than ever, becoming what it professes to be. This brings with it, however, the urgent need for a more inclusive vision and appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills among ecclesial leaders, especially priests, for addressing these challenges.

Pope Benedict XVI has set the tone for the Church's efforts to reach out to others and promote inter-religious and intercultural communication. Speaking of the encounter with the "other," the Holy Father has highlighted the biblical image of the Courtyard of the Gentiles in which peoples from every land engaged each other outside the Temple in Jerusalem. In a video message broadcast especially to youth and young adults on March 25, 2011, in support of the Pontifical Council on Culture's Courtyard of the Gentiles initiative, the Holy Father said:

> Dear friends, you are challenged to build bridges between one another. . . . Our first step, the first thing we can do together, is to respect, help and love each and every human being because he or she is a creature of God and in some way the road that leads to God. As you carry on the experience of this evening, work to break down the barriers of fear of others, of strangers, of those who are different; this fear is often born of mutual ignorance, skepticism and indifference. Work to create bonds with other young people without distinction and keeping in mind those who are poor or lonely, unemployed, ill or on the margins of society. (*Origins*, April 7, 2011, No. 43, 698-699)

The Priestly Mission Today: Evangelization

The framework for grounding this discussion about the vocation of the ordained priesthood in the context of diversity in today's world is given us by the Magisterium in four groundbreaking documents: the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et spes* (Nos. 56ff), Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii nuntiandi,* arguably the most influential ecclesial document to be issued since Vatican II, and Pope John Paul II's *Catechesi tradendae* and *Redemptoris missio*. In these normative documents the Holy See clearly asserts the identity and mission of the Church in terms of the concept of the evangelization of cultures. Pope Benedict XVI has enhanced this vision of identity and mission with his insistence on the New Evangelization which highlights the decline of Christianity in the so-called Christian nations of Europe and North America and points to the particular challenges of the Church's encounter with modern culture, especially the ideology of secularism. Underlying the Church's understanding of its identity and therefore the role of its hierarchical leaders – bishops, priests and deacons – is the contemporary encounter of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, with various ethnicities, races and cultures, especially the highly influential secular, modern and postmodern cultures.

An authentic priestly vocation means being called to serve the People of God, not as one might imagine them to be, but as they truly are.

The mindset of seminarians and priests may at times reflect the accommodation that they and the faithful in general have made with a given period and culture. In the middle of the twentieth century, the Church in the United States experienced a high point of stability and acceptance. A Catholic was elected president of the United States and the number of students in Catholic grade and high schools reached its highest level in history, as did the number of parishes, priests, and religious

men and women. Perhaps Catholics got used to that expansive kind of success and came to view as normative the Church – and the priesthood – as an accepted, prosperous, and rather middle-class institution. Those days have certainly come to an end, and a generation of U.S. Catholics now passing on may experience some difficulty in adjusting to the demise of the halcyon days of the "Ozzie and Harriet" suburban parish. Perceptive pastors have noted a sense of mourning among some European-American Catholics who miss the Church of the 1950s and 60s.

Intercultural competence, therefore, is clearly not just a matter relevant to diocesan, parish or school life. It pertains as well to priestly fraternity itself now and in the years to come.

In the case of some clergy, there may also be a tendency to imagine the life of a priest in an idealized manner, as fitting into a pleasant niche that corresponds to a world that is fading away. Today's seminarians and priests consequently need a certain grittiness that will serve them well in the face of new pastoral realities. An authentic priestly vocation means being called to serve the People of God, not as one might imagine them to be, but as they truly are.

In addition, the fact that presbyterates are changing dramatically in cultural make-up is just dawning on us. The Summer 2011 issue of *The CARA Report* states that 39% of seminarians at the theologate level today are not of European ancestry (White/Anglo/Caucasian), and the majority of these non-Anglos were not born in the U.S.[1] Their numbers, moreover, increase every year.

Intercultural competence, therefore, is clearly not just a matter relevant to diocesan, parish or school life. It pertains as well to priestly fraternity itself now and in the years to come. There is an urgent need among priests and seminarians to develop the capacity for effective and appropriate intercultural relations if presbyterates are to be sources of strength, unity and mutual support for bishops and priests.

This is also urgently indicated by the rising number of international priests now distributed throughout the U.S. Frequently, such priests find themselves working in neither their own native culture nor any culture they have previously experienced. It needs to be said, then, quite clearly: Intercultural competencies are not a requirement for only European-American priests and seminarians, but for all priests and seminarians.

Today, the possibilities for ongoing intercultural encounters are endless. For example, Hispanic priests find themselves serving European-American, Vietnamese-American and African-American communities. Vietnamese priests are learning Spanish to serve Hispanics. The old approach of creating distinctive territories or silos – the personal or national parish of the past – is necessarily giving way today to an approach that effectively gathers diverse communities into larger mixed groupings. Fr. Brett Hoover, CSP, calls these "shared parishes."

The Magisterium's insistence on the Church's missionary nature requires a renewed mindset among priests and their formators, one that sees the priest more than anything else as a man on a mission as distinct from someone filling a clearly defined niche. We need to form ministers who will reach out, take risks and work with the ever-expanding mixture of faithful people that history is bringing to our doorsteps. The focus of the diocesan priest on his local church community is altogether appropriate, but something has to be added to it, namely, that his local diocesan church is no longer the stable, familiar place it used to be. It is undergoing change, and to be a competent minister of this emerging church means becoming intercultural and bilingual, even multilingual.

Intercultural competencies are not a requirement for only European-American priests and seminarians, but for all priests and seminarians.

The missiological aspect of priestly life, therefore, must be stressed in view of the facts on the ground. For instance, it is a fact that six out of ten Catholics under the age of 35 in the United States today are Hispanic.

The Magisterium's insistence on the Church's missionary nature requires a renewed mindset among priests and their formators, one that sees the priest more than anything else as a man on a mission as distinct from someone filling a clearly defined niche.

The ecclesial picture becomes even clearer when one adds the rising number of Asian, Pacific Islander and African Catholics together with the significant numbers of African-American and Native-American Catholics. As has often been noted, more than half of all U.S. Catholics are not of European ancestry. There was a time when people in certain parts of the country–the Deep South, the Midwestern Heartland, or perhaps Alaska–could claim exception from the Church's rising diversity. Those days, however, are over as new Catholic communities, especially Hispanics, populate virtually every corner of the nation.

The Church's evangelizing agenda, consequently, is demanding and undoubtedly a source of tension, even controversy, because it has countercultural implications. To evangelize is not just about engaging with cultures; it is about transforming them.

The Church, furthermore, insists on thinking about these matters in terms of blessings that these changes bring. To serve God's Kingdom is to engage all cultures in dialogue and proclamation of the Gospel. This engagement is a vast and daunting project with four fundamental dimensions: 1) a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, 2) the transformation of cultures by the power of the Gospel message, 3) the transformation of the social, economic and political orders along the lines of what Pope Benedict XVI calls "social charity" and 4) ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue leading to the reconciliation of all peoples as desired by Christ.

The Church's evangelizing agenda, consequently, is demanding and undoubtedly a source of tension, even controversy, because it has countercultural implications. To evangelize is not just about engaging with cultures; it is about transforming them. Ethnocentrism and an exaggerated love of one's nation and culture obscure a truly Catholic identity that effectively gives witness to the faith. Similarly, a perceived need among some seminarians for a high degree of clarity, stability and certainty may create indifference toward or uneasiness with what is different or "other" and get in the way of effective ministry.

Those who work as formators with today's seminarians (as well as with youth and young adults), sometimes note unstable family backgrounds and a lack of basic catechesis. It is sometimes said that these things understandably may be a factor in driving young people to a rigid and fundamentalist way of relating to the faith, one that lacks nuance and fails to deal well with ambiguity. Whatever be the source of this tendency, it must be viewed in relation to the universal mission of all the baptized and especially priests as announced in Acts 1:8 and affirmed in *Ad gentes, The Decree on Missionary Activity* of the Second Vatican Council. Here priests are encouraged to "be profoundly aware of the fact that their very life is consecrated to the service of missions."[2] *Presbyterorum ordinis* expands this thought by affirming that "[t]he spiritual gift which priests have received in ordination does not prepare him merely for a limited and circumscribed mission, but for the fullest, in fact the universal mission of salvation 'to the end of the earth.' The reason for this is that every priestly ministry shares in the fullness of the mission entrusted by Christ to the apostles."[3]

A healthy concern for orthodoxy and fidelity to authentic Church teaching ultimately requires a degree of flexibility if indeed the Church is to inculturate the Christian message in every culture in accord with the mandate of the Lord. That flexibility must be the ability to prayerfully listen to and enter into dialogue and

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meaningful relationship with "others," those who do not profess what Catholics believe as well as Catholics from different cultures.

Intercultural competence refers specifically to the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will prepare priestly ministers to successfully pursue their missionary discipleship of Christ. Among the qualities necessary for a true missionary is an ability to tolerate (not necessarily approve) what is different, outside one's own experience, for the sake of learning about and relating to others. The priest must be able to give to others and to receive from them. The Church proposes dialogue and engagement with cultures and religions other than one's own through contact, study and immersion experiences as basic ways for approaching its divine mission.

Today, in a globalized world, Christian mission is not only what the Church does in mission territories, but also what occurs throughout the developed world. In a sense, it is now no longer necessary to go to the missions since the missions have come to us. This is the simple fact at parishes, dioceses, schools and Catholic organizations throughout the United States. In that sense, the whole country is mission territory. Are our seminarians and priests prepared for this psychologically, humanly, spiritually, academically and pastorally?

Guidelines for Intercultural Competence

From 2008-2011, the USCCB Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church has elaborated guidelines for intercultural competence that consist of the following:

1. **The first guideline insists on the ability of ministers to frame the question of cultural competence in terms of the Church's mission and its teachings from Sacred Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium**. Much of the language and rhetoric around intercultural relations in both social and Church circles is understandably derived from non-ecclesial sources. It owes much to the secular approach of multiculturalism, in which business people were concerned with attracting new markets for their products, and schools and colleges sought to accommodate diverse student bodies. While this secular, civic discourse has positive elements, it is neither adequate nor appropriate for framing the question of intercultural relations for ministry in the Church.

   The focus on intercultural competence in the Church flows directly from its mission and identity. It has to do with accessing the means to accomplish the Church's purpose. Consequently, today's priests must have an understanding of how the Church's evangelizing mission is mandated in Sacred Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium. Priests need to be grounded in an ecclesial understanding, as distinct from a secular understanding, of diversity and multiculturalism. One helpful resource is a series of workshops developed by the Committee on Cultural Diversity entitled *Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers.*

2. **The second guideline concerns how to appropriately communicate in cultures other than one's own**. This involves becoming aware of how culture works, identifying cultural differences and styles, and knowing something about the parameters for interacting with cultures. For instance, some cultures are individualist while others are collectivist. This means that successful communication in a collectivist culture is indirect: the context requires atten-

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tion to intermediaries like elders or authorities. Individualist cultures in contrast tend to communicate rather directly. There are several other parameters like this that establish the framework for successful intercultural exchanges.

3. **The third guideline concerns effective communication with persons of other cultures by familiarizing oneself with specific elements of cultures.** These elements include hierarchy, difficult topics that are avoided, tone of voice and use of language including body language. Effective communication also involves attention to the manner in which decision-making occurs and how conflict is addressed by diverse cultures. These skills are a basic factor in having successful mechanisms for gaining the real participation of diverse cultural groups in the life and mission of the Church. One does not learn these skills and develop the proper attitudes by infusion, however. One needs to be formed in this.

4. **The fourth guideline focuses on group interaction among diverse communities and persons and key factors that negatively influence it: prejudice, stereotyping, racism and ethnocentrism**. How are these negative factors identified and understood, and how does one move beyond them?

5. **Intercultural competence for ministry must be rooted in a practical knowledge of how the Church's goal of communion in diversity takes the shape of ecclesial integration rather than assimilation, and it requires a strong knowledge of Sacred Scripture and a Christian spirituality of reconciliation and mission.** What models and best practices are available to parishes, dioceses, schools and Catholic organizations in pursuit of their mission? Best practices need to be identified beginning with parishes and moving on to dioceses, schools and other Catholic institutions. Practical responses to the challenge of intercultural relations, however, must ultimately be grounded in a theology of mission and a spirituality of reconciliation if they are to preserve their Christian inspiration and catholicity rather than serve as expressions of "political correctness."

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The bishops' guidelines can be integrated into every ministerial formation program. In the case of the *Program of Priestly Formation,* the guidelines can be included in a contemporary vision of ordained ministry that stresses the mission of the priest as engagement with many cultures. The focus or target of all the Church's teaching and preaching is understood precisely in terms of culture in the deepest anthropological sense.

The guidelines, moreover, naturally fit into the four pillars of priestly formation today: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. For example, in regard to human formation, the *PPF* describes the priest as "the man of communion . . . capable of making a gift of himself and of receiving the gift of others . . . a man who relates well with others, free of overt prejudice and willing

to work with people of diverse cultural backgrounds."[4] In discussing the life of chastity as lived by celibates the PPF affirms, "chastity cultivates the capacity for authentic self-gift in generative and faithful love. The celibate person renounces the realization of this capacity in marriage but embraces it in a universalizing love extended to all people."[5]

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With regard to the spiritual underpinnings of priestly formation, the *PPF* stresses the Trinitarian source of the priestly vocation and identity from which is derived the priestly mission: "It (priestly spirituality) is a spirituality of communion rooted in the mystery of the Triune God and lived out in practical ways in the mystery of the ecclesial communion."[6] The focus is on relationships within the communion of the three divine persons and with each and every person created by God. This Trinitarian unity-in-difference or unity-in-diversity is the grounding of the communion, apostolicity and catholicity that is the Church. All the baptized, especially the presbyter, are called and sent to serve the Kingdom of God, which consists of a communion of all peoples regardless of culture, race or social position.

Spiritual formation also includes insights gleaned from the liturgy. The priest presides at the Eucharistic banquet to which all are invited, highlighting his unique role in making manifest the relationship of intimacy between God and human beings. This "divine commerce" between God and human beings is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in which all cultures, ethnicities and races will partake at the end of time. This mystical, Eucharistic and eschatological spirituality undergirds the bishops' guidelines on intercultural competence. These guidelines seek to prepare the whole Church for the heavenly liturgy at the end of time when the Lord will gather people from "every nation, race, tribe and language" (Rev.7:9).

Thirdly, on a more practical note, the *PPF* section on spirituality highlights the need for priestly ministers to understand and value devotions in their own spiritual life and to "connect with the rich cultural diversity of devotional life in the United States and to appreciate devotional practices of other cultures."[7] The *PPF* points out the apostolic character of priestly spirituality that shows itself in the way the priest seeks to encounter Christ in other people. The *PPF* then makes this telling observation: "Especially in a seminary context, seminarians are to learn how prayer is to be lived out in service of others, particularly the poor, the sick, sinners, unbelievers, and the stranger."[8]

In speaking of the purpose of intellectual formation of priests the PPF is very clear: "Intellectual formation has an apostolic and missionary purpose and finality."[9] By apostolic it means the Great Commission given to the apostles by Christ to "go and baptize the nations." Obviously, knowledge about "the nations," that is, cultures, ethnicities and races other than one's own, is central for carrying out this task (Mt. 28:19).

While considerable openness has been manifested toward this diversity, seminaries, theological centers, Catholic universities, colleges and pastoral institutes must continue to unpack the meaning of diversity and the appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable ecclesial leaders to reach out successfully to others.

Conclusion

The priestly vocation, as always but especially now at this point in history, requires true conversion to the Lord, a choosing to follow Christ. This conversion

necessarily means moving beyond one's comfort zone. Reaching out to others is fundamental, but how is this outreach to happen?

New generations of Catholics, especially immigrants, are bringing life to the Church in the United States. They provide a strategic focus for the Church's outreach both as potential new candidates for the priesthood and religious life and as future priests and religious called to reap a rich harvests of vocations in years to come. While considerable openness has been manifested toward this diversity, seminaries, theological centers, Catholic universities, colleges and pastoral institutes must continue to unpack the meaning of diversity and the appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable ecclesial leaders to reach out successfully to others. This pastoral need means integrating study, experience, reflection and prayer regarding cultural diversity into every ministerial formation program.

The focus on intercultural competence profiled in this essay pertains to the necessary means by which the Church will form priests more capable of living up to their magnificent calling. Such intercultural competencies will enable them to powerfully preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and form vibrant communities of faith.

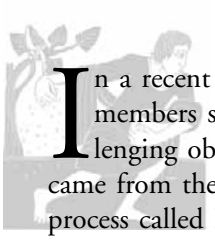
Rev. Allan Figueroa Deck, SJ, Ph.D., S.T.D., is executive director of the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, DC.

Endnotes

1. CARA Report, 17, no. 1 (Summer 2011), 10.
2. Pope Paul VI, *Ad gentes,* Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church (December 7, 1965), § 39.
3. Pope Paul VI, *Presbyterorum ordinis,* Decree on the Ministry and the Life of Priests (December 7, 1965), § 10.
4. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Program of Priestly Formation,* 5th ed., §76 (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006), 30-1.
5. *Program of Priestly Formation*, § 78.
6. *Program of Priestly Formation,* § 108.
7. *Program of Priestly Formation,* § 110.
8. *Program of Priestly Formation,* § 110.
9. *Program of Priestly Formation,* § 137.

When Work Culture and Ministry Collide

Brett C. Hoover, CSP, Ph.D.



In a recent study of Chicago parish leadership, staff members speak of "being busy" as the most challenging obstacle to effective ministry. The insight came from the examination of a leadership renewal process called INSPIRE (Identify, Nurture and Sustain Pastoral Imagination through Resources for Excellence). "Time is just critical here," said one participating parish staff member. "No one has enough of it." Many spoke of being tired, overworked, or fatigued, too busy to care properly for their health or families. The school principal at a parish lamented, "It's a big parish. It's busy, and you can't get away."

Why are parish staffs so busy? It frequently has a negative impact on the quality of ministry. Parish leadership teams cannot find time to reflect, to evaluate, to meet together or even to prepare properly for their ministry. What are people so busy doing?

In these pages I conclude that the *culture of work* in the United States has negatively affected parish leadership. Parish staffs, like other workers in the U.S., focus on *task* rather than on a larger Catholic mission such as community-building, faith formation or evangelization. Parish staffs also work in the individualistic style of U.S. society, where most activity is autonomous rather than interdependent. I propose remedies to this "work culture" of parishes and explore how remedies might be integrated into the pedagogy of seminaries and schools of ministry. The data for all these come from a yearlong examination of forty parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago who participated in the INSPIRE process.

The *culture of work* in the United States has negatively affected parish leadership.

Background and design

According to its own literature, "INSPIRE assists pastoral leadership teams in the Archdiocese of Chicago as they build capacity for collaborative pastoral leadership." Practically, this translates to 1) inserting parish consultants—persons with organizational development (OD) and pastoral ministry experience—into parishes to help staffs reflect on their work and learning, 2) holding convocations to promote networking and effective ministry and 3) offering grants to parish teams to facilitate learning and team development. INSPIRE uses the term "parish leadership team" rather than "parish staff" to recognize the variety of arrangements in parishes. Not all parishes have the large, professional ministry staff associated with middle class, suburban parishes.

With funding from the Lilly Endowment, the author was invited to research the INSPIRE program. Our study of INSPIRE included examination of over 350 parish reports, 85 interviews with team members and consultants, a parish case study and the original parish applications for INSPIRE. The research design began with study of the social practices (habits of action) of parish leadership teams, hoping to recognize patterns. This design follows the pattern of *practical theology.* American theologian Richard Osmer explains practical theology as a query into the life of a Christian community, asking: "What is going on? Why is it going on? What ought to be going on? How might we respond?" British theologians John Swinton and Harriet Mowat define practical theology thus:

Practical theology is critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to, and for the world.

Practical theology makes use of qualitative research and social scientific theory to investigate social practices. With the research into INSPIRE, we hoped to 1) elicit parish leadership team practices in context that prove effective in fostering interdependent leadership and promoting parish mission, 2) identify the ecclesiological themes emerging from parish narratives and 3) make practical recommendations rooted in our findings. The focus in this article remains on the first part though reference is made to the other two.

In trying to understand the consistent narrative of "being busy" in INSPIRE parishes, we found people not just busy but "consumed by work."

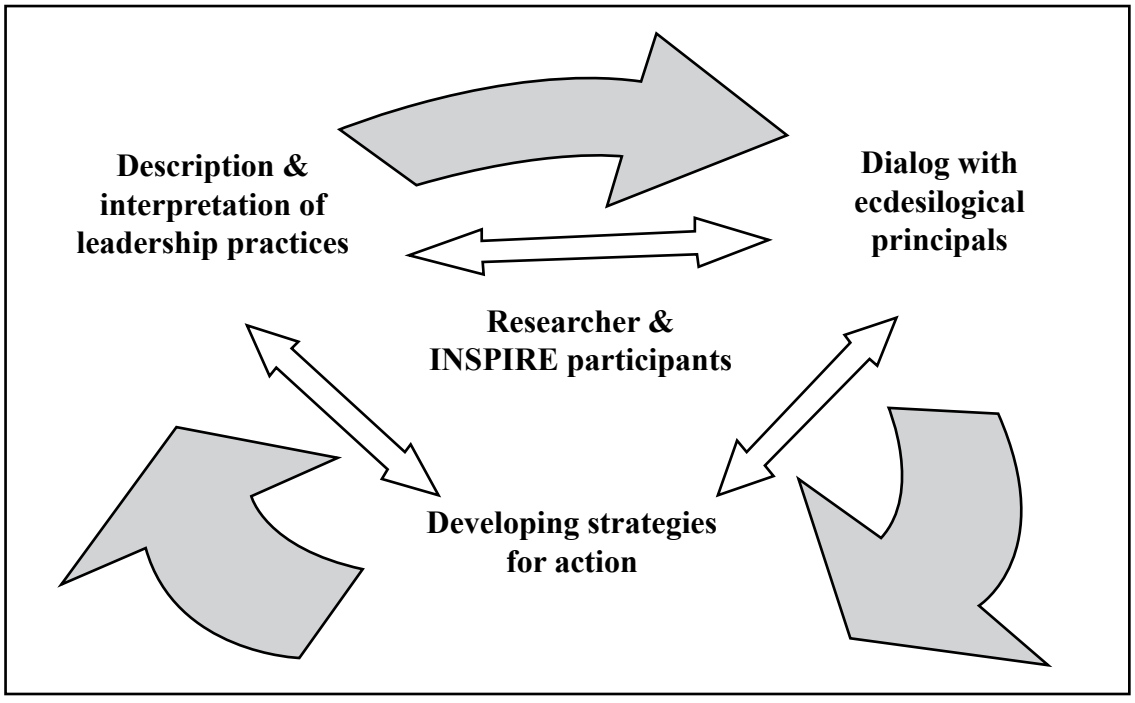
The Culture of Work in Parishes

In trying to understand the consistent narrative of "being busy" in INSPIRE parishes, we found people not just busy but "consumed by work." One woman on a parish team said, "Being a lay person in ministry . . . the Church can swallow up your life." At another parish, someone said, "Most on the team are workaholics."

Some of this can be traced to changes in the structure of work life and complementary changes in volunteerism. Sociologists Jerry Jacobs and Kathleen Gerson note that while individuals work the same number of hours as thirty years ago such work feels different for families as women have entered the paid workforce in greater numbers. About 60% of married couples are dual earning now. At the same time, parenting has become more activity-centered and demanding, especially for the middle class professionals that tend to work the most number of hours.[1] British practical theologian Helen Cameron has also noted how an increase of women in the paid workforce, more employed retirees and longer hours spent commuting have decreased the pool of church volunteers.[2] The sociologist Robert Putnam has written about the generational phasing out of a committed older generation of volunteers in churches and other organizations.[3] All this dovetails with the professionalization of church work in the United States so that, especially in middle class enclaves, more responsibility for ministry ends up in the hands of paid professional staff.

Yet, in INSPIRE parishes, even more remarkable was the influence of American work culture, especially its focus on work as *task*. I speak of a *culture* of work because, as sociologist Steve Derné shows, cultures shape human life by providing us with social frameworks that

Figure 1: Practical theology in the INSPIRE Research Project



make certain activities and ideas imaginable and others unimaginable.[4] Tasks are eminently imaginable in the dominant American culture, even to the point of excluding the perspectives of theory and context. According to psychologist Edward Stewart and intercultural communication specialist Milton Bennett, this culture promotes *operational thinking*: "The American approach is functional and emphasizes solving problems and accomplishing tasks. The measure of success lies in the consequences of concept-driven action."[5]

Parish leadership teams in INSPIRE could not escape thinking in these operational terms. A pastor said of his team at a multicultural parish, "We're here; we work. We work and it's always task-oriented." A business manager at a Hispanic parish echoed that: "We've spoken about it. I think it was sometime in July of last year. How we felt about our environment and the feelings expressed were like it's work. It's work and that's all it was, work." This complaint arose across parish boundaries of culture, ethnicity and social class. At a middle class mostly white parish, a lay staff member said, "My sense is we are immediately onto task."

The focus on *task* makes achievement feel like one of the only concrete markers of success. Lay staff members in particular likely fear that if they cannot demonstrate their success through accomplishment of tasks their pastor may dismiss them as "unnecessary" workers. Over a quarter of parishes in our project experienced involuntary dismissals. Robert Bellah and his colleagues note how achievement of tasks relates to people's sense of themselves: "Work traces one's progress through life by achievement and advancement in an occupation. It yields a self defined by a broader sort of success, which takes in social standing and prestige, and by a sense of expanding power and competency that renders work itself a source of self-esteem."[6]

The devotion to task remained so intense in parishes that people found it difficult to escape. One suburban parish team made a commitment to not speak of "business" on their retreat, but they could not keep from doing it. Many people could not keep from thinking about work, even when they were at home with their families. Meetings were seen as distractions from real work. More than one team member thought of caring for his or her self as something else to do, another burdensome task. This became clear in several parishes when people refused to commit to personal learning (e.g., spiritual direction, exercise, weight loss), even though it involved a grant of money: "We just on Monday talked about [the] personal learning plan and there were several people who felt that doing something would be just something else they needed to do and didn't feel that they had time for one more thing in their lives."

The focus on tasks contradicts Roman Catholic thinking about both work and ministry. . . . This shift of orientation from task to reflection resulted in a more relational approach to ministry.

The intensity of a work culture of task also made it difficult for team members to understand what INSPIRE was about—since the process focused more on leadership and collaboration than on specific tasks. INSPIRE seemed neither concrete nor practical. A lay woman at a wealthy parish said, "I had thought that INSPIRE was more task-oriented. Meaning, I had even gone back and re-read the stuff that had come and still found out I wasn't clear as to what it really was going to be . . . I think it's kind of vague." A pastor found it nearly impossible to explain INSPIRE to his staff.

We noted factors that exacerbated this work culture of task in parishes. One was the work habits and approach of the pastor. We also saw the influence of business-oriented models of leadership. Some parishes had corporate-minded business or operations managers with "zero understanding of church." In two very large parishes—one urban and the other suburban—the finance council was seen to overrule the decisions of the pastoral ministry staff. A wealthy parish eschewed INSPIRE's consultants to hire from a major Chicago business school.

Task and Cultures in the United States

Given the frequent observation of this task-orientation as a phenomenon in the dominant culture of the United States, we might expect to find it in mostly Anglo (Euro-American) parishes. Yet almost all the parishes studied in Chicago exhibited the work culture of task—poor and rich, Anglo, Polish, African-American and Hispanic. No doubt some will see the work culture of task

as a sign of cultural assimilation in immigrant cultures. Little evidence, however, suggests that parish leadership of color has adjusted completely to dominant American values and practices. An avalanche of contemporary data suggests the persistence of ethnicity and ethnic cultures, including among the Mexican and Polish immigrants that populate many Chicago parishes.[7] Many contemporary theories of immigrant incorporation describe the incorporation process as occurring in different segments of life, with immigrants making choices about what they want and do not want to adopt.[8] Theologian Gary Riebe-Estrella suggests that language and work ethic may be among the first adaptations families make. After all, most immigrants specifically come to the United States to work. Riebe-Estrella argues that religious orientations and family organization may be among the last things to be affected by the dominant culture.[9]

Ministry that avoids interdependent action essentially replaces an ecclesiology of community with individualism. It circumvents the spiritual bonds forged by the Holy Spirit within the Church.

Problems with the Culture of Task

The culture of task exacted a significant cost on parish leadership teams. It prevented them from gaining a larger perspective on their ministries. "We work and work without taking a step back to see and hear," said one woman. "We often find ourselves responding to the issue at the moment or focusing on short-term goals," wrote a team on their INSPIRE application. A large Hispanic parish described one of their greatest challenges as "a danger of losing perspective." A lay staff member said in an interview, "I think, especially when you've done this work for so long, you begin to—it just all kind of rolls into one big lump and you're somewhere in the middle trying to find a way through." This loss of perspective resulted in a reactive strategy for ministers, focusing on immediate problems and concerns without any long-term plan or vision. A consultant characterized a parish's challenge thus: "I have suggested that they talk about these issues at their meetings, but I know they attend to the day to day, with no planning and decision making or problem solving."

The focus on tasks contradicts Roman Catholic thinking about both work and ministry. In John Paul II's encyclical on work, *Laborem exercens,* he speaks of a "gospel of work" that challenges the customary ways we value what we do: "The basis for determining the value of human work is not primarily the kind of work being done but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person." In the intense personalism of the former pope, the dignity of the human being remains the ultimate standard of judgment: "However true it may be that man is destined for work and called to it, in the first place work is 'for man' and not man 'for work.'" (*Laborem exercens* 6). The U.S. bishops similarly affirm that the value of ministry lies in people not tasks: "Ministry is diverse and, at the same time, profoundly relational. This is so because ministry has its source in the triune God and because it takes shape within the Church understood as a communion. . . . Through their sacramental initiation all are established in a personal relationship with Christ and in a network of relationships within the communion of the People of God."[10] Excessive focus on task serves as a reversal of a Christian order based on human dignity. Task orientation is simply a microcosm of the larger economic order based erroneously on production rather than people. Theologian Roberto Goizueta notes, "If the act of production is the prototypical human activity, then all human activity will tend to be judged by the criteria of production. . . . Human life will be viewed and valued as the means or instrument through which we produce a desirable product, whether that product is income and profit, food, or the classless society."[11]

Addressing the Culture of Task

With parish leaders trapped in a work culture of task, INSPIRE served best as a means of awakening people from that culture. It enabled them to stretch their notion of work beyond the ethos of the dominant culture. They felt empowered to "step back" from their work to replenish themselves. Parish leadership team members found that INSPIRE forced them to take time to reflect on their lives as individuals and their ministry as a team.

An opportunity for *personal* reflection provided dramatic learning for participants. One woman said,

"Having someone ask me questions about what is it that I needed, and what are some of the things I was struggling with, I was honestly shocked at what came out of my mouth." A consultant said of one parish team, "Several members have dealt with the busyness and noise of their lives and reprioritizing their time and energy. One staff member admitted, 'I realized the need to start uncomplicating my life so that I am better able to see and experience God.'"

For others, a process of *team* reflection served as the greatest benefit. A youth minister said of her group, "It was like we had to step back so we could start from the same place, which I think is a good thing." Another lay staff member said, "Because now when I look at INSPIRE, I know it had to do with leadership but it also seems to be more of a time to learn more, not to just do a task . . . to give ourselves to really look at things and to take a look at who are. Because, see, I don't think we would have done that." For one parish, the ways such reflection time renewed perspective was invaluable. "We have realized that there are new ways to approach every situation. We are not tied to the way things were done in the past." A pastor summed up the effects of INSPIRE: "After we got involved with INSPIRE, there was something that was more present and active and intentional and practical in all activities that we did."

For many, this shift of orientation from task to reflection resulted in a more relational approach to ministry. A business manager became more aware of other people's feelings in his work. A man coordinating community service work expressed it well:

> [We appreciated] knowing that you had the support from others that were there, that were probably always there, but you're not realizing that because you get so consumed in what you are doing. But I think what this has allowed us to do is to say, 'Wait a minute. I do have someone else that I can go to.' Or I have that extension of not only what I want to do, but also what they want to do in regards to helping the community as a whole.

INSPIRE also challenged the odd divorce between parish ministry and faith effected by task orientation. One of the consultants asked a wealthy, white, urban parish, "How would you describe yourselves as a spiri-

tual community?" He described their response: "It just blew them away. They hadn't thought of that." Said one pastor of his staff, "We were not intentional in saying, okay, we are a spiritual community." A pastor at a suburban multicultural parish pushed his team to make correlations between their activities and the gospel message: "Because if we lost track of that, if we lose track of why we're doing what we're doing, if we're only connected to the institution, we'll get way lost."

Priests fail as pastors if they do not have interpersonal skills for active listening, group facilitation, reading people's emotions and knowing how to consistently communicate a pastoral vision. Ineffective pastors focus almost all of their attention on task, which leads them away from the concerns of their people.

Several INSPIRE parishes began praying at meetings as part of their commitment to the process, often spurred on by a consultant. One INSPIRE parish decided to alternate meetings focused on business and meetings focused on their spiritual growth together. Some found that retreats helped their team not only bond to one another but also "pray, relax, and be spiritually renewed together as a group." It helped one team think less on their individual work and more on their common commitment to service. One parish very early on in the process "noted that it was great to pray together without agenda or work to do."

Ministerial Isolation

American work culture also produced in parishes what I call a "culture of ministerial isolation." Seventeen of the 40 parishes explicitly reported having struggles with people going their own way in ministry rather than viewing ministry as an interdependent reality. "We sometimes become isolated in our own ministries and don't appear interested or aware or involved in each other's ministries," said another. A staff member said in one city parish, "We are all told to stay in our compartments." A pastor said about working together, "We didn't even know how to talk about it." One parish development director called this the "island mentality." A volunteer minister called it "isolated departments." INSPIRE consultants made use of the business term, "the silo mentality."

A number of parish practices were associated with ministerial isolation. In several parishes, people tended to avoid interaction with one another. This happened especially where staff members did not trust the pastor and felt, as a result, that their jobs might be on the line. A consultant reported, "Members [are] keeping their head down and just doing their jobs." Many teams additionally found it difficult to connect their ministry with the work of the parish council, finance council or ministry boards or commissions. Others engaged in what the business consultant Patrick Lencioni calls "show and tell meetings."[12] Each team member reported on his or her own work but did not relate it to a common mission and common goals.

While business consultants find fault with isolation for productivity reasons, ministerial isolation creates theological problems for parishes. Basic to the notion of the human person in Catholic social teaching is our *social* nature. We are not really autonomous, self-reliant beings. Faith itself is a fundamentally communitarian endeavor:

> God, however, does not make people holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another. Rather has it pleased Him to bring humankind together as one people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness. (*Lumen gentium* 9)

This opposition to isolation comes across in both the People of God ecclesiology of *Lumen gentium* and the subsequent emphasis on *communio* as the center of Vatican II ecclesiology.[13] In either case, ministry that avoids interdependent action essentially replaces an ecclesiology of community with individualism. It circumvents the spiritual bonds forged by the Holy Spirit within the Church.

Without a doubt, ministerial isolation is rooted in the dominant culture of the United States. For that culture, human beings exist not in a web of community

or tradition but in order to create an autonomous self.[14] According to Bellah and his associates, work remains a key means for this self-innovation. He calls it:

> Work, the realm, par excellence, of utilitarian individualism. Traditionally, men, and today women as well, are supposed to show that in the occupational world they can stand on their own two feet and be self-supporting.[15]

Culture is in part a matter of what we find imaginable and unimaginable. Many Americans can only conceive of work as a zone of individual achievement. A consultant said of one parish, "It had been so embedded in them to be able to work autonomously." One might call it the "default" setting of the culture. Working together for the sake of a common vision remains unusual, strange. It has to be taught.

INSPIRE did teach it. Consultants pushed hard to persuade parish leadership teams to see their ministry in terms of interdependence. An artist at one parish said of INSPIRE, "I was thinking, 'What am I doing with all these seminars and workshops? I just want to paint these icons.' But it has made me realize that being in a team, I just feel the machine will operate a little bit smoother." Team members learned to help one another, to decide major directions together, and to relate their activities to a shared pastoral vision. They developed common goals and steps to achieve them. They went on retreats together to solidify their common commitment. Several parishes developed a common project they could all participate in—Lenten worship, a parish anniversary celebration, a volunteer appreciation night.

A lay ecclesial minister, chuckling, said of her suburban multicultural parish: "What INSPIRE was helping us to do was to move the tectonic plates to collide and coincide with each other." A youth minister at another parish said, "[The individualistic model] worked well, but it didn't necessarily use all the strengths of everyone for the whole parish. Now I feel like our desire is that the whole pastoral team has input and not only input but, I guess, involvement in things for the parish." Because of the cultural default, however, this new view of ministry did not always stick. The suburban lay ecclesial minister admitted, "I think because we have not followed through with it, we have separated [the tectonic plates]."

Pastoral Vision

Patrick Lencioni spoke about isolation in work thus: "In most situations, silos rise up not because of what executives are doing purposefully but because of what they are failing to do: provide themselves and their employees with a compelling context for working together."[16] In our study, we identified the ministerial equivalent of this "compelling context" as a *pastoral vision*. The organizational leadership scholar Helen Cooper Jackson describes effective organizations as those whose "total organization is involved in the creation of a shared vision for the organization's future."[17] The work culture of task and ministerial isolation creates in parishes an acute need for an effective common vision of parish life. A pastor said of INSPIRE, "There is a lot of visioning that goes on. We do a lot of just task-oriented work just to keep the parish running. And so, INSPIRE has really given us a reason to move some of the visions forward, which is why I think it's a great success."

Seminary and diocesan leadership take doctrinal orthodoxy and appropriate sexual boundaries seriously, but they do not worry about whether or not a priest-to-be can stir parishioners with a vision of parish mission and life or lead them through a group process. They should.

Parish staff members often remained unconscious of their reasons for doing what they did, but they were not directionless. As one staff member noted, "We all operate out of some vision, whether it's stated or not." One parish uncovered their unstated vision and found it wanting. A consultant quoted the pastor: "We can no longer be a service station. You know, you come here, you get your gas and move on. This is a family. This is a community and as a staff we have to start communicating this." Too often, the unstated vision in parishes seemed to be simply keeping buildings and programs going. A successful vision required more of a spiritual challenge. An Anglo suburban parish described their situation: "Everybody was quite polite and they would answer or talk about their particular ministry, but it

wasn't as much of a wrestle or challenge or there wasn't as much discussion or debate. It was to give information."

A pastoral vision has to be not only a challenge but a gospel response to the particular socio-economic and cultural circumstances of the parish. It is an adaptation of the mission of the Universal Church to a specific locality. As Helen Cameron puts it, "Local churches that see mission as the essence of what they are about will be changing in response to their context, the surrounding culture and their dialogue with the Bible and tradition."[18] One Hispanic parish focused on the holistic health of the people in its poor, immigrant neighborhood. Another Hispanic parish became so identified with community outreach to its needy parishioners that the INSPIRE director said, "In some ways, you just cannot separate the parish from the community." A Polish parish committed itself to the evangelization of young people in the Polish community. An Anglo parish without much cultural diversity challenged themselves to be more attentive to the global picture, taking on sister parishes in Appalachian Kentucky and Uganda.

Many Chicago area parishes experienced a significant drop in attendance and commitment. As a result, about a quarter of INSPIRE parishes focused their pastoral vision on hospitality or evangelization. At least one parish focused more narrowly on increasing Sunday attendance. That pastoral vision lacks a larger spiritual rationale. It serves as a gut-level response to a thinly veiled panic about the viability of a parish. On the other hand, a full vision of hospitality developed in the language of faith animates a parish. One pastor said, "So every opportunity is that outreach, but the outreach—I'm not talking to the least common denominator—I'm trying to take them inside the mystery." Visions expressed in these kinds of terms live in liturgy and in outreach, and they are exciting enough that people can take it to the different ministries and inspire hope.

Elements of a successful vision

Against the backdrop of ministerial isolation, we should note that a pastoral vision has to be shared to be effective. A consultant said of one pastor, "He was visionary in his approach, but he would not share the details of his plan, as if he could not trust everyone with those details." Provoking team conversation about mission proved crucial to parish leadership renewal. A consultant summarized the point: "You had a mix of people new and [those who] had been there a long time, and they all recognized and knew that they had to create and have the same vision. Because if they didn't have the same vision . . . then it wouldn't happen." A consolidated parish team lamented the lack of consensus over their pastoral vision. Some parishes made use of town hall meetings to involve parishioners in developing a vision and living it. Some parishes facilitated the sharing of the vision through guiding images or metaphors. They spoke of parish as *home,* as "a committed community instead of a service station," and as a community dedicated to "sharing Christ with Love" (abbreviated SCL). These techniques made a pastoral vision emotionally salient and easier for team and parishioners to remember.

Successful parishes had not only a strong sense of vision, but they also followed up on it. One parish that focused on evangelization embodied it by concentrating resources and efforts in formation of their ministers. A large urban parish divided themselves up into teams for each element of their pastoral vision. An Anglo pastor declared the importance of integrating everything a parish does into the larger common vision: "I think what we're noticing is that we use everything we do to constantly reinforce what we're about."

Most of the time, the pastor drove the process of making and communicating a pastoral vision. A staff member said of her pastor, "One of the first things that stuck in my mind that Father said is, 'we're a people of the plaza; the plaza out in front of church. We welcome; we greet; we're open to everyone and we model that as a staff too; we're people of the plaza.'" Some pastors facilitated the development of a vision rather than articulating it themselves. A new pastor spent a year listening to his parishioners, another year working on getting the parish to listen to itself, and *then* he initiated a process to develop a vision.

Confronting work culture at the seminary

The "work culture" of the United States is a powerful force on parish staffs today, perhaps especially on priests. One pastor worried about the influence of business models on newly ordained priests: "A lot are second career priests and they come from the business world, but they also don't know that being a priest is different from being a business person." A group of pastors advising us noted that the male environment of the diocesan seminary (imitating business perhaps) upholds competition and discourages admission of weakness. They also told us that post-seminary pastor training tends to emphasize finance and personnel but glosses over pastoral concerns like vision and communication.

The success of INSPIRE demonstrates that the practices that combat task orientation and ministerial isolation can be taught. Consultants helped pastors form a strong pastoral vision. The INSPIRE emphasis on learning (including spiritual direction) encouraged greater conscious reflection, and the promotion of staff retreats provided opportunities for team planning and reflection (as well as common prayer and faith sharing). Efforts to encourage purely social gatherings of team members steered them away from an exclusive focus on task, and they increased that trust which facilitates the development of a common pastoral vision and common goals. But can such practices be taught in the seminary?

The U.S. Catholic bishops' *Program for Priestly Formation* (PPF) apparently thinks so. Seminary formation is explicitly not about tasks but spirituality: "Formation, as the Church understands it, is not equivalent to a secular sense of schooling or, even less, job training. Formation is first and foremost cooperation with the grace of God" (68). The PPF is also clear about avoiding ministerial isolation: "Pastoral ministry is primarily directed to a community and then to individuals within that community" (239). While the PPF acknowledges that seminarians must learn leadership skills (239, 280) in order to encourage and promote faithful, interdependent ministry, it focuses little attention on their practical development. It contains almost no practical norms for leadership development but many for formal theological study.

Our research at Chicago parishes found that leadership skills are crucial to a parish ministry not caught up in task or isolation. Priests fail as pastors if they do not have interpersonal skills for active listening, group facilitation, reading people's emotions and knowing how to consistently communicate a pastoral vision. Ineffective pastors focus almost all of their attention on task, which leads them away from the concerns of their people. Many pastors in our study misjudged the impact of their words and actions on others; some could not see their own authority over lay ecclesial ministers they alone can employ or discharge. Some covered up their low social intelligence by dismissing such non-administrative leadership skills as "touchy-feely" or unmanly.

The relevant skills, however, can be taught in seminary formation. Field education facilitators and internship supervisors traditionally work on developing these skills, but sometimes their work receives little emphasis. Pastoral theology departments remain understaffed. Some faculty members disparage the work of field educators or reduce pastoral theology to psychotherapy.

Those of us engaged in the formation of priests have a responsibility to see no one graduates from the seminary without necessary leadership skills. If they do not learn them there, many will lead according to the task-oriented and individualist standards of the culture. That we cannot afford.

Perhaps more troubling, field and internship supervisors receive insufficient guidance on evaluating seminarians' leadership skills. Pressured by the demand for more priests, formators downplay or even dismiss the constructive criticism of interested laypeople. Seminary and diocesan leadership take doctrinal orthodoxy and appropriate sexual boundaries seriously, but they do not worry about whether or not a priest-to-be can stir parishioners with a vision of parish mission and life or lead them through a group process. They should.

Happily, leadership skills like these can be inculcated in almost any setting. In fact, we should not restrict them to field education programs. Faculty and formators can structure already existing curricula to give students more opportunity to practice necessary skills. Students can facilitate discussions in their classes to hone their group facilitation skills. They can engage in frequent group work to counter tendencies toward ministerial isolation. Formators can ask students to create model pastoral vision statements for different environments within the diocese. Faculty can shape assignments to require consultation of laypeople outside the seminary. Faculty can pray at the beginning of class to place everything in a spiritual context. They can note connections between their theological subjects and the practical details of parish leadership. For example, systematic theologians can remind students that *communio* requires both a vigorous sense of common mission and the promotion of relationships within the parish.

It is not enough just to "be busy" in ministry, as

almost all of the people involved in our study said they were. Not everyone who works a lot works well for the common good. This is not to suggest that most priests are not in high demand or do not serve both generously and competently. In fact, the best practices recounted here can all be traced back to specific Chicago pastors who led their flocks with exceptional grace and skill. None of us is perfect, and all of us are on a pilgrim journey toward God's Kingdom. But when some leaders—priests or lay ecclesial ministers—remain incompetent or ill trained, we all suffer by association. More importantly, God's people suffer. Those of us engaged in the formation of priests have a responsibility to see no one graduates from the seminary without necessary leadership skills. If they do not learn them there, many will lead according to the task-oriented and individualist standards of the culture. That we cannot afford.

Brett C. Hoover, CSP, Ph.D., is visiting assistant professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. From 2010-11 he was research faculty at the Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University, Chicago.

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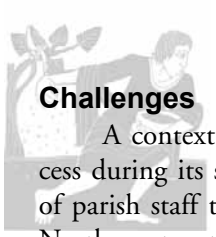
Transitions in the INSPIRE Research Project

Brett C. Hoover, CSP, Ph.D.



Challenges

A contextual issue complicating the INSPIRE process during its seven-year tenure has been the frequency of parish staff transitions, especially those of pastors. Nearly every one of the forty-one parishes involved with INSPIRE has in some way struggled with parish leadership transitions of one nature or another. Most of these experiences of transition in the INSPIRE parishes were oriented to simple turnover, either the transfer of a pastor to a new parish or the voluntary resignation of leadership team members (usually those formally employed by the parish). Most reasons for transition remained unremarkable. One director of religious education (DRE) left her parish and took over a project for the Chicago Archdiocese. Another DRE retired. Transferred spouses resulted in the entire family moving. One of the staff members at a suburban parish lived far from the parish, so she left when the pastor was transferred. Associate pastors were not infrequently made pastor at a different parish. Perhaps most consequentially, pastors simply decided it was time to move on. As a suburban pastor remarked of his transition, "We were kind of going through lists of who's doing what and then as we looked forward, what needs to be done. As those things were being spoken, I realized that I can't do it. It's time for me to go . . . . I told them all that. Something freeing about it, but also it was painful."

Other transitions proved more difficult on account of the circumstances. Two parishes involved in INSPIRE had at one time had a priest removed because of alleged sexual misconduct. Another three had staff members depart because of accusations of financial misconduct. The latter included a parish where the former business manager is now serving a prison term for embezzlement of a large amount of money from the parish; the pastor there was removed as well. Not surprisingly, in these cases strong feelings of pain and betrayal emerged which did not disappear for some time. In several other cases, serious illness—either that of leadership team members or of their immediate family—figured in a transition. In a few cases, it was the death of a pastor or leadership team member.

To describe the emotional experience of transition, people often turned to a language reminiscent of grief.

In more than a quarter of INSPIRE parishes, a parish leadership team member was involuntarily dismissed during or around the time of the INSPIRE process. Nearly all those dismissed were parish employees rather than volunteers. In most cases, the pastor became convinced of the team member's incompetence or unwillingness to work with other team members. In a couple of cases, the termination seemed to result from interpersonal tensions between the pastor and an employee, both after a pastor transition. In one case, the pastor eliminated the positions of the entire pastoral staff. In all cases, the decision to dismiss belonged to the pastor alone, though in a few cases he conferred with the consultant and/or other staff members. In a few instances, the termination of more difficult team members resulted in a markedly more cohesive and effective pastoral leadership team.

All of the transitions were psychologically disruptive. The organizational development theorist William

"The dominant assumption in the United States is that nature and the physical world should be controlled in the service of human beings."

Bridges distinguishes between the situational reality of change and the psychological process of *transition* affected by it.[1] In many INSPIRE parishes, people honed in on that process using emotionally laden words and phrases. Staff turnover at one parish was described as "major upheaval" that was "very difficult." One staff member said of her longtime pastor's departure: "He was so cemented into this community and had his fingers out in all these different directions from this point and to just be uprooted—I know it was just devastating [for him]." She called the experience "brutal" for him, "unfair," like a "forced divorce." It was a "stressful time" for the parish. Another pastor described his own departure as "painful." A team member at a restructured parish described the experience of having to attend a different church in disruptive terms: "The first time I went there, I was uncomfortable. I missed my pastor. I just didn't know if I was going to feel right there." Scandal-ridden transitions produced powerful disruption. "The rug has been pulled from under us," said the music director at such a parish. She spoke of shock and betrayal.

To describe the emotional experience of transition, people often turned to a language reminiscent of grief. A parish consultant narrated how first the pastoral team then members of the parish expressed anger and frustration at the departure of a pastor. A woman at a different parish said of her pastor, "There was sadness about him leaving." A pastor at a Hispanic parish said, "You lose one person and it affects the whole." Another pastor spoke of "laughing and crying at the same time" after leaving his old parish. On an INSPIRE application, a pastoral leadership team described the anger and "wounds" left behind when a pastor ran away with his housekeeper without a word to anyone. Another consultant wrote of one parish, "Their energy was consumed by the anger, hurt, pain and sadness of a difficult transition from one pastor to the new one."

At times, the language of grief turned extravagant. A very competent pastoral associate not only expressed anger at the departure of her lay colleagues but lamented, "Why were they all leaving me behind?" She described the changes in her pastoral team as a more difficult loss than the recent death of her ailing mother. When the dismissed principal at an urban parish subsequently died of a heart attack, parishioners even accused the pastor of killing her.

Also, as Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler have noted, grief tends to reanimate previous grief.[2] The INSPIRE director referred to one INSPIRE parish experiencing transition, "There's a sister . . . who's been there for years and has a lot of anger in her about all the problems of the past."

Perhaps a surprising aspect of INSPIRE transitions is how remarkable parish team members found them, as if they had not ever expected such a thing could happen. Yet transition is the normal state of human life. People leave jobs, especially in a society as mobile as ours. Death happens to everyone. As developmental psychology tells us, our lives are characterized by constant transition. The very word for emotion in psychology—*affect*—implies that our environment *affects* us, resulting in emotional responses.[3] The philosopher Martin Heidegger described human life itself as the condition of being *thrown* or *abandoned* into a particular and vulnerable world; we live our lives largely as a response to that condition.[4]

William Bridges observes that people generally resist awareness of transition and especially the potential good in it.[5] This may simply result from the considerable distress involved. One priest thought it had to do with exaggerated expectations about peace and security in our lives: "I thought when I was fifty-five or sixty [that] I would be secure and everything would be fine. And now that I'm there, I'm angry." A pastoral associate drew attention to the common sense of vision and family-feeling on her team before it turned over. She felt a great sense of loss.

A point made earlier remains relevant. Parish ministry in INSPIRE parishes was frequently viewed through the lens of *task orientation.* Tasks orientation focuses attention on what people accomplish, but it tends to direct attention away from human experience. A task is what you must complete, but your response to it matters little. Because of the impact of excessive task orientation in businesses, social scientists and management experts still find it relevant to report on the early twentieth century studies of the Hawthorne Plant of the Western Electric Company, where social relations were found to have a greater impact on productivity than

physical conditions.[6] Task orientation minimizes those elements of our lives associated with our social and emotional life. It narrows our focus to control of the environment. Stewart and Bennett write, "The dominant assumption in the United States is that nature and the physical world should be controlled in the service of human beings."[7] A focus on controlling the environment obfuscates a more holistic perspective on life. Transitions become yet another task to complete, another part of the social environment to keep under control. Attending to the emotional disruption seems at best an addendum to and a distraction from more concrete and practical matters.

Yet the emotional disruption has serious consequences for parish leadership teams. At INSPIRE parishes, personnel transitions reduced people's experience of trust within their team. Naturally, this was most prominent in parishes with more dramatic experiences of transition. When a new pastor was installed after a financial scandal, a parish consultant spoke about the slow renewal of trust among the traumatized team. An INSPIRE application for a parish with high pastor turnover, death and illness mentioned the "abuse, neglect, and uncertainty which led to various degrees of mistrust after each transition." Yet even relatively stable parishes experienced a break in trust. Regarding a suburban parish that lost its longtime pastor, a consultant said, "In the beginning of the INSPIRE process, two of the persons were very new to being part of any parish leadership team, and it took some time before they each felt 'safe' and comfortable . . . It was a time of transition for each of the new team members, a time to find how they 'fit' in the parish and on the team." Indicative of the point, a team blanched when a new pastor made rapid changes. The trust level had not yet recovered.

The fact that, in most cases, Roman Catholic pastors are mostly assigned and not chosen also had an impact in some parishes. People feared who might come. One man working at a parish in transition noted, "Like the president [of the United States], we voted him in. [But] we had no idea of who we were going to get or if we were going to get a priest at all. I think it was kind of thrown at us." His colleague said, "We had a lot of fears about who we were going to get."

A related issue is how transitions tend to stall the work of parish leadership teams. One parish stopped having regular meetings while the pastor and associate pastor worked out their differences. A suburban parish found themselves unable to address goals their consultant helped them put together. Another could not work on their INSPIRE team learning plan. A consultant said that, after their pastor's transfer, one parish staff member stopped feeling like a team on account of grief. INSPIRE personnel described them as "getting stopped and stuck and then getting started again." A suburban lay ecclesial minister said about her old team's INSPIRE-taught skills: "I think a lot of what we did together is kind of lost now, and that makes me sad in a way, because I think they were good skills."

Though people found transitions disruptive and difficult, in many cases they substantially improved the team situation.

Details got lost in transitions. When a business manager resigned, one parish team lost track of crucial meeting minutes. In another, rules had to be explained again. More often, however, the stall has to do with adapting to new people with their different personalities and styles of leadership. One battered team, having lost their dominating pastor, hesitated over every decision they made. They kept asking the new pastor, "Are we doing this right?" When a personnel crisis at another parish was brought to the fore by transition, the pastor ceased working on INSPIRE. "[I] put the entire INSPIRE program on hold. . . . You don't really do team building when you know you are moving one of your team members out." A consultant said, "Sometimes it's like starting from scratch." On an application, one parish wrote, "Many of the members of the team have changed and have brought with them new ways of doing things. Long-term staff members and volunteers are resistant to change." Of course, such stalling is not necessarily a bad thing. In some parishes, older staff members took take time away from their usual ministry work to welcome new members or to initiate them into the INSPIRE process. While this slowed things down, it was effective in promoting interdependent work in the long term.

Some theorists have analyzed the process involved in transitions. Influenced by the work of anthropologists Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner, William Bridges talks about transitions as initiating people into a *neutral*

zone where "the critical psychological realignments and repatternings take place."[8] Turner's work itself describes the way ritual alters people and communities through an interim period ("liminality") where the social structure is upended. He did not apply his theories outside of ritual, and he felt this interim period was only partial in postindustrial societies.[9] Turner's focus on this dynamic of social change has, nevertheless, inspired analysis of religious communities.[10]

The most common effective practice to navigate transitions was developing a common awareness of the emotional disruption associated with transition.

Certainly INSPIRE parishes in transition found themselves in periods of uncertainty where old patterns and practices no longer worked for them. One participant spoke of "not knowing what the future holds." A few parishes had to carry on without pastors for a while. Temporary priest administrators carried on for months or years without being appointed the official pastor, often without knowing when it might happen. When one pastor left the priesthood at an urban parish, the archdiocese told the team that remained not to take on anything new. People wondered about new relationships with new colleagues, and the thought of new pastors brought worry and anxiety about what they would be like. People found themselves confused about roles and responsibilities. A pastor said, "There has been a lot of change in this staff, and it has caused some confusion about who is responsible for what." In a couple of urban parishes, the pastor and the staff had trouble adjusting to one another for a long period of time. Divisions erupted in a number of places after a transition, sometimes without a clear resolution.

Some uncertainty, for better or for worse, came to an end through the efforts of team members. In five cases, a leadership vacuum in a parish resulted in a pastoral associate, an associate pastor or even the parish council taking over effective leadership of the parish. Even when a leadership vacuum did not occur, the stable presence of a strong and respected team member often facilitated a better transition.

Though people found transitions disruptive and difficult, in many cases they substantially improved the team situation. "Certainly the staff was splintered in the past," said one pastor, "but the change in personnel and [the work of] INSPIRE have healed things. Everyone feels more positive about the staff, its interaction, and [the] ability to work more effectively." In one case, the parish consultant actually helped a new pastor remove a difficult staff member. In another, a pastor persuaded a chronically negative team member to resign, and only he had to listen to the man's complaints after that. In four cases, the new pastor proved more willing to work interdependently with the parish staff. Transition, nevertheless, did not always bring good things. In one parish, the new pastor gradually did away with staff members' jobs and pulled out of INSPIRE.

Practices for Transition

Certain practices on leadership teams helped them successfully navigate transitions. Some of these have already been mentioned, such as a team member's filling a leadership vacuum. Some have made implicit appearance already as well—such as strong lay leadership in the parish. In three parishes, a strong sense of ownership of the parish and its ministry by parishioners moderated anxiety about the future; in two of those cases, the new pastor was actually recruited for the position.

The most crucial practices, nevertheless, were more basic. The most common effective practice to navigate transitions was developing a common awareness of the emotional disruption associated with transition. It is necessary to develop this awareness because task orientation draws attention away from people's emotional responses. INSPIRE in this case helped people to see what they otherwise could not, especially through the urging of consultants who saw the emotional dynamics parish teams wanted to deny. As a departing pastor put it, "I think that was the biggest learning [from INSPIRE]—to name it. This is a transition. Then . . . we were able to help one another." He went on, "[I] probably would have had these feelings and this resentment and whatever, but I never would have acknowledged it had we not done that as a team." His pastoral associate said, "We identified areas that we knew would be affected and owned the process rather than being led by [it]. This meeting empowered us to take charge of the situation. It got us in touch with our own feelings in order to ease the parish through these changes. Comfort and trust in the consultant made this process possible and

easier." A consultant said, "I think understanding [transition] and knowing it helps them to deal with it." An urban Hispanic parish team member explained how, at the consultant's recommendation, they had read William Bridges' book on transition. "It helped explain some of the feelings that I felt and what I observed happening with the parish staff."

The conscious process of transitioning in one parish drew attention to the lack of it elsewhere. A new pastor reflected on how his successor at his previous parish never came to visit, did not want to know anything about the people and was focused on the arrival of his new car at the moment when the previous pastor handed over the keys. As he put it, "The INSPIRE program is genius because it deals with transition—nobody else is doing it. There should be a mandatory session [on it]." Indeed, at another INSPIRE parish, a new pastor refused to accept the reality of his staff's emotional disruption, and it caused tension and problems.

When people did take a conscious approach to transition, good things happened. In two cases the consultant brought in speakers on transition that gave comfort not only to the team but to parishioners as well. At a suburban Anglo parish, a pastor became aware of the need to communicate the corporate culture of the parish to new associate pastors. He said, chuckling:

> You have to kind of bring them up to speed, so that they don't get upset or their feathers ruffled because somebody cuts them off in mid-sentence and says, "You and the youth minister need to talk about that outside this meeting. I don't need to hear this." And sometimes it's as blunt as that. The rest of us aren't offended at it, but somebody new coming in, who's never been exposed to that before, might take offense at it. So that's where I smooth their feathers out after the meeting.

The INSPIRE process led team members at a multicultural suburban parish to consciously welcome a new receptionist and help her adapt to their vision of the parish. In several cases, awareness of a pastor or staff member's transition led to a greater awareness of transitions in other parts of people's lives—such as a death or job loss in the family.

One small parish in the suburbs built their entire participation in INSPIRE around the pastor transition process. With little professional staff, the chosen volunteer leaders spent much of their energy on understanding how transitions affect people. They read a book on pastor transition. They worked hard at welcoming the new pastor, who had been recruited by the previous longtime pastor. One team member described the new pastor as the previous pastor's "gift of love to us." The team became a kind of cabinet or support team for the new pastor. "I have become close to our team members, and as such, have felt a certain comfort and safety with the parish during this time of transition," said the new pastor. "They have become the eyes and ears, the heart and soul of the parish; it's in their bones." At the same time, the old pastor talked freely about the need to welcome the new leader. The two of them went over the books together. They became friends and demonstrated their mutual respect to the parish. The new pastor referred to himself as Timothy to the old pastor's St. Paul. All this persuaded even those team members who had organized a petition drive to cancel the departure of the old pastor to appreciate the new pastor.

Ritualizing the departure of the pastor makes a difference to all involved—the pastor, the leadership team, and to the parish in general.

Earlier, we talked about how personnel changes required adaptation to new persons and their different leadership styles. As one staff member put it, a new staff brings an entirely new interpersonal dynamic. Because of this, one of the more successful practices regarding transition was providing time and opportunities for people to get to know one another. Some of this was satisfied by informal outings and social time. Sharing food made a difference, especially but not exclusively in Hispanic parishes. Team retreats constituted another effective means. "The team retreats helped us understand how he operates," said a staff member at an urban parish with a new pastor. One of the consultants made frequent use of the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory (MBPI), and not a few people found this helpful for understanding the leadership style and personality of new team members.

Roman Catholicism is a tradition of sacrament and symbol. In Roman Catholic parishes, priests serve not

only as functional ministers, they also serve as powerful living symbols. They wear unique clothes, do not marry, and publicly preside at major ceremonies. One pastor told of how his previous parishioners invited everyone he had ever baptized to honor guard his farewell liturgy. Priests have an image associating them with sacred things, celebrated and parodied in the media. The theologian Kenan Osborne reflects on priests and bishops, "In marketing terms, this image is an extremely successful branding of the two most visible officials of the church, to the extent that even those who exemplify the brand and betray it reinforce the ideal in their very failure to live up to the positive image."[11] The sociologist Richard Schoenherr and his colleagues, in their critical study of the declining numbers of priests in the United States, write: "By and large…the scope and domain of what was considered most essential and important to organized Catholic ministry has always been circumscribed by those tasks and responsibilities performed by priests." Even in more progressive and lay-oriented Catholic settings, the priesthood has great symbolic import. The pastoral associate at a progressive parish said of his departing pastor, "Well, in a sense we lost the person who symbolized for us, oddly enough, lay empowerment."

Ritualizing the departure of the pastor makes a difference to all involved—the pastor, the leadership team and to the parish in general. The INSPIRE director did a session at the urban Hispanic parish mentioned above. A staff member reported, "In a very prayerful way, [the director] helped us to affirm, bless, and say farewell to our pastor who had made the decision to leave our parish community and the priesthood." The new pastor at the progressive parish talked about his departure from the old parish. Parishioners surprised him on the day he was driving away, taking final pictures and saying goodbye.

Though other priests and lay staff members may not have the same symbolic import as the pastor, ritualizing their departure has also had a positive impact on parish teams: "The farewell dinner after the staff day to say goodbye to our music director was an incredible experience for all of us. It was not only a time to be together but to say goodbye to an old friend. It was a healing experience for all of us. The mass and reception we had for him was also a memorable event in the transition process."

Brett C. Hoover, CSP, Ph.D., is visiting assistant professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. From 2010-11 he was research faculty at the Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University, Chicago.

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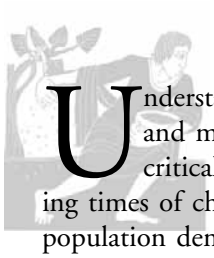
Leadership, Spirituality, and Pastoral Administration: A Seminarian View

F. K. Marsh, Ph.D.



Understanding the importance of the diverse and multiple responsibilities faced by leaders is critical to effective leadership, especially during times of change. A fluctuating economy, changing population demographics, merging and emerging membership and customer bases, among myriad other challenges, heighten pressure for those in leadership roles. Key to the long-term success of all organizations are the decisions, attitudes and actions of leaders today coupled with reframing paradigms for leaders of tomorrow.

The challenges for pastoral leadership are no exception. The number of Roman Catholics in the United States, for example, is growing at an estimated rate of 9 to 11 percent per decade, particularly due to immigration (Hoge 2008), while the number of available priests is declining an estimated 12 to 14 percent per decade (Hoge 2006). Lay people are increasingly called upon to work in parishes, with an estimated 31,000 paid professional lay ministers (DeLambo 2005) employed along with approximately 27,000 diocesan priests and 13,000 religious priests serving more than 68 million Catholics in 18,000 parishes across the United States *(The Official Catholic Directory* 2010).

If trends continue, it is projected that the number of priests will decline 25 percent, the number of Roman Catholics will increase more than 20 percent and lay ministers may increase in the range of 25 to 50 percent over a period of twenty years (Hoge 2006), offering managerial and leadership challenges for any pastoral leader. New parishes are opening, many are closing and others are being restructured into "clusters," with one priest having pastoral responsibilities for two or more parishes (Schuth 2006). Parish life is considered to be "more complex… [and] new sets of skills are required of today's pastors" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 2000, Executive Summary). The many changing conditions have the potential for impact on pastoral leaders in the form of increased job stress, work imbalances, health issues and so forth.

This changing landscape for parishes in America poses unique opportunities and challenges to pastors already in, and others preparing for, leadership positions.

This changing landscape for parishes in America poses unique opportunities and challenges to pastors already in, and others preparing for, leadership positions. Current leadership theories can help build better understanding and more effective ways to address the complexities being faced by pastoral leaders, especially when the spiritual element of leadership is taken into consideration (Carter 2009). Recent research on pastoral leadership has offered several important insights.

When studying leadership styles, for example, a transformational leadership style was found to correlate with pastoral leader effectiveness (Carter 2009) as well as with followers' satisfaction with their pastor (Rowold 2008). Other studies have identified the importance of leadership skills in predicting leadership effectiveness within ministerial functions (Nauss 1989), along with

identifying patterns of pastoral leadership skills found within leadership types (Nauss 1994).

Effective pastoral leader taxonomies, processes and outcomes are being identified and studied (McKenna and Eckard 2009). While examining the actual learning processes of practicing pastoral leaders, furthermore, critical developmental experiences and lessons of the leaders were identified (McKenna *et al.* 2007). Education and training have been found important to pastoral leader development, in addition to relationships and on-the-job experiences (McKenna *et al.* 2007). Little research exists, however, about the development of pastoral leaders, their continuing development as they progress through different stages as leaders (McKenna *et al.* 2007), or their preparation for leading parishes through change in the challenging times of today.

This study analyzes seminarians' perceptions regarding the levels of importance of the duties and tasks of pastoral leadership against pastoral performance rubrics, identifying similarities and gaps in understanding.

This study analyzes seminarians' perceptions regarding the levels of importance of the duties and tasks of pastoral leadership against pastoral performance rubrics, identifying similarities and gaps in understanding. A spiritual dimension is added as the connection between spirituality and leadership is explored. The results provide a glimpse into the perspectives of developing leaders and insight into four integrative elements that spirituality offers them.

Method

Participants in the study were second, third, and fourth year seminarians at a Roman Catholic seminary. The seminarians had participated in yearly "rector seminars" on different topics of parish leadership and administration. The second, third and fourth year theology seminarians represented twenty-two dioceses in the United States, one foreign diocese and two religious orders.

The duties, performance areas and tasks from rubrics defined in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission, The Duties and Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest: An Assessment Project*[1] were utilized with permission in this study and provided the basis for the majority of leadership questions in a written survey.[1] Spirituality questions were designed synthesizing concepts and definitions from several sources, particularly *The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests* and the *Program of Priestly Formation*.[2] A research consultant gave advice during the research design and survey development stages of the project and external reviewers were utilized.[3] A survey pretest resulted in minor adaptations to the final survey instrument.

The electronic survey was administered to each class of seminarians during the final days of spring semester 2010.[4] A total of fifty-seven seminarians completed the survey, resulting in an eighty-eight percent response rate.[5] Twenty-one of the respondents were second year seminarians, sixteen were third year and twenty were fourth year seminarians.

The Seminarians

Profile

The majority of the participating seminarians (93 percent) were United States citizens; the remainder were from Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland or Colombia. Seventy-seven percent were Caucasian and nearly ten percent were Hispanic or Latino (8.8). The seminarians ranged in age from 22 years old to over 50, with the majority (70.2 percent) being 22 to 30 years old. Approximately fifteen percent of the respondents (15.8) were 31-40 years old and slightly less than fifteen percent of the respondents (14.0) were 41 or older. A small percentage of the seminarians (5.3 percent) had converted to the Roman Catholic faith.

While all respondents reported having higher education degrees, approximately one in five of the seminarians (21 percent) reported either having a Masters degree (17.5 percent) or J.D. (3.5 percent). Slightly more than half the respondents (60 percent) reported holding degrees in theology, philosophy or divinity-type studies. The remaining forty percent reported holding degrees in a wide range of studies, for example, history, music education, chemistry, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, business administration and athletic administration.

The top three tasks the majority of seminarians reported for a *pastor leading a parish* were as follows: initiating strategic planning; inspiring parish ministries, apostolates and volunteers; and responding to crisis situations.

Work Experience

Forty-two percent of the seminarians reported having no years of full-time secular work experience prior to entering the seminary,[6] and an additional 12 percent reported having less than one year. Nearly half of the seminarians (46 percent), however, reported having a range of years of secular work experience, especially from one-to-three years (10.5 percent) to 10 years or more (17.5 percent). Ten percent of the seminarians reported having full-time parish work experience, for three years or less, prior to entrance to the seminary.

For those with secular work experience, there was a wide range of industries represented in the employers listed, for example, teaching, mental health and health services, retail, the military, police and construction, as well as much variation in levels of positions held, from laborer to assistant to vice president. Four seminarians reported having held executive level positions: chief financial officer, vice president of marketing, vice president senior asset manager or business owner.

Leadership Experience and Training

Of interest was understanding the seminarians' general knowledge of leadership and the types of leadership training and experience, if any, they had had before entering seminary. A general definition of leadership was requested of them, therefore, plus specific examples of leadership education and training received.

When asked, "What types of leadership *experience*, if any, did you have prior to Seminary?" 21 percent responded "No leadership experience." Nearly eighty percent of the respondents, however, listed more than sixty examples of a wide variety of leadership-type experiences in job positions, volunteer work at charitable organizations, experience while at college or experience in parishes. Of those seminarians reporting having had leadership experience, job experience was most often reported across class levels as offering such prior to seminary.

Sixty percent of the seminarians stated they had no formal leadership *training* prior to entering the seminary. The remaining respondents listed a variety of training examples. Most frequently listed were formal training seminars through jobs, corporate seminars, military training and volunteer training through parishes or charitable organizations.

The majority of respondents across class levels offered some definition of leadership encompassing visioning, influencing and inspiring others, building strategy and the setting and achieving of common goals – skills and attributes typically identified with leaders and leadership capabilities. The seminarians, in general, demonstrated knowledge of leadership although the majority did not offer in-depth definitions. The range of leadership experience or training prior to seminary for these respondents, thus, varied greatly, from little or none to much experience and training, but the concept of leadership was generally understood.

Pastoral Leadership – The Survey and Analysis of Results

In Fulfillment of Their Mission: The Duties and Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest identifies nine categories of "ministerial *duties* (major areas of responsibility) and their constituent *tasks*" in groupings of performance areas (Ippolito *et al.* 2008, p. 9). Of particular interest to this research was the duty of "Leads Parish Administration" with its related performance areas, tasks and activities, which provided the basis for this study.[7]

Duties and Tasks – Rankings

Seminarians were asked, **"**When you think about leading a parish, how would you rank the level of importance of each of the following from the Pastor's Perspective?" [8] Respondents were then asked to review two lists, or sets, of ten tasks each (described below) and to rate the relative importance from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important).[9]

Seminarians were next asked, about the same sets of the twenty total tasks, "When you think about leading a parish, how would you rank the level of importance of each of the following from the Parish Lay Leader's Perspective (for example, parish council or key committee leaders)?"

Of interest here was gaining insight into seminar-

ians' attitudes regarding the importance of performance areas within the duty of leading parish administration (and leadership-related areas) from these two different perspectives. Again, one perspective was thinking about the importance of activities of pastoral leadership from the view of a parish pastor, and the other perspective from the view of key lay leaders, defined as parish council or committee leaders. The underlying question was whether there were differences in developing leader responses when considering the same tasks from two different, and some would argue often opposing, perspectives.

The ten tasks listed in Question Set 1 for ranking were as follows: Initiating strategic planning (vision, goals); overseeing implementation of strategic plan; scheduling meetings; participating in parish, pastoral and finance councils; inspiring parish ministries, apostolate and volunteers; overseeing parish finances (budget, fundraising, etc.); meeting employees several times a week; overseeing parish programs; employing parish staff (evaluating, hiring, firing), and responding to crisis situations.[10]

The ten tasks listed in Question Set 2 for ranking were as follows: Managing parish staff (supervising, supporting); engaging in social activities with staff and their families; implementing diocesan policies; supervising parish communication; supervising maintenance of physical plant (church, grounds, schools); mediating parish conflicts; socializing with volunteers; building relationships with diverse cultural groups; developing a collaborative leadership style; and maintaining personal balance and health.

As can be seen in Table I, the top three tasks the majority of seminarians reported for a *pastor leading a parish* were as follows: initiating strategic planning, with 77.2 percent of the seminarians placing this activity in the top three (47 percent listing it as Number 1); inspiring parish ministries, apostolate and volunteers (68.4 percent); and responding to crisis situations (59.7 percent).

TABLE I. Seminarian Rankings of Importance (1 most - 10 least) of Pastoral Tasks, Percent Frequencies and Means - Task Set 1.

	RANKED Most to Least Important for the Pastor, FROM A *PASTOR'S* PERSPECTIVE, Task Set 1	**Majority Response %**	**Mean**	**RANKED Most to Least Important for the Pastor, FROM *LAY LEADERS'* PERSPECTIVES, Task Set 1**	**Majority Response %**	**Mean**
	Initiating strategic planning	77.2	2.32	Initiating strategic planning	59.7	3.61
Top Rankings, as MOST IMPORTANT	Inspiring parish ministries, apostolate & volunteers	68.4	2.89	Overseeing implementation of strategic plan	45.6	4.04
Ranked most often in Top Three (1-3)	Responding to crisis situations	59.7	3.47	Inspiring parish ministries, apostolates & volunteers	43.9	4.61
				Responding to crisis situations	43.9	5.14
	Overseeing parish finances (budget, fundraising)	63.2	5.77	Overseeing parish finances (budget, fundraising)	56.1	5.05
Ranked with a MID-LEVEL of Importance	Participating in parish, pastoral & finance councils	56.1	5.46	Participating in parish, pastoral & finance councils	54.4	4.14
Ranked in Middle (4-7)	Overseeing implementation of strategic plan	50.9	4.61	Overseeing parish programs	50.9	5.74
	Overseeing parish programs	45.6	5.46			
	Scheduling meetings (confounder)	64.9	7.88	Scheduling meetings (confounder)	36.8	5.98
Bottom Rankings, as LEAST IMPORTANT	Employing parish staff	49.1	6.54	Employing parish staff	50.9	6.61
Ranked Lowest (8-10)	Meeting employees several times a week (confounder)	49.1	6.91	Meeting employees several times a week (confounder)	49.1	7.14

Of middle range importance, given majority rankings of numbers four through seven from the seminarians' perspectives, were those things that had more to do with oversight and participation: overseeing parish finances (budget, fundraising) with 63.2 percent of the respondents ranking it in the middle numerical range; participating in parish, pastoral and finance councils (56.1 percent); and overseeing implementation of strategic plan (50.9 percent). Slightly less than half (45.6 percent) also ranked overseeing parish programs in the mid-range of importance.

Ranked in the lowest levels of importance (numbers eight through ten) by half or somewhat more than half the respondents were as follows: scheduling meetings (64.9 percent) and meeting employees several times a week (49.1), activities which had been added to the rubrics as confounders. Interestingly, the other lowest ranked activity, employing parish staff, was ranked in the lowest level of importance by half the respondents (49.1).[11]

When thinking about the same tasks and activities for the pastor from *lay leaders' perspectives*, the seminarians showed more variation in their rankings. The majority of the rankings ranged largely from 59.7 percent to 43.9 percent (please refer to Table I FROM LAY LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES Tasks Set 1).[12] Initiating strategic planning still ranked in the top level of importance rankings of the seminarians when thinking about leadership and administrative tasks for the pastor as seen from the lay leaders' perspectives; however, it fell to 59.7 percent majority with a mean of 3.61. Overseeing implementation of the strategic plan, inspiring parish ministries, apostolate and volunteers, and responding to crisis situations were all listed in the top three rankings by a majority of the seminarians but with the majority at slightly less than half (45.6, 43.9, and 43.9 percent respectively), with means ranging from 4.04 to 5.14. Interestingly, the bottom three tasks remained the same, but with scheduling meetings majority percentage only at 36.8.[13]

TABLE II. Seminarian Rankings of Importance (1 most - 10 least) of Pastoral Tasks, Percent Frequencies and Means - Task Set 2.

	RANKED Most to Least Important for the Pastor, FROM A *PASTOR'S* PERSPECTIVE, Task Set 2	Majority Response %	Mean	RANKED Most to Least Important for the Pastor, FROM *LAY LEADERS'* PERSPECTIVES, Task Set 2	Majority Response %	Mean
Top Rankings, as MOST IMPORTANT	Developing a collaborative leadership style	59.7	3.39	Managing parish staff	52.6	4.53
Ranked most often in Top Three (1-3)	Implementing diocesan policies	57.9	3.96	Developing a collaborative leadership style	49.1	4.40
	Mediating parish conflicts	54.4	4.65	Supervising parish communication	56.1	5.42
	Managing parish staff	50.9	4.00	Socializing with volunteers (confounder)	50.9	5.95
Ranked with a MID-LEVEL of Importance	Maintaining personal balance & health	47.4	4.33	Mediating parish conflicts	45.6	4.67
Ranked in Middle (4-7)	Supervising parish communication	45.6	5.75	Building relationships with diverse cultural groups	43.9	5.81
	Building relationships with diverse cultural groups	38.6	5.56	Supervising maintenance of physical plant	42.1	5.53
				Engaging in social activities with staff & their families (confounder)	42.1	5.12
				Implementing diocesan policies	38.6	5.19
Bottom Rankings, as LEAST IMPORTANT	Supervising maintenance of physical plant	49.1	6.82			
Ranked Lowest (8-10)	Socializing with volunteers (confounder)	43.9	6.74	Maintaining personal balance & health	42.1	6.14
	Engaging in social activities with staff & their families (confounder)	35.1	5.89			

For the first set of ranked tasks, the tables show that there was greater variability in the seminarians' responses (and thus less agreement) regarding the level of importance of pastoral activities when thinking about that importance from the perspective of lay leaders.

In the second set of tasks (see Table II), developing a collaborative leadership style, implementing diocesan policies and mediating parish conflicts were ranked in the top three areas of *importance for a pastor* by more than half the seminarians (59.7 percent, 57.9 and 54.4, respectively).[14] Supervising maintenance of the physical plant was ranked as one of the least important, as were appropriately two confounders, socializing with volunteers and engaging in social activities with staff and their families. Only 38.6 percent of the seminarians ranked building relationships with diverse cultural groups of mid-level importance from a pastor's perspective.

When ranked as most to least important for the pastor from *lay leaders' perspectives*, the largest grouping was in the mid-range with seven tasks clustered with means from 4.67-5.95. Developing a collaborative leadership style remained in the top three and managing parish staff moved to the top three. Maintaining personal health and balance was thought to be the least important for the pastor, by the seminarians, when viewed from the lay leaders' perspective. The range of importance, 1-10, for the tasks in both question sets showed a wide range in ranking by the seminarians, with fifteen of the twenty tasks receiving a complete spread of 1 through 10. This indicates that seminarians varied widely in their assessments of the task level of importance. No significant pattern of variation was found in the responses of second-, third- and fourth-year seminarians.

Pastoral Performance Areas' Activities – Importance and Proficiencies

In Fulfillment of Their Mission also groups tasks and activities into performance area categories and assesses levels of proficiency, ranging from novice to above proficiency. Six performance areas were selected for inclusion in this study: Leads parish pastoral and finance councils; oversees parish programs, ministries and apostolates; oversees the stewardship of parish finances; employs and manages parish staff; supervises parish communication; and builds relationships with diverse cultural groups. Seminarians were asked to rate the relative level of importance they believe activities from selected performance areas have for a parish pastor on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "very important, important, moderately important, of little importance, or not sure."

TABLE III. Performance Areas and Activities, Levels of Importance as rated by Seminarians.

		LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PASTOR as rated by Percent of Seminarians					Percent rating Very Important + Important	Percent rating Moderately + Of Little Import	
PERFORMANCE AREAS and ACTIVITIES	**LEVEL OF PASTORAL PROFICIENCY as stated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission***	**Very Important Column 1**	**Important Column 2**	**Moderately Important Column 3**	**Of Little Importance Column 4**	**Not Sure**	**% Totals Columns 1+2**	**% Totals Columns 3+4**	**Mean**
Leads Parish Pastoral & Finance Councils									
Enlists the expertise of consultative bodies within the parish	Novice	47.4	45.6	5.3	0	1.8	93.0	5.3	4.37
Participates in various aspects of parish administrations (financial, personnel and physical plant)	Novice	33.3	42.1	21.1	1.8	1.8	75.4	22.9	4.04
Chairs a project for one of the parish committees	Approaching Proficiency	8.8	24.6	36.8	28.8	1.8	33.4	65.6	3.11

TABLE III. Performance Areas and Activities, Levels of Importance as rated by Seminarians. (Continued)

PERFORMANCE AREAS and ACTIVITIES	LEVEL OF PASTORAL PROFICIENCY as stated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PASTOR as rated by Percent of Seminarians					Percent rating Very Important + Important	Percent rating Moderately + Of Little Import	
		Very Important Column 1	Important Column 2	Moderately Important Column 3	Of Little Importance Column 4	Not Sure	% Totals Columns 1+2	% Totals Columns 3+4	Mean
Shares information regularly with committee chairs, council members and staff	Approaching Proficiency	38.6	45.6	14	0	1.8	84.2	14	4.19
Fulfills canonical and diocesan regulations for pastoral and financial councils	Proficiency	68.4	29.8	0	0	1.8	98.2	0	4.63
Sets goals in consultation with council members to guide their work in fulfilling the mission of the parish	Proficiency	35.1	49.1	14	0	1.8	84.2	14	4.16
Inspires greater lay involvement and creativity in the councils regarding stewardship in the parish	Above Proficiency	43.9	42.1	10.5	1.8	1.8	86.0	12.3	4.25
Serves as a consultant on the diocesan level	Above Proficiency	7.0	24.6	38.6	28.1	1.8	31.6	66.7	3.07
Oversees the Stewardship of Parish Finances									
Can identify and describe basic financial processes as they apply to the parish	Novice	33.3	56.1	8.8	0	1.8	89.4	8.8	4.19
Can read a financial statement and explain the parish budget	Novice	36.8	45.6	15.8	0	1.8	82.4	15.8	4.16
Participates in workshops on diocesan financial policies and procedures	Novice	17.5	40.4	36.8	5.3	0	57.9	42.1	3.7
Personally calls on members of the parish to take responsibility for parish finances	Approaching Proficiency 28.1 35.1 33.3				1.8	1.8	63.2	35.1	3.86
Utilizes the expertise of the parish financial council	Approaching Proficiency	66.7	28.1	5.3	0	0	94.8	5.3	4.61

TABLE III. Performance Areas and Activities, Levels of Importance as rated by Seminarians. (Continued)

PERFORMANCE AREAS and ACTIVITIES	LEVEL OF PASTORAL PROFICIENCY as stated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PASTOR as rated by Percent of Seminarians					Percent rating Very Important + Important	Percent rating Moderately + Of Little Import	
		Very Important Column 1	Important Column 2	Moderately Important Column 3	Of Little Importance Column 4	Not Sure	% Totals Columns 1+2	% Totals Columns 3+4	Mean
Aligns parish finances to meet all modifications/ revisions in diocesan financial policies and procedures	Approaching Proficiency	33.3	50.9	14.0	0	1.8	84.2	14	4.14
Prioritizes financial needs of the parish according to its mission	Proficiency	45.6	49.1	5.3	0	0	94.7	5.3	4.4
Makes financial decisions following principles of good stewardship and gospel values	Proficiency	63.2	33.3	3.5	0	0	96.5	3.5	4.6
Raises sufficient funds to carry out the mission of the parish	Proficiency	40.4	50.9	8.8	0	0	91.3	8.8	4.32
Fulfills responsibilities of good stewardship according to diocesan policies	Proficiency	40.4	45.6	12.3	0	1.8	86.0	12.3	4.23
Creates endowment for parish operations and programs	Above Proficiency	19.3	38.6	28.1	12.3	1.8	57.9	40.4	3.61
Oversees Parish Programs, Ministries and Apostolates									
Informs parish members of available ministries and apostolates	Novice	28.1	57.9	12.3	0	1.8	86.0	12.3	4.11
Keeps updated on diocesan policies and regulations	Novice	59.7	35.1	3.5	0	1.8	94.8	3.5	4.51
Assesses the quality of existing parish programs, ministries and apostolates in light of local needs	Approaching Proficiency	33.3	50.9	14.0	0	1.8	84.2	14	4.14
Promotes participation by calling parish members to share their time and talents	Approaching Proficiency	42.1	42.1	10.5	3.5	1.8	84.2	14	4.19
Provides for the supervision and formation of parish staff, ministers and volunteers	Proficiency	24.6	59.7	12.3	1.8	1.8	84.3	14.1	4.04

TABLE III. Performance Areas and Activities, Levels of Importance as rated by Seminarians. (Continued)

PERFORMANCE AREAS and ACTIVITIES	LEVEL OF PASTORAL PROFICIENCY as stated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PASTOR as rated by Percent of Seminarians					Percent rating Very Important + Important	Percent rating Moderately + Of Little Import	
		Very Important Column 1	Important Column 2	Moderately Important Column 3	Of Little Importance Column 4	Not Sure	% Totals Columns 1+2	% Totals Columns 3+4	Mean
Organizes and promotes programs to carry out the mission of the Church	Proficiency	50.9	29.8	17.5	0	1.8	80.7	17.5	4.28
Discerns the activity of God in the lives of people and calls them into various ministries and apostolates	Proficiency	68.4	19.3	10.5	0	1.8	87.7	10.5	4.53
Coordinates (facilitates) communication among the various parish ministers, programs and apostolates	Proficiency	15.8	47.4	33.3	1.8	1.8	63.2	35.1	3.74
Cultivates and nurtures a spirit of discipleship among parish priests, lay ministers and staff	Above Proficiency	56.1	33.3	8.8	0	1.8	89.4	8.8	4.42
Employs and Manages Parish Staff									
Can describe basic diocesan personnel policies and procedures	Novice	31.6	52.6	12.3	3.5	0	84.2	15.8	4.12
Follows diocesan personnel policies and procedures	Novice	52.6	38.6	7.0	1.8	0	91.2	8.8	4.42
Participates in the hiring process	Approaching Proficiency	45.6	40.4	8.8	5.3	0	86.0	14.1	4.26
Writes job descriptions for parish staff openings	Approaching Proficiency	14.0	36.8	42.1	7.0	0	50.8	49.1	3.58
Revises parish personnel policies and procedures in light of changes in diocesan requirements	Approaching Proficiency	24.6	52.6	19.3	3.5	0	77.2	22.8	3.98
Maintains a healthy work environment	Proficiency	57.9	28.1	12.3	1.8	0	86.0	14.1	4.42
Nurtures a spirit of discipleship among staff	Proficiency	56.1	29.9	14.0	0	0	86.0	14	4.42
Makes personnel decisions following principles of good stewardship and gospel values	Proficiency	61.4	28.1	8.8	1.8	0	89.5	10.6	4.49
Hires qualified individuals who support the needs/mission of the parish	Proficiency	57.9	36.8	3.5	1.8	0	94.7	5.3	4.51

TABLE III. Performance Areas and Activities, Levels of Importance as rated by Seminarians. (Continued)

PERFORMANCE AREAS and ACTIVITIES	LEVEL OF PASTORAL PROFICIENCY as stated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PASTOR as rated by Percent of Seminarians: Very Important Column 1	Important Column 2	Moderately Important Column 3	Of Little Importance Column 4	Not Sure	Percent rating Very Important + Important: % Totals Columns 1+2	Percent rating Moderately + Of Little Import: % Totals Columns 3+4	Mean
Reviews contracts and evaluates employees on a regular basis following diocesan policy (annually)	Proficiency	35.1	47.4	17.5	0	0	82.5	17.5	4.18
Mediates conflict among parish staff in keeping with diocesan policy, parish mission and the good of the Church	Proficiency	36.8	45.6	15.8	1.8	0	82.4	17.6	4.18
Provides for the supervision of staff	Proficiency	17.5	57.9	21.1	3.5	0	75.4	24.6	3.89
Provides opportunities for continuing education of staff	Proficiency	22.8	35.1	35.1	7.0	0	57.9	42.1	3.74
Empowers staff to develop their full potential	Above Proficiency	47.4	31.6	15.8	5.3	0	79.0	21.1	4.21
Supervises Parish Communication									
Keeps updated on diocesan resources, memoranda and regulations	Novice	43.9	43.9	10.5	1.8	0	87.8	12.3	4.3
Assesses strengths and weaknesses of the various modes of communication available and in use in the parish	Novice	12.3	61.4	24.6	1.8	0	73.7	26.4	3.84
Develops a system for facilitating communication with the parish community	Approaching Proficiency	21.1	64.9	14.0	0	0	86.0	14	4.07
Assures that parishioners are informed through various modes of communication	Proficiency	29.8	49.1	19.3	1.8	0	78.9	21.1	4.07
Maintains open communication both formally and informally (shares information with committee chairs, council members, staff, etc.)	Proficiency	33.3	49.1	15.8	1.8	0	82.4	17.6	4.14

TABLE III. Performance Areas and Activities, Levels of Importance as rated by Seminarians. (Continued)

PERFORMANCE AREAS and ACTIVITIES	LEVEL OF PASTORAL PROFICIENCY as stated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PASTOR as rated by Percent of Seminarians					Percent rating Very Important + Important	Percent rating Moderately + Of Little Import	Mean
		Very Important Column 1	Important Column 2	Moderately Important Column 3	Of Little Importance Column 4	Not Sure	% Totals Columns 1+2	% Totals Columns 3+4	
Creates systems for communicating with larger publics	Above Proficiency	10.5	57.9	24.6	7.0	0	68.4	31.6	3.72
Builds Relationships with Diverse Cultural Groups									
Seeks accurate information about the diverse cultural groups in the local and parish community	Novice	28.1	56.1	12.3	3.5	0	84.2	15.8	4.09
Makes contact with the leaders of various cultural communities	Approaching Proficiency	17.5	49.1	26.3	7.0	0	66.6	33.3	3.77
Creates an environment (liturgical, social, educational) that welcomes diverse groups	Approaching Proficiency	22.8	47.4	21.1	7.0	0	70.2	28.1	3.82
Incorporates examples from different cultural perspectives into preaching and teaching	Proficiency	19.3	47.4	26.3	7.0	0	66.7	33.3	3.79
Integrates the devotions and religious customs of the various cultural groups within the community into the life of the parish	Proficiency	28.1	38.6	29.8	3.5	0	66.7	33.3	3.91
Mediates tensions between different cultural groups	Proficiency	31.6	45.6	17.5	5.3	0	77.2	22.8	4.04
Creates strategies for intercultural dialogue and understanding	Above Proficiency	12.3	49.1	26.3	12.3	0	61.4	38.6	3.61
Speaks a pastoral language in addition to his mother tongue	Above Proficiency	29.8	42.1	10.5	12.3	5.3	71.9	22.8	3.79

Table III shows the level of importance ratings given by the seminarians against the proficiency levels stated for the activities in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*. As can be seen in Table III, the majority of seminarians, not surprisingly, thought most of the activities to be important or very important for a parish pastor. Twenty-two of the fifty-six activities listed (40 percent), however, were rated by 20 percent or more of the seminarians as of little importance or moderately important, with a few not sure. Every performance category, however, had a minimum of one to a maximum of seven activities viewed as of little or moderate importance. Interestingly, the proficiency levels of the activities that seminarians rated of little or moderate importance, as assessed in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission,* ranged from novice to above proficiency.

Table IV breaks out the twenty-two activities rated with lower levels of importance by the seminarians.

Leads Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils
- Participates in various aspects of parish administrations (financial, personnel and physical plant)
- Chairs a project for one of the parish committees
- Serves as a consultant on the diocesan level

Oversees the Stewardship of Parish Finances
- Participates in workshops on diocesan financial policies and procedures
- Personally calls on members of the parish to take responsibility for parish finances
- Creates endowment for parish operations and programs

Oversees Programs, Ministries and Apostolates
- Coordinates (facilitates) communication among the various parish ministers, programs and apostolates

Employs and Manages Parish Staff
- Writes job descriptions for parish staff openings
- Revises parish personnel policies and procedures in light of changes in diocesan requirements
- Provides for the supervision of staff
- Provides opportunities for continuing education of staff
- Empowers staff to develop their full potential

Developing a collaborative leadership style, implementing diocesan policies and mediating parish conflicts were ranked in the top three areas of *importance for a pastor* by more than half the seminarians.

Supervises Parish Communication
- Assesses strengths and weaknesses of the various modes of communication available and in use in the parish
- Assures that parishioners are informed through various modes of communication
- Creates systems for communicating with larger publics

Builds Relationships with Diverse Cultural Groups
- Makes contact with the leaders of various cultural communities
- Creates an environment (liturgical, social, educational) that welcomes diverse groups
- Incorporates examples from different cultural perspectives into preaching and teaching
- Integrates the devotions and religious customs of the various cultural groups within the community into the life of the parish
- Mediates tensions between different cultural groups
- Creates strategies for intercultural dialogue and understanding
- Speaks a pastoral language in addition to his mother tongue

Table IV. Activities within Performance Areas that 20% or more of the Seminarians rated as Moderately Important or Of Little Importance.

Of particular note in Table IV are the performance areas with the largest number of activities considered of little or moderate importance, i.e., builds relationships with diverse cultural groups (seven activities) and employs and manages parish staff (five). Of additional

note are those areas in which 50 percent or more of the activities listed were considered of lesser importance (supervises parish communication and diverse cultural groups). Within the performance category of builds relationships with diverse cultural groups, seven of the eight total activities were viewed by 20 to nearly 40 percent of the seminarians as of little importance or moderately important with those activities' proficiency levels rated in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission* as approaching proficiency, proficiency, or above proficiency.

Additionally, activities considered of little or moderate importance by 40 percent or more of the seminarians were: Provides opportunities for continuing education of staff (42.1 percent), creates endowment for parish operations and programs (42.1), participates in workshops on diocesan financial policies and procedures (42.1), writes job descriptions for parish staff openings (49.2), chairs a project for one of the parish committees (66.6), and serves as a consultant on the diocesan level (68.4).

Examination of these twenty-two activities across class levels found second-, third- and fourth-year seminarians answering within the response categories of moderately important or of little importance, with no pattern of response. Seminarians within each class level, thus, believed these activities to be of either moderate importance or of little importance for a parish pastor.

Spirituality

The seminarians were then asked to link spirituality with leadership, responding to the question, "In what ways does your spirituality impact you as a leader?" All the seminarians, one hundred percent, reported their spirituality impacting their leadership. Their responses offered insight into spirituality seen as a personal, living relationship with a triune God, i.e., the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Foundational frames of spirituality – transcendence, inter-connectedness, ultimate purpose, transformational nature and so forth,[15] as described by these respondents was relational, building from God, and formed the basis from which other spiritual elements derived. Four themes, or elements, of spirituality-leadership interaction emerged: process, action, character and outcome/effect.[16]

Figure I. Elements of Spirituality-Leadership Interaction.

The process descriptors found within spirituality impacting leadership for these respondents were broad-based concepts engaging God, self and others. Summarized, they included the following: listening and silence as tools of both connection and insight before action; bringing others to Christ and the spiritual experience; expectations that transformations occur within self and within others so that progress is sought toward transformation and change; receiving greater awareness and strength in applying principles and Biblical teachings in life; and a belief that "even though I am leading, I am being led." Seminarians describing various processes as spirituality impacting their leadership capacity generally described a type of continuous cycle of reflection-seeking-attitude-behavior-reflection model with relationship to the triune God as center.

Within the action category, seminarians reported their spirituality prompting them to act while in leadership positions, or while engaged in leadership experiences, or in leadership decision-making. The responses describing actions related to leadership and spirituality (as opposed to processes, outcomes or character), fell into the following categories: increased prayer; establishing and focusing on priorities and "rightly ordering" priorities; placing Christ's and others' agendas before self; and goal setting, assessment and evaluation in conformance with God's will. While leadership was viewed as a collection of style, attitudes, actions and behaviors, there was an emphasis with these responses on spirituality changing action.

Seminarians also reported growth in virtues and virtuous behavior, or character framing areas, as an important way in which their spirituality impacted leadership, citing the essential nature of virtuous be-

Seminarians also reported growth in virtues and virtuous behavior, or character framing areas, as an important way in which their spirituality impacted leadership, citing the essential nature of virtuous behavior for effective leadership.

havior for effective leadership. For these seminarians, the focus of spirituality and leadership was interior growth and external behavior in accordance with that growth. The character-related virtues most often cited were courage, confidence, humility, fortitude, prudence, discipline, perseverance, forgiveness and love.

Several outcomes, or effects, were also cited as the primary result of spirituality impacting leadership in the form of increased service to others; a changed paradigm of leadership evolving to an understanding and attitude of servant leadership; an enhanced desire to learn about God and others; increased peace; increased compassion; total reliance on God; and God providing "fuel to meet the challenges."

Spirituality's impact on leadership, for these seminarians, was thus reported as integral to leadership, integrative with leadership, and framing for the seminarians' processing, attitudes, character and actions.

Major Findings

Results of this research show that the majority of the fifty-six tasks and activities included within the six performance areas of pastoral leadership and administration utilized in this study were rated as important to very important by survey respondents. Twenty-two of the tasks and activities (40 percent) were, however, rated with lesser importance – moderately important or of little importance – by 20 percent to more than 60 percent of the respondents. These tasks and activities are all considered relevant for pastors as assessed in the rubrics of *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*. Specifically, activities and responsibilities within the performance areas of employing and managing parish staff, building relationships with diverse cultural groups, overseeing parish finances, and supervising parish communication, received lower importance ratings by seminarians across class levels. Interestingly, these lower-rated activities range across all proficiency levels, from novice to above proficiency, as stated in the performance rubrics of *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*. There was also greater variation in responses in ranking tasks for a parish pastor when considered, by the seminarians, from the perspective of key constituents, the lay leaders.

According to this study, there appears to be a gap in understanding of areas considered to be important to pastoral leadership today by at least one in four seminarians across second-, third- and fourth-year class levels. This is particularly notable in the two performance areas in which the majority of the activities listed were given lower ratings, i.e., supervises parish communication and builds relationships with diverse cultural groups, areas of great import to all types of leadership today. Employs and manages parish staff and leads parish pastoral and finance councils also received lower importance ratings for several activities and tasks.

In linking spirituality to leadership, for these developing leaders, the study finds that spirituality contributes to leadership within an interior aspect of self and from self to others. All the respondents, one hundred percent, believe their spirituality strengthens their leadership capacities, aiding in both personal growth and performance through a variety of processes, actions, character and outcomes.

Discussion

Results of this research, therefore, indicate a high level of spirituality among the respondents, a high level of perceived importance of the impact of spirituality on leadership and low levels of perceived importance regarding pastoral leadership performance areas relating to staffing, diversity, communication and finances – areas typically considered critical in leadership and managing through change. A key finding is that one in four of the developing leaders in this study will enter a first pastoral assignment with a great reservoir of spirituality, an understanding of linking spirituality to leadership, but less understanding of the importance of essential pastoral leadership performance areas, in particular those areas with direct impact upon the well-being of the organization (finances), employees (staffing), and lay leaders, volunteers, congregations and communities (communication and diversity). The question is, does this matter? I argue that it does.

While the importance of a first pastoral assignment as assistant or associate pastor, and thus with one-to-one mentoring by a senior pastor, is not to be underestimated, additional factors must be taken into consideration. The labor intensity of this type of training model may prove problematic with the current changing environmental conditions, especially with the reported increasingly shorter length of time to pastor one's own parish (Hoge 2006 and 2008), and the increasing complexity of the emerging parish leadership role. It is possible that in the foreseeable future less labor-intensive and more compact models of training and education must be developed to efficiently prepare pastoral leaders to face the challenges of leadership.

The results of this study are important for additional reasons. First, wide variation in the understanding of importance in leadership performance areas, tasks and activities suggests that as parish assignments are made, an individual entering into that assignment with a lower level of understanding of activity importance may demonstrate lower levels of performance and effectiveness and thus encounter decreased parishioner satisfaction. The responsibility to address a lack of understanding moves to the senior pastor who may or may not have the resources (time, energy and so forth) to adequately educate and change the perspective nor build in-depth understanding for the developing leader regarding potential negative consequences.

Secondly, from a formation perspective, discussing leadership issues and concepts in groups during seminary education and training within a continuous framework of knowledge-building would provide a time and venue to ensure that seminarians become equally well-grounded in pastoral leadership as well as aid them in dialoguing and networking specifically about leadership prior to their first full assignments.

Thirdly, building earlier awareness of the wealth and variety of constituent perspectives and skills, especially those of lay leaders, staff and diverse groups, will enable a developing leader to more effectively communicate, build trust and inspire others, key elements in leading during times of change and the challenges faced today. Changing demographics require culturally sensitive leadership at all levels and stages of development.

Finally, the relationship between spirituality and leadership is being established in the broader literature (Benefiel 2005 and 2008; Fry 2003; Fry and Kriger 2009; Fry and Slocum 2008; Hicks 2003; Williams 2003) as well as the role and importance of workplace spirituality on organizations and performance (Biberman 2008; Duchon and Plowman 2005; Garcia-Zamor 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz 2003; Mitroff and Denton 1999). Building deeper understanding about the development of leaders with high levels of spirituality and linking their spirituality with leadership capacities offers great insight into a formative element of the interior self coupled with the external actions and behaviors important to effective leadership practices.

Essential to leader development is moving through multiple stages: understanding the concepts and responsibilities of leadership, learning and doing the myriad tasks of leadership and becoming a leader, in other words, a state of being. It would seem that spiritual individuals, with early and high levels of leadership training and experience integrated with their spiritual formation, will become highly spiritual, highly effective leaders. Gaps in understanding regarding the duties and responsibilities of pastoral leadership, however, may slow progress in serving the changing Church.

Spiritual individuals, with early and high levels of leadership training and experience integrated with their spiritual formation, will become highly spiritual, highly effective leaders.

Closing Remarks

The development of future pastoral leaders and the effectiveness of their leadership during times of demographic change and organizational, economic and societal shifts will prove critical to the sustainability of parishes and the unique role they play in society. Essential to the long-term success of parish leaders will be a thorough understanding of the parishes and systems in which they operate and deep knowledge of, and training in, the responsibilities and activities necessary for effective pastoral leadership.

To achieve a well-functioning parish, pastors must be prepared with the organizational skills and abilities necessary to lead through change. The number one request from priests in the first years of pastoral assignments, when reflecting upon their seminary training,

was for leadership, administration and interpersonal skills development (Hoge 2008). This study has implications for the manner in which pastoral leadership education is provided in seminaries and other formation programs, in particular regarding the nature of the leadership training, timing of the training, the methodology and whether the training is required or optional.

These research results suggest that a high level of spirituality is perceived to positively impact leadership in multiple ways and that spirituality provides a lens from which leadership challenges are interpreted and evaluated. It may well be that as pastoral leaders seek strength and guidance in facing the increased internal organizational pressures and unpredictable external forces such as those encountered in the early decades of this century, further linking spirituality and leader capabilities will prove critical to the success and well-flourishing of all organizations.

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Limitations

The current study focused on the perceived importance of the performance areas and tasks of pastoral leadership and other parish administrative responsibilities, and the link between spirituality and leadership, from the perspective of a group of seminarians at a Roman Catholic seminary. Forms of response bias may have influenced results, for example, hypothesis guessing, social desirability or self-esteem bias. Also, the small number of participants does not allow for deeper statistical analysis. In addition, with the nature of this exploratory analysis results may not be generalizable. Additional studies increasing the total number of cases available in the dataset will allow for comprehensive statistical analyses of results as well as providing comparative data.

Future Research

Plans are underway for a larger study of seminarians. The administration of the survey at the seminary represented here in two-to-three years will allow for comparisons within study groups. Including additional seminaries in a future survey will offer comparative analyses across seminarian programs. Surveying practicing pastors, in single as well as in clustered parishes, regarding the priorities of pastoral leadership duties and the ways in which lay ministers help lead parishes will offer a more complete picture of the changing landscape of parish leadership and help to validate the pastoral performance areas and activities. Asking structured, in-depth questions about how spirituality impacts practicing leaders' roles and decision-making will further the understanding of the relationship between spirituality and leadership. Finally, linking spirituality to religious traditions and building understanding of workplace spirituality (Delbecq 2009) in other types of organizations will offer a broader lens from which to view the development of all leaders.

F.K. Marsh, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Management with the Richard J. Bolte School of Business, Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg, Maryland. She received her MBA from Canisius College and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan.

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Endnotes

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2. Other publications, for example, J.C. Carter's work and a recent article by R.B. McKenna, P.R. Yost, and T.N. Boyd, also proved helpful. Please see the bibliography section for citations of these and other related texts. External

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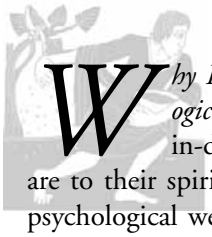
reviewers also offered suggestions on near-final survey instrument drafts.

3. Special thanks go to Rev. Dr. Paul Sullins, the Catholic University of America, and the rector and academic dean of the seminary for their many survey reviews and insightful suggestions, to Donald McCrabb, Catholic Leadership Institute, Dr. Gary Roberts, Regent University, and Rev. Vincent O'Malley and many others, for ongoing conversations and survey suggestions. Joseph Ippolito, Education Development Center, Inc., and others were most helpful in rubric discussions and guidance. Thanks also go to participants in a panel discussion session entitled "Spirituality in the Workplace," at the annual conference of the Christian Business Faculty Association, October, 2010, where early spirituality results were discussed. Anonymous reviewers gave helpful feedback. Any errors in this work, however, are the sole responsibility of the author.
4. The survey was password-protected and proctored during each administration. Attendance and participation in the survey were requested by the rector unless a seminarian was excused due to illness or participation in a conflicting event. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The university's internal research review board (IRB) approved the study.
5. Upon survey completion, frequencies, means, and standard deviations were generated for question responses with cross-tabulation by class level providing further detail. In the analysis of open-ended questions, themes were identified through an inductive, iterative approach as understanding emerged (see B. Glaser and A. Strauss, 1967, for further detail), utilizing thematic clustering, word counts, and categorical coding of the data.
6. A full-time position was defined as a paid position, 32 hours a week or more, with benefits provided.
7. All further reference to *In Fulfillment of Their Mission: The Duties and Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest* is the Ippolito *et al.* 2008 edition as cited in the References.
8. Performance areas and activities selected for inclusion in this study were decided upon after comments and suggestions from pastoral leaders and consultants to the survey. The length of the survey limited the inclusion of all performance areas and activities.
9. For use in the survey questions, verb tenses in the tasks and activities were changed, for example, "initiates" to "initiating," one word change was made ("animates" to "inspiring"), and one activity combination was developed "Maintaining personal balance and health." These changes were based on comments from the survey pre-test. For spacing and fit onto electronic survey pages, a performance area, task, or activity may have had an "a" or "the" removed when it did not affect task meaning.
10. A total of twenty tasks were selected for inclusion. Eleven of the tasks were selected directly from the pastoral duty "Leads Parish Administration" found in *In Fulfillment of Their Mission*. Five other tasks typically considered important to effective leadership and listed within other pastoral duties in *In Fulfillment* were selected and added to the "Leads Parish Administration" ranking set. These additional tasks were: Responding to crisis situations, mediating parish conflicts, building relationships with diverse cultural groups, developing a collaborative leadership style, and maintaining personal balance and health. Four other tasks were added to the questions as "confounding checks," potential answers placed within the lists that were not in the actual duties or performance areas found *In Fulfillment*: Scheduling meetings, meeting employees many times a week, engaging in social activities with staff and their families, and socializing with volunteers. Confounding checks are a design control technique utilized in research to decrease the effects of extraneous factors. Refer to *Fundamentals of Marketing Research*, by S.M. Smith and G.S. Albaum for a good discussion, pp. 292-295.
11. The means for Tasks Set 1 ranged from 2.32 to 7.88, a difference of 5.56, with the narrowest cluster of means in the middle range, from 4.61 to 5.77. The highest frequencies, i.e., the most seminarians in agreement, occurred in the top rankings of activities plus the areas of overseeing parish finances and scheduling meetings.
12. Means clustered around four to five.
13. The difference in the range of means for the tasks when viewed from a lay leader perspective by the seminarians was narrower than when viewed from a pastor's perspective (7.14-3.61=3.53 versus 6.91-2.32=4.59). The majority percentages, in general, were less indicating a greater variation in the rankings of 1 to 10 for each activity.
14 When ranking the second set of tasks one through ten, the rankings with majority agreement dropped slightly in comparison to Set 1 and the means were more closely clustered (3.39 to 6.82 and 4.40 to 6.14).
15. See particularly Giacalone, R.A., and Jurkiewicz, C.L., "Toward a Science of Workplace Spirituality," in *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003, Tables 1.1 and 1.2 for various literature's definitions and dimensionalities of spirituality.
16. In culling through the essay responses to the spirituality question, first-order codes were identified comprised of words used by seminarians to describe the ways in which their spirituality impacts their leadership. Word counts and phrasing further identified clusters.

Why Priests are Happy: A Study of the Psychological and Spiritual Health of Priests

Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti

Ave Maria Press, 2012
Reviewed by Rev. Gene Hemrick



Why Priests are Happy: A Study of the Psychological and Spiritual Health of Priests is an in-depth study on how well disposed priests are to their spiritual life devotional life, physical and psychological well-being, celibacy, bishop and ministry.

Contrary to the opinion that priests are demoralized and that sexual abuse scandals have dampened their zest, the study finds they are happy and possess the zeal that comes with happiness.

Rossetti's study covers some of the major bases regarding the challenges priests face: burnout, loneliness, being unappreciated, alcoholism, narcissism, sexual conflicts, obesity, relational conflicts, living quarters and coming from a dysfunctional background. In studying these variables, we are given a realistic picture of the priesthood in its entirety: priests are human and contend with the same problems everyone faces.

The study also compares the happiness of priests to that of the laity. The result shows that priests, on the whole, are happier than most of the people they serve.

The study raises the question, what exactly is the essence of their joy? What is in the vocation of a priest that especially gives him joy? The evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of a loving relationship with God.

In tracing to its roots the happiness Rossetti finds, we note that his study points us to the principles of joy expounded in Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino.* It is no exaggeration to conclude that in praying the breviary and experiencing its constant exultation of God's creation, priests enter into the "elating joy of existence and of life." In living celibacy, they experience the "joy of chaste and sanctified love." In ministering to their people, they often find "the sometimes joy of work well done." And then there is the "transparent joy of purity, service and sharing; and the demanding joy of sacrifice."

What is in the vocation of a priest that especially gives him joy? The evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of a loving relationship with God.

As hopeful as are the findings of the Rossetti study, certain hard questions still need to be addressed before taking full satisfaction in a joyful priesthood. For example, what effect is ministering to several parishes simultaneously having on the growing number of pastors in this situation? Are priests being deprived of the joy of intimate community that comes when serving one parish, rather than several parishes?

There is joy in feeling part of a unified presbyterate. How much joy do international priests serving in the US derive from their presbyterate? How much joy or lack of it is found among priets sharing common theological positions versus conflicting theological positions? How much camaraderie or lack of it is found in diverse groups of priests, i.e., older and younger, educated together or from different seminaries, second-career priests versus single-career priests?

All studies that are well conducted lead to more questions and the need for deeper analysis. Based on all the good work Rossetti put into this study, I look forward to his next project exploring more issues in the American priesthood.

Rev. Eugene Hemrick is director of the National Institute for the Renewal of the Priesthood, Washington, DC.

THE CORE ELEMENTS OF PRIESTLY FORMATION PROGRAMS

In recognition of the 10th anniversary of *Seminary Journal*, the Seminary Department has introduced a new publication series: *The Core Elements of Priestly Formation Programs*. These collections of articles celebrate the "best practices" and wisdom and insight of a wide variety of seminary professionals and church leaders. With only a few exceptions the articles were selected from the archives of *Seminary Journal* (1995-2005). Articles included from other sources are printed with permission.

The Core Elements series will be an ongoing publishing effort of the Seminary Department. The framework for the first three volumes reflects the four pillars as identified in the Bishops' Program of Priestly Formation: *Intellectual, Spiritual, Human* and *Pastoral*. The fourth addresses the topic of "addictions" and their implications for ministry formation.

These four volumes are produced as an in-service resource for faculty and staff development and personal study and as a potential source book of readings for those in the formation program. New collections of readings will be added annually.

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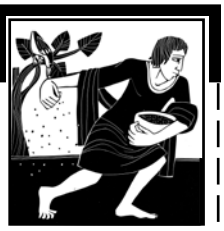

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