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Report No. 8

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS:
PEOPLE'S NEEDS,
PARISH SERVICES,
AND LEADERSHIP
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Leadership, Parish Organizations, and Laity: An Alternate View

Reports 8 and 9 will focus on parish organizations and leadership. The leaders are responsible for the ministries, organized programs, and other activities of the parish. Leaders include ordained clergy, paid staff, volunteer staff and other elected or appointed leaders. The unique combination of priests, religious (i.e., members of religious communities who are sisters, brothers, or priests), and laity active within a parish's leadership depends on a variety of factors, some social, some historical.

Many have asserted that lay leadership in the American parish is on the increase since the Second Vatican Council. That is an assertion that has many nuances. During what Catholic historian Jay Dolan calls the "republican period" of the church (colonial times until about 1830), laity were commonly responsible for the life of the parish, often

collectively owned its property, initiated its formation, and addressed requests for pastors and priests to mission societies or bishops.

Even during the "immigrant period" (about 1830 to 1950) when there was a goodly supply of priests and religious and when the hierarchy had consolidated control over property and assignments, the laity were responsible for a rich array of parish community organizations. These organizations ranged from benevolence and burial societies, fraternal societies, sodalities, prayer and devotional societies, to school and cultural auxiliaries, and social and recreational organizations. Often it was difficult to draw the line between a parish organization and an ethnic or neighborhood association. Parish-inspired lay leadership was there, but in a different form than we currently recognize it. Few doubted, however, that the parish was central to the life of the community or that the clergy were in charge. In most of these societies and auxiliaries, a priest-moderator was present and exercised leadership.

Several elements have changed in the post-Vatican II parish, and at least five are worth noting. First, while there has been a recent revival of the linkage between old-style community organizations and the parish, especially in transitional and poor neighborhoods of the *cities*, proportionately fewer Catholics now live in the cities and increasing numbers live in the *suburbs*. In the suburbs, parish organizations and community organizations are less likely to be interwoven; the many social, economic, and political functions performed by parish-related community organizations in the city either are thought unneeded in the suburbs, remain unmet, or require a conscious effort by the parish to develop an appropriate organizational response. Usually the last requires that leaders recruit, mobilize, and affirm laity; the result nowadays — in both the city and suburb — is a greater *awareness* of lay involvement.

Secondly, in the post-Vatican II parish the women religious and laity are increasingly likely to penetrate "sacred space" and to perform functions thought to be reserved for priests before Vatican II. Non-ordained ministers serve as rectors, distribute communion, and lead the prayer of the faithful-all from the sanctuary. Music leaders and cantors direct the people in hymns and chants, typically from a visible place in the sanctuary. Married deacons, as ordained clergy, regularly assist at the altar. Moving away from the altar to the rectory and the parish community, non-ordained ministers also perform many "priestly" functions. In addition to priests and deacons, women members of religious orders and dedicated lay professionals serve on pastoral ministry teams. They visit the sick, bring communion to shut-ins, counsel the troubled, catechize children and adults, keep the books, and initiate new ministries.

Thirdly, the number of parishes and parishioners increases while the supply of priests begins to dwindle and the supply of religious plunges. If the leadership for ministries, organizations, and activities is to be maintained, it will now include higher proportions of the laity.

Fourthly, the bishops themselves, through various contemporary statements on the laity, have encouraged participation, parish responsibility, and new kinds of mission and vocation. In the American parishes, "ministry" has come into common usage as both a clerical and non-clerical activity and calling. This is a momentous change of great sociological and ecclesiological significance.

Finally, these changes parallel the great upward mobility of American Catholics since World War II. An increasingly educated and moderately prosperous group, more of the laity now have the skills required for parish leadership and the feeling that they, not the clergy and bishops alone, are the church. As the country has moved from the production line to high-tech and service industries, and succeeding generations of Catholics have moved from blue collar to white collar and professional occupations, many are finding their everyday work settings less hierarchical; they share responsibility; authority resides in the group, not the top leader. When work life is thus arranged, it seems to them natural to transfer that model to the parish setting. Social and economic realities take the laity a long way from "Father knows best"

One other point bearing on leadership and organizational development merits special attention. American sociologists have tended to tell the Catholic story as though it were an urban story. For nearly a century, the story of the parish was the story of the urban ethnic neighborhood. By the early 1960s, attention had shifted to the suburban mega-church. That story is not inaccurate, but it is only partial. A significant portion of the Catholic church in the U.S. has always existed outside the central cities and suburbs of the metropolitan areas. The story of the parishes in the small cities and towns, the unincorporated and rural areas has not been well examined.

We do not have sufficient data to characterize that church during the "immigrant period" but we can certainly assess its significance now. Data drawn from the General Social Surveys from 1982 to 1984 show that 41% of all those who call themselves Catholics live in the unincorporated areas that fringe large metropolises (and may or may not be urban in orientation), in the cities of less than 50,000, in the smaller towns, and in the rural areas. The Notre Dame Study data show that 46% of our sample of 1099 parishes are located in such areas. These parishes historically have not had large parish staffs, nor had a large number of organizations and activities proliferated to meet parishioners' needs. It becomes a moot point to speak of lay leadership where organizations do not exist to be led.

Sources and Limitations of Data

In this Report we will concentrate, first, on the kinds of needs and problems that parishioners bring to the parish, and, then, on the kinds of organized programs and ministries that parish leaders offer their people. It will become evident that parishioners do not bring all their basic needs to the parish for assistance; however, there are some additional needs for which they would like help if only the parish had the capacity to offer

it. Even then, a sizable segment of young, educated, parish-connected Catholics is not oriented toward the parish as the appropriate place to take their needs. There is little question that the ability of a parish to respond varies greatly, depending often on a parish's size and staff resources, its location, ethnic history, and the kind of leadership it has had in the past. Finally, we will see that pastors consider the articulated needs, support, and involvement of laity, alongside the vision of leadership, to be the main ingredients in the ability of parishes to offer vital programs.

Our next Report, No. 9, will penetrate more directly the internal life of parish organizations, examining the recruitment patterns and backgrounds of parish leaders, parish governance and decision-making, current expectations that parishioners and leaders have of their pastor, how they feel about each other and their diocesan leadership.

The present report relies almost entirely on two data sources: (1) the 2667 parishioners selected through scientific sampling procedures in 36 representative parishes across the country, and (2) the 1099 scientifically selected parishes who responded to a survey of parish demographics, programs, staff and leadership characteristics. We are reasonably confident that the sample of 1099 parishes offers an accurate picture of U.S. parish characteristics, within the abilities and perspectives of the pastor or parish administrator who filled in the questionnaire. Its response rate was high and our efforts to uncover bias in non-response yielded no major systematic errors.

The sample of 2667 parishioners needs to be approached with certain cautions: (1) it is not a sample of all Catholics but of *registered parishioners*; (2) the questionnaire was long and required English-language skills; (3) the 36 parishes from which the parishioners are drawn are representative of the most important dimensions along which U.S. parishes differ and their selection followed appropriate stratified random sampling procedures; the resulting picture of parishioners, however, is not based on as large a number of primary sampling points as one would employ in a general population survey; this creates some problems for estimates of population parameters; and (4) for language and cultural reasons, we have purposely excluded Hispanic parishes and Hispanic-surnamed parishioners from the *parishioner* data-base.

Thus, as we have cautioned readers in previous reports, our sampling design is appropriate for the purposes of our Study: It is strong on parish characteristics, but it is limited to non-Hispanic parishioners, and it yields respondents who, when contrasted with the general population of Catholics, are older, more involved in parish affairs, and are slightly more conservative on Catholic issues.

This Report looks first at parishioner needs, then at parish programs. We should not expect a perfect match between the two. Methodologically, that would be an inappropriate standard. Rather, the first part of the Report will depict the stated needs of parishioners in the 36 parishes. The second part will show what organized programs are available and judged vital in the 1099 parishes. The former offers precision but lacks the generality of the latter. The latter offers generalizability to U.S. parishes, within customary

survey standards, but lacks parishioner data for all 1099 sampling points. The ideal design, scientifically, would be one where sufficient numbers of parishioners were available from all 1099 parishes to yield generalizations within each parish and across all. The cost, however, would be exorbitant. Perhaps some day, cooperation among diocesan researchers, bishops, and funding agencies will permit a coordinated study of large members of parishes, scientifically sampled, and large numbers of their parishioners, also scientifically controlled. Until then we must settle for the pieces of the puzzle yielded by current diocesan studies, the NORC-based studies, the Notre Dame Study, studies done by specialized parish consulting organizations, and several current studies of leadership, vocations, religious communities, and pastoral ministry.

Where Parishes Fit into the Needs of Parishioners

To some extent, the needs parishioners bring to their parish will depend on the purposes they set for the parish. For example, one would not come to the parish if he had a leg needing to be amputated; he would seek a doctor and a hospital. But one might consult a priest or a counselor on the parish staff to deal with the shock, grief, and meaning of the whole episode. Or a pregnant unwed teenager might not bring her condition to the parish staff if she felt that their answers would be inappropriate to her problem, or if she feared serious repercussions from their knowledge of it; she would turn to friends or medical professionals.

Society includes a wide variety of institutions that offer specialized help. What help one will seek from the parish depends not only on the availability of that help but also on whether one would ever conceive of the parish as an appropriate agency for help. Even when direct help is not available, one might approach parish staff for a referral; not knowing which psychiatrist or social worker is competent or can be trusted, for example, one might ask parish staff for advice. And people certainly approach the parish seeking friends for themselves and their children. Friends share similar values; one can discuss problems with friends. Thus, the parish may not give direct services but still offer help.

Report 4 discussed a wide variety of "models of the parish" The preponderant number of Catholics in our sampled parishes used *communal* religious symbols — body of Christ, people of God, a family united in fellowship — to describe the purpose of the parish. Large numbers also spoke of worship and Sacraments, spiritual enrichment, religious education, and *personal* religious growth. About one-third of our parish-connected Catholics specifically thought of the parish as a place for charitable works, offering help to those in need. Thus, even though "spiritual" symbols dominate Catholics' thinking about their parishes, Catholic parishioners regularly apply symbols of community life and service to all needs, material and psychological. At least in the abstract, the metaphor of the parish as a service station *specializing* in the dispensation of holiness once a week does not fit well the mental images by which registered parishioners envision their parishes.

Reviewing literature on the purposes of parishes, we asked the following question of parishioners: "At one time, it is said, people turned to their parish or priest for help on all sorts of things. Nowadays many parishes do not provide such help or people prefer to seek help elsewhere. They turn to friends, special agencies, or professionals outside the parish. Here is a list of personal needs or family problems" The kinds of problems are shown in Table 1. We first asked respondents to list which source for help they would approach — (1) friends, (2) pastor and/or parish staff, or (3) professionals or agencies outside the parish — for each problem. Then, for those respondents who had selected the third option (professionals outside the parish) for a problem, we asked whether it was "likely" or "unlikely" that they would use such a service if it were available in their parish.

The first three columns of Table I show the percentage of parishioners who would turn for help to each source. The total across these three columns for each problem does not equal 100% because some parishioners, varying with each issue, did not see this as a relevant problem in their life; such non-responses fluctuated between 6 and 19 percent. Less than 1% of the respondents indicated they would turn to more than one source for help on any given problem, and they are also excluded from the table. The fourth column is derived by adding the proportion who would turn to their parish staff for help or would turn there *if help were available*. It is always larger than the first column. The fifth column represents the difference between the fourth and first columns. We have called this an "opportunity gap" The larger the gap, the more it suggests that people do think of parish staff as appropriate people to help them deal with a problem, but that they would not turn to parish staff presently because appropriate help is not now available. The problems are listed, not in the order they appeared on the questionnaire, but by declining frequency of mentioning parish staff as the appropriate source for help.

The table bears witness to the staying power of the parish as a place where registered parishioners would bring their needs. As later analyses will suggest, to some extent the bias of our sample — slightly older, more loyal to parish, more conservative on church issues — is reflected in the high proportion of people who either presently would turn to parish staff for help or would like to turn to them if such help were available. If we examine the fourth column, we see that over half of the responding parishioners would turn to parish staff for over half of the problems, and the figure is very close to half for another four problems. American parishioners appear willing to set heavy demands on their pastors and parish staffs — and ultimately themselves, given the nature and composition of contemporary parish leadership.

TABLE 1
SOURCES OF HELP FOR PARISHIONER NEEDS,
2667 PARISHIONERS IN 36 PARISHES

| | **% of Respondents Who Would Turn For Help to:** | | | | |
Problem	**Pastor, Parish Staff**	**Friends**	**Professionals Outside Parish**	**If help were offered within parish, % turning to Pastor, Parish Staff**	**"Opportunity Gap"**
1. Religious education of children	84.4%	1.3%	1.8%	85.8%	1.4%
2. Religious education for myself	82.6	2.4	3.4	84.9	2.3
3. Support for faith	78.3	8.5	1.2	79.4	1.1
4. Premarital counseling or marital renewal	74.1	3.3	9.0	78.7	4.3
5. Counseling at time of sickness	53.0	18.1	19.3	63.6	10.6
6. Opportunities to serve others	47.9	21.3	18.3	60.2	12.3
7. Death of a member of my family	46.3	43.5	3.5	48.8	2.5
8. A place to express my doubts and fears without judgment	44.0	34.0	11.2	49.0	5.0
9. Severe marital problems	39.2	11.4	36.9	59.6	20.4
10. Family problems	36.5	24.2	26.3	51.0	14.5
11. Unwanted pregnancy	31.8	13.9	34.9	46.7	14.9
12. Handling of painful memories	30.4	42.5	16.0	38.7	8.3
13. Alcohol/drug abuse	13.3	7.2	67.3	49.9	36.6

14. Severe money problems	6.5	28.3	52.6	26.1	19.6
15. Unemployment	4.9	25.3	56.4	29.6	24.7

The first four problems listed in the table are either "religious" in nature or are traditional family concerns in a Catholic setting. All are central to what people expect of parishes and what virtually all parishes do. Problems 5-12 represent a kind of middle ground; they are less strictly "religious,' but still deal with emotional, and, therefore, "spiritual" traumas — e.g., meaning, being needed, separation, intimacy, etc. The source for help is often parish staff, but it is sometimes as likely to be friends or professionals. The third set of problems (l3-15) — economic and physical/psychological — seldom are seen as within the scope of current parish staff services; for them, parishioners would turn mainly to professionals or agencies outside the parish.

The fifth column, depicting the opportunity gap, sheds some light on the boundaries for parish services. Problems 1-4, 7 and 8 have nearly exhausted their potential; a parish either has in place sufficient services, or parishioners would probably not turn in greater numbers to the parish if it offered this service. Their opportunity gap is small. The unrealized potential for parishes, ironically, is at the bottom of the table (problems 13-15), where there appears to be a large unmet need for economic programs and, especially, alcohol and drug counseling (opportunity gap of a very large 36.6%), and in the middle of the table (problems 8-11) where problems of the family life-course are manifest.

In one respect all of these opportunity gaps are material and psychological conditions that worry parishioners — in families and out. The high proportion of parishioners who would turn to parish staff (column 1) for premarital counseling and marital renewal (74.1%) suddenly plummets when one gets into tough family situations (39.2, 36.5, and 31.8, for problems 9-11). We suspect the high "opportunity gap" figures for these problems (20.4, 14.5, and 14.9) is an indication that current programs are inadequate. We are moving beyond our data to make the following interpretation, but it almost seems as though parishioners are saying: "The parish is the right place to set our marriages on course and to make modest adjustments in marital communication, but it has little to offer when we face truly difficult situations in our marriages" And given the opportunity gap measure for the latter, they are saying, "We wish the parishes offered more to ride out the tough situations" such as severe marital problems, unwanted pregnancy, and family problems.

Apart from the family life-course pattern, some individual items are noteworthy. In dealing with the death of a loved one, the parish pastor and staff are important but friends are just as important. Recourse to friends for confiding is also shown in problems 8 and 12, where the availability of parish services generates only a modest increase in likely recourse to parish staff. Counseling related to illness (problem 5) could be an area of

greater parish involvement. But even of more interest, parish-connected Catholics appear willing to look to their pastor and staff for more opportunities to serve others (problem 6, opportunity gap of 12.3). We cannot say whether their parish offers insufficient programs to help the needy or whether parishioners are insufficiently challenged by their leaders currently, but an opportunity gap of attractive proportions exists.

Despite the large opportunity gaps, we must keep in mind that for about half of the problems, a majority of the parishioners still would not think of the parish staff as the appropriate place to turn. In their minds, parish staff should provide certain specialized services, but not try to deal with all of their needs. Friends and community agencies are the places to turn.

In summary, to registered parishioners from our sample, the parish is a place for religious nurture, but it is or could be much more. It has unrealized opportunities related to family life, economic and some personal traumas such as alcohol dependence, and it could challenge its people more to serve others. But for some registered parishioners it remains only a place for religious nurture.

A Profile of Needs for Parish Services: Who Wants What?

Whenever a wider variety of attitudes, opinions or needs are examined, social scientists look for an underlying "structure" in their data. A "structure" will tell whether several individual items will cluster together in a predictable pattern that makes them distinct from another pattern. In this instance, we subjected to a "factor analysis" all of the scores portrayed in the fourth column of Table 1, denoting a willingness to turn to the parish staff for help on various problems.

Responses to 15, 13, 14, 9, and 11 have a single pattern. They form what will be called Factor 1; since many of its items deal with severe personal or family problems, we will call it the "severe stress" factor. Responses to 8, 12, 7, 10, 6 and 5 follow a single pattern, but for the most part it is distinct from Factor 1. It will be called Factor 2; since many of its items concern difficulties in life that are normal to most of us, it will be called the "normal stress" factor. Factor 3, also sufficiently distinct from the others, includes items 2, 3, 1, and 4; we are calling it a "traditional spiritual services" factor in Catholic settings, since it concerns faith, religious education, and religiously-rooted marriage. Labels for factors always obscure some of the meaning; they should be considered merely as shorthand for patterns of thinking among a wide array of items.

Once factors or underlying structures are isolated, social scientists can see whether these relate to other social characteristics. In this case, we are trying to see whether needs for parish services are associated in predictable ways with respondents' demographic characteristics. We examined age, marital status, and ages of children, all of which were also incorporated in a measure of family life-cycle, sex, race, region and locale of residence, education, and income level. The results describe which Catholic parishioners will want what kinds of services from their parishes.

These demographic characteristics were incorporated into a procedure social scientists call "multiple regression analysis" This procedure allows us to examine whether preferences for parish staff services derive from parishioners' demographic characteristics, and when two characteristics overlap, it well help us estimate which is the stronger determinant in the use of parish staff. For example, stage in the family life-cycle may affect willingness to use parish staff for certain problems. Being under 40 and having children under 18 is stressful and could exacerbate serious marital problems. At that stage in the family cycle one might want "severe stress" services. But one might also want "traditional spiritual services" as a central component of child-rearing. Yet, older people whose children are grown may feel a compelling need for traditional spiritual services to give meaning to daily lives left void by grown children. Multiple regression will help decide whether age alone or stage in the family life-cycle contributes more to the need for traditional spiritual services. In another example, we can sort out whether income or education, which often vary together in predictable ways, is a more important factor in approaching the parish for various services.

Multiple regression also allows us to estimate the extent to which the combination of *all* of these characteristics has affected the different desires for services. Since common sense often tells us that people's needs vary by their location in life, it is important to know whether demographic characteristics are very reliable predictors of parishioners' likely use of parish services.

Because the data are complex and confusing to readers not schooled in statistical techniques, we have chosen to summarize our findings in words rather than tables. Tabular information, including Beta coefficients, statistical significance, and proportion of variance explained, is available for readers requesting it. In our verbal description we will speak only of those relationships that meet strict standards of statistical significance (>.001).

 Factor 2 — use of parish staff to deal with problems of moderate stress-seems to be the one most responsive to differences in parishioners' locations in life. (It has the highest proportion of variance explained.) It is most affected by age: older people would turn to the parish staff for services related to normal stress (such as doubts, fears loss of loved one), while younger people would be more likely to turn elsewhere. Beyond the effects of age, higher education levels also are related to seeking help among friends and professionals outside the parish. Black Catholics are more likely than whites to seek help from the parish staff. Women are less likely to approach parish staff for normal stress services, turning especially to friends. Regionally, Midwestern Catholics are more likely to turn to parish staff. No other demographic characteristics predict well to the use of parish services for "normal stress" problems.

Slightly different patterns between social location and likely use of parish staff are found on the "severe stress" factor and the "traditional spiritual services" factor. The relationships, however, are not so pronounced. (Less variance is explained.) Income level, stage in the family cycle, urban-rural locale, sex, and education become more important

than age in understanding the "severe stress" factor. Parishioners with middle or higher incomes are less likely to approach parish staff for help on "severe stress" problems; they would go to professionals outside the parish. Young parishioners with children under 18 would more likely turn to friends or professionals than to parish staff for dealing with financial problems, alcohol or drug problems, unwanted pregnancy, and severe marital problems. Women, rather than men, are more likely to bring their "severe stress problems" to the parish staff; this is just the reverse of the "normal stress" relationship. Parishioners in the smaller towns and large cities, especially of the Midwest, would be more likely to turn to the parish staff. Neither suburbanites nor rural parishioners are very likely to turn to the parish but probably for different reasons: as we will see later, the suburban parishes have some of these programs, but rural parishes seldom have them.

The "traditional spiritual services" factor is least successfully accounted for by the social location of parishioners. Only age and education contribute much to the understanding of which people, more than others, would use parish staff for religious education, faith, and marital preparation. Older people turn to parish staff for traditional spiritual services more than do younger people. Educated people turn less to the parish staff. Perhaps surprisingly, stage in the family life-cycle accounts for virtually none of the variance on this factor. In short, beyond what educational and age differences explain, young people with young children differ little from older people with grown children in their likely use of the parish staff for spiritual succor.

While we have been describing statistically significant relationships of high magnitude, it is very important to note that on none of these three factors have demographic characteristics accounted very well for patterns of preference. It is possible that we have not measured parishioners' likely uses of parish services very well. Our question phrasing may push some people away from the parish staff response, although Table I certainly attests the frequency with which it is selected. Social scientists must always acknowledge that their measures yield less precision than policy planners want and need. We are reminded of Harry Truman's story of the one-armed economist. Frustrated over the economy, HST asked one of his close advisers to find him a one-armed economist. The dutiful aide searched in vain and regretfully reported his results to the President. Truman's eyes twinkled as he told the aide: "The problem with economists is that they come into the Oval Office and say 'on the one hand the economy needs this, but on the other hand it needs that'" The Chief Policy-Maker did not want the other hand. In like manner, the possibility that we have imprecise measures is of little solace to diocesan planners and parish staff who would like greater insights on parishioner needs.

We can conclude this section, however, with two points of summary. The evidence for these points seems to surmount the difficulties of measurement. First, the opportunity gap is substantial for many parish services relating to severe family and personal problems. Secondly, younger Catholics of higher educational and income attainments, who are currently raising their families, have moved away from the parish and its staff as a central point of orientation for many of life's problems. Friends and professionals are the people to whom they would turn, not to parish staff. One can debate whether this is an issue of

availability, staff competence, increasing secularization of Catholics' expectations, or whatever. But one must remember that the factor scores include those who would turn to parish staff if help were available — and the young educated affluent Catholics raising families are still less likely than others to seek parish services. We are talking not only of severe stress and normal stress services but also of traditional spiritual services. Further, our sample is of Catholics who have stayed on the parish rolls and were emotionally sufficiently involved with parish life to fill out our questionnaire; our sample is not of those who have left the parish. We think this is an issue of some import for parish leaders.

The chroniclers of the immigrant church (about 1830 to 1950) have argued that the parish, its priests and religious, was the place where the faithful brought their problems, spiritual, emotional, and material; we perceive that a significant change in expectations developed in the U.S., perhaps as early as post-World War II. The G.I. Bill sent young Catholic veterans, mainly men, to college in record proportions; never before was higher education so affordable and so necessary. But they did not enroll only at local Catholic colleges or at national universities such as Georgetown or Notre Dame. They went to Purdue and Penn State, Wisconsin and Berkeley. And they studied for MBAs at Harvard, Chicago and Stanford. They did not return to an ancestral neighborhood and parish. They helped to organize new parishes in the suburbs where they settled, but the new parish did not have a large staff of priests and religious. Priests and religious were in scarce supply. When problems came, young Catholic parents no longer had a kindly aunt two blocks away with a ready ear, wise head, and warm heart; and they had not grown up knowing the parish personnel. Their milieu, from college to country club, was increasingly secular. At best, the parish was a source of indirect help — good counsel from friends, referral to a professional service provider by the priest or a sister.

American Catholics are now well into the second generation of these changes in parish orientations. The human problems are reproduced, sometimes escalated with each generation; parishioner needs remain. But our data attest that the young educated parents are less attuned to seeking help in the parish, even on traditional spiritual matters. Whether the parish will be seen as the institution that should and can respond remains one of the great challenges to Catholic leaders into the 21st century.

Their response will consider not only the parish as a point of orientation and community for Catholics, but the proliferation of Catholic and other church-based agencies in contemporary life. One should not assume that the failure to turn to the parish is compelling evidence of secularization. For example, if educated young parents are not turning to parish staff for their own continuing religious education, it may be because a local college, retreat house, or lay group has organized a superb religious education series, in which they participate. Or, if they would not consider consulting their parish staff for help with severe marital problems, it may be because a half-dozen Catholic and non-Catholic churches support a family counseling center with excellent pastoral counselors. A local Lutheran hospital may have a better alcoholism treatment center than anything a collection of Catholic parishes could launch. The reality of modern life is that American Catholics are deeply involved in a world of institutions of their own Church and of the

other Christian churches. They minister to these others just as the others minister to them. The parish itself may organize some of these ministries. The parish may recognize new opportunities for the service of both its own members and the extra-parish community. But at times, the parish may defer to the ministries of others who serve its people well. The challenge is for each local parish to discern which course to take.

Priorities for Parish Programs

We also asked parishioners two types of questions about parish priorities. In one, respondents were to assume scarce parish resources and to indicate which, among a list of ten parish programs, should receive more attention. In the other, eight types of parish involvements in the outside community were listed, and parishioners were to indicate which of these should receive more or less parish attention. We used a standard social science procedure called "analysis of variance" to relate parish priorities to the three factors discussed in the previous section. Only statistically significant relationships of moderate or large magnitudes are described here.

The "traditional spiritual services" factor shows little relationship to any of the eighteen parish priorities on our two lists. One could not tell from knowing that a parishioner wanted recourse to parish staff for religious education, for example, that he would place any higher parish priority on evangelization, religious education, or parish involvement in local elections.

On the "severe stress" factor, however, the relationship with parish priorities was strong and consistently predictable. Those who wanted recourse to parish staff for severe economic, alcohol, or marital problems felt the parish should be much more involved in changing unjust social conditions, in community issues such as handling crime and criminals, prevention of alcohol and drug abuse, Medicare, quality private education, business/ government relations, and local elections.

On the "normal stress" factor a handful of relationships stand out but do not form a consistent pattern. People who are more likely to use parish services in normal life-stress situations are more likely to want the parish to place greater emphasis on reclaiming drop-outs and reaching converts, on improving parish liturgies and social life, and on involvement in local elections. One should recall, however, that this factor was most responsive to the age of respondents and, therefore, it reflects many traditional concerns of Catholics less uprooted by the social changes of recent decades.

Even though social characteristics did not predict with much precision to the range of services one sought from parish staff, the range of services one seeks — as reflected in the factors — is often quite consistent with the priorities Catholic parishioners set for their parishes.

Such generalizations, however, are based on close examination of parishioners in a restricted number of representative parishes. The number of parishes involved, 36, yields

insightful data for *parishioners*, but is less reliable for generalizations about *parishes*. Since we now want to examine the programs, ministries, and activities that U.S. parishes actually offer, we turn to the sample that permits greater generalizability, the 1099 parishes.

An Analysis of Parish Programs

Every parish offers Sunday Mass or its equivalent. Mass is the central expression of identity and common purpose for the parish. Beyond Mass, widely varied constellations of programs contribute to parish character. Table 2 shows the proportion of parishes offering each of a wide variety of programs.

TABLE 2
ORGANIZED PROGRAMS IN 1099 US. CATHOLIC PARISHES

Program, Activity	% of Parishes Having Program
Religious Education, Grade School Level	93%
Religious Education, High School Level	84
Parish Council	76
Liturgy Planning Group	72
Programs for Care of Sick	71
Adult Religious Education Programs	63
Youth Ministry Programs	62
Ministry to the Aged	59
Social Service Programs (meeting individual needs)	52
Music (e.g., Choir) and Cultural Activities	49
Marriage/Family Development Programs	48
Prayer/Reflection Small Groups	46
Parish Grade School	45
Ministry Training Programs	37
Parish Planning Process	34

Catechumenate (RCIA)	32
Evangelization Programs	32
Parish Renewal Programs	29
Parish Leadership Training Programs	27
Charismatic Renewal	23
Ministry to Divorced/Separated	20
Social Action Programs (action for change)	20
Use Parish Consultant	19

Table 2 is assembled from the "parish activities" section of the questionnaire completed by the pastor or parish administrator from each of the 1099 parishes. In addition to more extensive questions about staff size, parish grade school, religious education, parish council, and use of parish consultants, the questionnaire offered a list of numerous programs and asked "For which of the following is there a *formally organized program* to which some staff time is devoted?" (underscore in original questionnaire). We feel this measure does reasonably well in capturing the existence of programs that are stable features of a parish, rather than sporadic "catch-as-can" activities. While pastors often think of themselves as being in a different category than "staff" we found that they typically do not limit the term "staff" to paid personnel. Rather, when a volunteer is formally responsible for an activity and interacts regularly with the pastor and other parish leaders, and when the activity has structure and longevity, its leader comes to be viewed as "staff" albeit unpaid. This is the case particularly in the parishes that have few or no paid personnel beyond the pastor. In itself this is an important finding, based on both our pretests and the intensive 36-parish study. We feel reasonably confident, then, that the pastor in the 1099-parish sample is responding to the "organized program" language of the question; if he has an organized program he would not hesitate to report it, even if it is not led by a paid staffer. Programs are shown, not in their order on the questionnaire, but in the declining proportion of parishes that currently have them.

Beyond Mass, the core of organized parish activity nationwide involves religious education, liturgical planning, parish governance, and specialized ministries to the sick, youth, and the elderly. About half of the parishes have one or more of the following: social service programs, music and cultural activities, marriage and family programs, and/or a grade school. Programs to train parishioners for ministry and service, reach out and receive new members, and plan and renew the parish are found in about a third of the parishes, depending on the program. Again depending on the program, about one fifth of the parishes have charismatic activities, offer specialized ministries to the divorced or separated, engage in social action programs, or call in professional consultants.

Patterns of Parish Programs

One should not assume that parishes similar in some aspects will engage in the same sets of activities. Those who have an organized ministry to the elderly may be different from those who are involved in social action, and those who have schools may be different from those who organize an adult catechumenate. Because the pattern of programs differs considerably from parish to parish, we must once again use a measurement procedure to uncover a "structure" that may be hard to see in the data.

We have analyzed the data in Table 2 through procedures social scientists call "cluster analysis" and "discriminant function analysis" These procedures identify patterns of activities that typically occur together. There are also some programs that one group of parishes has but another group does not have. The procedures "discriminate" between the groups. Using these procedures, there is no single "right" answer about the types of parishes that exist. The analyst must arrange the data into many patterns, compare these with existing knowledge and informed intuition, subject the patterns to critics' insights, and refashion the patterns until a reasonable number of types emerge that are faithful to an underlying structure in the data. Whenever typologies are developed, both a science and an art is involved.

But there is always an objective that drives the enterprise: to reduce a baffling array of information into a few useful categories. The types will lead us to understand parishes better, or they may point to strengths and weaknesses in existing parish programs. The ideal — for both social scientists and diocesan planners — would be to relate types of parish programs to parish social characteristics with such a high degree of predictability that, if we knew either, we could predict the other. For example, if we knew that a parish offered a wide range of programs including a ministry to the divorced, it would be a large, suburban, highly educated, and Italian parish. Or if a parish were in a sparsely-Catholic town in the Rockies, we could predict that it offered evangelism programs and charismatic groups.

We have not reached that ideal. One of the reasons is that, social measurement is never so precise, and the measures we have fashioned are far from perfect. The second and more important reason is that parishes are seldom straitjacketed by their social characteristics. They have histories. Their histories are of leaders who sometimes rise above their social environments to leave a legacy of responsiveness to peoples' needs. Or, their histories are of missed opportunities. And so it will be with our data. We will find neat patterns of programs that will allow us to type parishes. But we will not be able to uncover tight explanations for these patterns — other than a mixture of social environment and unique leadership. Now to unfold that story.

After many trials involving cluster analysis and discriminant function analysis, we settled on the patterns portrayed in Figure 1. These patterns offer a picture of parish complexity, as defined both by the range of programs a parish offers and the likelihood that it has a school. Methodologically, these patterns are very attractive because they "fit"

the 1099 parishes quite well: (1) only about 17% of the parishes lacked sufficient data or consistency in patterns to fit them within one or another type; (2) the pattern of activities required to fit a parish into one type and exclude it from another successfully "predicted" the placement of 92% of the Type 1 parishes, 90% of Type 2, 91% of Type 3, and 93% of Type 4; and (3) when a prediction was inaccurate, it almost always placed the parish into the type with the next lowest or highest complexity. This means that we can be quite confident a parish classified within one type has nearly all of its programs in common with other members of that type. Figure 1 uses a double asterisk to depict a "loading" of greater than .75 on the type and a single asterisk to depict a "loading" of greater than .50. A high "loading" means that, whatever set of activities the parishes within the type have in common, this particular activity is part of the central core of the activities. The figure also shows the proportion of parishes within the type who have a school. Finally, it gives the number of parishes classified within each type, and its percentage of the total number of parishes.

The Type 1 or "simple" Catholic parish represents 18% of our U.S. parish sample. It offers little more than Mass and religious education for the young. Some have characterized it as basically a sacramental service organization. Nevertheless, 28% of the simple parishes have a school. These parishes do offer other programs, but not in such characteristic abundance that they can be called complex parishes.

The Type 2 or "moderately complex" parish is the most common one in our sample, characterizing 28% of the national sample. In addition to sacramental services and education for the young, this type of parish is very likely to offer youth ministry and ministry to the sick. It is also quite likely to have organizations responsible for liturgical planning, music, adult education, ministry to the elderly, and social services to help the needy. 38% of the moderately complex parishes also have a school.

Both Types 3 and 4 are quite complex, but the higher likelihood of a school in the latter makes it even more complex organizationally than the former. The Type 3 "complex" pattern characterizes 19% of our national sample. A very wide range of programs is available, including religious education at all levels, liturgical planning, ministry to the sick, youth ministry, programs for marriage and family development, and ministry training. But other programs such as music, social service, ministry to the elderly, prayer groups, evangelization, catechumenate, and ministry to the divorced and separated are found with considerable frequency. The proportion of complex parishes having schools is above the national average; for Type 3 parishes, it is 46%.

FIGURE 1
PARISH COMPLEXITY, BASED ON CLUSTERS
OF ACTIVITIES WITHIN 1099 US. PARISHES (a)

	Simple	Moderately Complex	Complex	Very Complex

Program, Activity	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Mass	**(b)	**	**	**
Religious Educ. - Grade School	**	**	**	**
Religious Educ. - High School	**	**	**	**
Ministry to Sick	-	**	**	**
Youth Ministry	-	**	**	**
Liturgy Planning	-	*(c)	**	**
Religious Educ. - Adult	-	*	**	**
Ministry to Elderly	-	*	*	**
Music and Culture	-	*	*	*
Social Service	-	*	*	*
Marriage/Family Development	-	-	**	*
Ministry Training	-	-	**	*
Prayer Groups	-	-	*	**
Evangelization	-	-	*	*
RCIA (Catechumenate)	-	-	*	*
Parish Renewal	-	-	-	*
Ministry to Divorced/Separated	-	-	*	-
Charismatic Renewal	-	-	-	*
Social Action	-	-	-	*
% with School	28%	38%	46%	59%
(Number of parishes in type)	(202)	(305)	(205)	(198)
(Percent of parishes in type)	(18%)	(28%)	(19%)	(18%)

(a) *A total of 910 parishes (83%) met the classification requirements; 189 (17%) lacked discriminating information or consistency in pattern.*
(b) *The double asterisk denotes an activity that loads at .75 or better with the program cluster and is very central to it.*
(c) *The single asterisk denotes an activity that loads at .50 or better with the program cluster and is quite central to it.*

Type 4 parishes are "very complex" have slightly different configurations of programs than Type 3 and are quite likely to have a school — 59%. They have nearly all the programs of Type 3 but place less emphasis on marriage and family development, ministry to the divorced and separated, and ministry training. Yet they are more likely to have prayer groups, ministry to the elderly, parish renewal programs, charismatic renewal, and social action. 18% of the parishes follow the Type 4 pattern of complexity.

The success of our typology of parish programs does not mean that there are no other definitive typologies of American parishes. With our data, however, no other typology yielded such consistently high predictions for classification of parishes, or grouped them together in sufficient numbers so that they described a sizable proportion of the U.S. parishes.

Once we know the kinds of program clusters that parishes offer, we need to see whether a set of social characteristics predicts well the presence or absence of program clusters. To do so, we once again employ multiple regression analysis; we also used another form of discriminant function analysis. For the former, we treated the four types as ascending levels of complexity on a continuous scale. For the latter we treated each type as a discrete entity. In each approach, we examined several properties of the parish: region, urban-rural locale, number of people in the parish, proportion of the people in the area served by the parish who are Catholic, the predominant ethnicity of the parish, the estimated median education and income of its parishioners, the presence or absence of a school, the presence or absence of a parish council, and the presence of diocesan priests or priests who are members of a religious community. The two methods of analysis serve different purposes but provide reinforcing evidence about the effects of parish social characteristics on the programmatic complexity of the parish. Again, we will use prose rather than tabular information to describe statistically significant findings. Tabular data are available for those who request them.

As suspected the presence of a parish school, the size of the parish, and its urban, suburban, town, or rural location are the principal characteristics that account for a complex range of parish programs. Some have said that parish schools are like a second set of organizations, mobilizing additional groups of parishioners. Others have said that it is the school that gives vitality to other parish organizations. Still others have countered that schools are a drain on parish resources that could have been used to mobilize other programs. Finally, some say a parish cannot even have a school unless the parish reaches a certain size. We cannot assess all of these arguments. Our data clearly show, however, that larger parishes offer a wider range of programs and staff; among these programs is a school. The larger parishes are typically located in cities and suburbs and are Type 3 and 4 parishes, that is, complex. More of the moderately complex and simple parishes are found in the town and rural areas respectively, and there are fewer schools there.

Other characteristics such as predominant ethnicity, education, income, region, or presence of religious clergy rather than diocesan clergy may have an impact *on individual programs* - such as Irish and German parishes having a high likelihood of a school — but contribute little of statistical significance to the complexity in parish programs. The presence of a parish council is associated with more complex program structures, but that is to be expected. Parishes with many programs have more need for planning and review, i.e., governance. We cannot say whether the presence of a parish council leads to more complexity in programs.

Even though social and structural characteristics such as school, size, location, and governance do contribute to the complexity of the parish's programs, they tell only a small part of the tale of the parish. (In the language of social science, they explain only a modest part of the variance in complexity.) We are led to conclude that environment counts, but the unique history of a people and its leaders counts even more. Current parish patterns derive partly from the kinds of people served in a specific location, but they derive even

more from the initiatives taken by leaders in the past. A pastor, a group of parishioners, a handful of sisters or brothers — any one may have contributed to a far different profile for a parish than its present social characteristics may dictate. Those interactions between social needs and leadership action are the final topic of this report, but before turning to it we will divert to some particularly significant social differences, not on patterns of programs but on individual activities.

Significant Differences in Individual Programs

Beyond the differences noted between some social characteristics and parish complexity, there are also important differences in the likelihood that a parish will have a specific program. These are associated with some of the same social and structural factors. Only the most prominent differences will be mentioned here.

Although "religious education for myself" was an item for which the overwhelming proportion of adult Catholics in our 36-parish sample would turn to their parishes (84.% in Table 1), we suspect that many Catholics must receive their "religious education" during the Mass itself, outside the parish, or not at all. Table 2 noted that only 62% of the parishes offer adult religious education programs. The opportunities for adult religious education are greatest along the middle and southern Atlantic seaboard and the Mountain states where 75 and 70 percent of the parishes, respectively, offer such programs. General population surveys tell us that these are also states where Catholics constitute smaller proportions of the population. In states where Catholics are more numerous, the Northeast and Midwest, only 59 and 62% of the parishes, respectively, offer adult education programs. Availability is highest in the suburban parishes (75%) and lowest in the rural parishes (45%). Among the parishes with recognizable ethnic concentrations, 86% of the Black parishes, 71% of the Hispanic parishes, and 69% of the Irish parishes lead with the availability of adult religious education programs. (Black parishes are heavily concentrated in cities. Hispanic parishes are located in the cities of the East but also the town and rural areas of the West. Predominantly Irish parishes are found everywhere.) The figure for adult education programs trails down to 52% of the Polish parishes and 44% of the Eastern European parishes. (Polish parishes are more likely to be urban and suburban, while Eastern European parishes are found more often in towns of less than 50,000 and rural areas.)

Table 2 noted that marriage and family development programs were found in 48% of the parishes, but organized ministries to the divorced and separated are available in only 20% of the parishes. According to Table 1, over three-fourths of the 2667 parishioners in our 36-parish sample would turn to the parish for marital counseling and marital renewal. For severe marital problems, however, we noted a large "opportunity gap" (20.4%). We suspect that the sizable differences between the two types of programs, noted in both the parish data and the parishioner data, attest an unmet need. As our earlier reports have noted, divorce and separation have directly touched nearly one-fourth of all ever-married Catholics. There are very large differences in parish responses to the need. Suburban parishes lead with the availability of marriage and family programs (60%) and ministry to

the divorced and separated (33%). But availability drops quickly to 49% and 20%, respectively, in the large cities, 43% and 14% in the towns, and 36% and 11% in the rural areas.

Examining recognizably ethnic parishes, we find that 59% of the Italian parishes offer marriage and family programs and 31% provide ministries to the divorced and separated. (Italian parishes are now most likely to be found in the suburbs, although substantial numbers of Italian parishes are in the cities and towns.) Most other recognizably ethnic parishes are in the 30 to 40 percent range for marriage and family development programs and are well below 20% for ministry to the separated and divorced; 38% of the Black parishes offer the former, but only 10% provide the latter. While it may be true that Catholics who are closer to their ethnic roots have experienced less divorce, and the mean age in their parishes is older, one may wonder whether the need for help with severe marital problems is this low within their parishes.

Social service and social action programs also provide interesting contrasts. The former tend to address the needs of individual victims. The latter seek to transform what are perceived as unjust social systems. Social service programs have generally been more acceptable in American church settings than have social action programs. (The case could be made, however, that the neighborhood ethnic society or "civic" organization was directed at structural prejudices that foreclosed opportunity for members of that ethnic group. And it was certainly a staple during the "immigrant church" period.) Nowadays, organized social service programs are most likely to be found in the parishes along the middle and southern Eastern seaboard (77%), the suburbs (65%) and cities (60%), and in the Black (79%) and Irish (62%) parishes. Social service programs are least likely to be found in the Mountain states (44%) and Midwestern (47%) parishes, the rural areas (32%), and Eastern European (38%), German (43%), and Polish parishes (44%). (The recognizably German parishes are disproportionately located in the rural areas and towns of the Midwest and Mountain states.)

Social action program figures run quite parallel but trail social service programs by 20 to 40 percentage points. In the cities and suburbs, 29 and 27 percent of the parishes offer a social action program; in the towns and rural parishes, the figure drops to 11%. Black parishes are far and away most likely to have social action programs (55%); Hispanic (27%) and Irish (23%) parishes follow. Those recognizably ethnic parishes least likely to offer social action programs are the East European (6%), German (13%), and French (14%). (French parishes are found especially in the towns and rural areas of the Northeast and Southern Louisiana.)

Evangelization and programs for the adult catechumenate are also tilted heavily to the lower Atlantic seaboard (49% evangelization, 51% catechumenate). The former is most likely to be found in city (41%) and suburban (39%) parishes, while the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) or similar programs for the catechumenate are found especially in the suburbs (45%). Generally, the smaller the proportion of Catholics in an area, the greater the use of RCIA — but this is limited to the more urban areas. Far less is

happening programmatically with evangelization and the adult catechumenate in the small towns and rural areas. Black parishes lead in both programs with 66%; Hispanics are next with 47% for both; Irish parishes show 36% for evangelization and 34% for RCIA. The figures for other ethnic parishes trail off, quickly for evangelization, more slowly for RCIA.

For those who have a less public and more meditative orientation to parish life, it is instructive to look at the figures on devotional and prayer groups. Such groups are most likely to be found in the Mountain (56%) and middle and southern Atlantic seaboard parishes (55%), and in the suburban churches (63%). Small group prayer sponsored by the parish is minimal in the rural parishes. Among recognizably ethnic parishes, it is most common among the Italians (57%), Hispanics (54%), and Irish (53%), and least prevalent in the parishes of East Europeans (24%), French (29%), and Poles (37%). These parish data suggest that some of the ethnic groups associated with *private* devotional practices are less likely to mobilize *public parish groups* for devotional exercises.

Programs, Parish Vitality and the Support of the People

For a variety of historical and social reasons, parishes develop different configurations of programs. Apart from age, education, family life-cycle, and race, it did not appear that *parishioners'* needs and expectations differed much — although there were some differences in expectations for "severe stress" "normal stress" and "traditional spiritual" services. Rather, it was found that the individual *parishes* — due to their location, their size and resource base, or their history of leadership — offered different patterns of programs. In part, these patterns may develop because the people participate in and support some programs and ignore others.

We asked the pastor or parish administrator of the 1099-parish sample to list the "three activities of the parish (that) are most well attended by parishioners" Clearly the Sunday Mass predominated and was almost always listed as the most well-attended. Beyond that, the results are quite interesting: 60% of the parishes listed bingo; 21% listed adult religious education; 20% listed the religious education of children; 17% listed parish school activities or sports; 12% listed lenten services or devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary; 10% listed parish social or fraternal organizations (e.g., Knights of Columbus). Other activities received well below 10% of the mentions.

Bingo is a curious phenomenon among Catholics. In some ways, it is like meal-site for the elderly; it is a night out, away from the home. But with bingo, any or all family members, including the extended family, may go. One can socialize with friends. Grandparents take their grandchildren. The night out costs less than the movies or other entertainment. Money for parish projects can be raised. A small-stakes game of chance is offered among friends in a safe atmosphere. And bingo is a lay enterprise, usually organized and run by the laity. Bingo *as a social phenomenon* has a staying power among

many parishioners that has outlasted the concern expressed by many bishops, pastors, and fellow parishioners about bingo *as part of the regular parish budget and stewardship program.*

Large attendance at events, however, is not necessarily a major source of vitality. We also asked the 1099 parish respondents to list "What three activities of the parish best exemplify its vitality?" Here the list is longer, but again is topped by the Sunday Mass. Others include: bingo (29%), children's religious education (25%), parish school activities and sports (24%), adult religious education (20%), social and fraternal organizations (18%), the parish council and various committees for lay governance (11%), parish social services (10%), parish social justice activities (8%), liturgical preparation (7%), and youth ministry (7%). Many other activities were listed but their percentage of total mentions trailed off.

Again one can see the predominance of social activities as a vitalizing force in the parish. There are, however, increased mentions of the programs that serve parishioners' special needs, direct parishioners to the needs of others, or involve parishioners in parish governance.

When we compare the list of vital activities with the four types of parishes discussed earlier, we find that bingo is mentioned disproportionately as a source of vitality in the Type 2 (moderately complex) and Type 3 (complex) parishes, but it also receives mentions even in the most complex parishes. Devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, altar society and sodalities are especially important sources of vitality for the Type I (simple) parishes. Parish renewal programs are of considerable significance in the Type 3 (complex) and Type 4 (very complex) parishes. The parish council and its committee structures are especially important to the vitality of the Type 4 (very complex) parishes. Social activities and fraternal organizations are frequently mentioned by all four types of parishes, but nowhere with the frequency of bingo.

Finally, we asked the 1099 parish respondents "What factors have contributed to the development of these vital elements of your parish?" We coded up to five factors per parish. In the pastor or parish administrator's perceptions, clearly the involvement and support of the people and good leadership are the essential ingredients. They appear to be the defining characteristics of vitality. The mentions, as coded, include: high involvement of the laity (20%), the spirit and pride in *this* parish community (19%), the quality of staff (19%), an appropriate response to people's needs (18%), lay involvement in parish governance and the parish council (15%), the support of the people (14%), and the vision of leadership (13%). Other factors such as the commitment of the clergy, the quality of the parish school, the religious life of families, and diocesan leadership receive considerable mentions, but they are each well below 10%.

It would appear from these responses that pastors are looking for a good fit between parishioners and their leadership to bring about parish vitality. Pastors, in the contemporary parish, place a lot of emphasis on what lay persons are willing to do. Yet

the Rev. Philip Murnion in his studies of parishes for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1977-80), found that the leadership of the pastor was still the essential factor in the life of the parish. Our next report will show that while the pastor may look to the people, he still retains considerable control over the organizational life of the parish. Furthermore, few parish leaders — paid staff or volunteers — feel that much will get accomplished by the laity unless "it has Father's blessing" That delicate interplay among the key parish actors will be the subject of Report 9.

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PREVIOUS REPORTS

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1820s to the 1980s

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