

THE ELEMENTS OF A DIOCESAN PARISH DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

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This paper proposes the creation of a diocesan system devoted to the development and revitalization of parish churches:

- As communities of faith
- As organizations
- In relation to the dynamics of their own internal life and the external forces and trends of the culture, economy and wider church, and
- In relation to God who has called us into being and given us identity and purpose

There are four elements being suggested for every diocese.

1. A formal, disciplined way of monitoring parishes and taking action for their faithfulness and health.
2. A clear sense of direction about parish development on the part of diocesan leaders.
3. A strategy that effectively navigates the diocese in that direction.
4. Resources that support the strategy.

The purpose here is to suggest categories and lines of thought rather than to be prescriptive about particular situations. Basic principles always need to be adapted for the local context.

I will often be using the terms parish, congregation, and church in an interchangeable manner. My own preference is to use the term parish because:

1. It is part of our tradition.
2. It emphasizes the value of each local church community having a relationship with communities outside the church. Those communities may be geographical or special interest communities such as the arts community or communities of compassion and justice.
3. It is truer to the reality that many parishes have within them two or more congregations with different spiritualities.

It may be useful for more dioceses to shift to using parishes for all its communities of faith. Categories beyond that might rise out of agreements between the diocese and the parish about its strategy for development.

I. Monitor Parishes and Intervene for Faithful and Healthy Life

The single most important thing a diocese can do to enable the development and revitalization of its parishes is to have a group gather on a regular and frequent basis to review the state of diocesan parishes. Diocesan leaders often talk about the need for an "early warning system", a way to help congregations before problems are overwhelming. An essential part of the "early warning system" is a monitoring team that attends to congregations in all stages of the life cycle.

After a parish is in deep trouble we speak about the signs that we saw in the years before the decline. Usually it isn't the case that we didn't see the signs; it's that we didn't take the time or have the setting in which to reflect and develop an approach.

A monitoring team is not just about “early warnings” but also about the development of parishes in all stages of development.

A. Make Up of a Diocesan Parish Development Team — Four to six people who are:

- In contact with a significant number of parishes each month
- Have comprehensive training in parish development (or will arrange to get it)
- Are willing to participate in all sessions

This group needs to include all active bishops in the diocese. Appoint the person with the best facilitation skills to serve as facilitator. In a large diocese this may be a staff group, in small dioceses it may include other leaders.

B. Frequency of Meetings — Meet at least monthly; in a larger diocese you might meet every other week for two to three hours. Have one full-day meeting each year to reflect on the diocese’s overall approach to congregational development. Bring in outside resource people, diocesan parish development consultants and others to broaden the discussion.

C. Process of Team Meetings

1. Design the meeting. The facilitator gathers information from participants on parishes/regions for work; check with the bishop to set priorities.
2. Begin the meeting with a list on newsprint of areas to cover; invite additions, be clear about time use (some items may need a few minutes of discussion to identify what is needed or follow-up action; other items may require half the meeting time to work through an issue). It helps if items are stated as objectives so the outcome to be produced at this meeting is clear (e.g. develop a strategy for intervention with St. Paul’s, identify what information we need for further work with St. Mary’s, etc.)
3. Move through the meeting objectives. The facilitator needs to record brainstorming and decisions, encourage group skills and invite closure on items. The bishop must serve as a team focuser by being willing to listen respectfully and then make decisions on interventions or the process.
4. Have a newsprint sheet that states follow-through action and who is responsible.

D. Goals of the Team

1. Monitor the life and ministry of parishes and area ministries in terms of diocesan parish development strategy and principles.
2. Plan interventions that encourage and facilitate development and revitalization. Generally seek ways to build long-term capacity for parish self-reflection and development. Be as collaborative as the commitment and competence of leaders allows
3. Build the diocese’s parish development system.

E. Contemplation - Intercession - Action

The team’s work can only be enhanced if it is grounded in prayer.

The center of that prayer life is the Prayer Book’s *Threefold Rule of Prayer* – Eucharist, Daily Office and Personal Devotions. Much of it will be as individuals in various parish churches, some might be engaged as a community.

In addition to that central rhythm of Anglican spirituality there might also be a special form of devotion the group engages.

1. Contemplation - The monitoring task can be seen as a contemplative process. It is your attempt to see the situation as it is, on its own terms; and to see it in its potential, a transformed reality, a fuller expression of unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity; a participation in God's Holy City.

The team might include times of silence, stillness and reflection in its work.

2. Intercession - At the end of each team meeting you might take some time to intercess for the people, congregations, and circumstances you have discussed. Hold them on your heart, before God, in trust of God's goodness.
3. Action - Specific interventions are likely to be influenced and shaped by the team's contemplation and intercession. Members of the team might offer their work and the life of each congregation and area ministry at the Offertory of the next diocesan staff Eucharist. Offer it all with the bread and wine to be taken, blessed, broken and used.

II. A Sense of Direction

Three aspects of having an integrated, sharp sense of direction are:

- A clear understanding of the task of parish development
- A vision of the faithful and healthy parish
- A focus on parish development as the primary task of the diocese.

A. A Clear Understanding of the Task of Parish Development

I hear diocesan leaders describe the work of parish development in various ways, all of which seem to emphasize two aspects of the parish:

1. As a community of faith with a unique identity, purpose and dynamics.
2. As an organization that can be understood, assessed and developed using the knowledge and methods of organization development and management

And a need:

3. Alignment - there needs to be an adequate "fit" among the various aspects /elements of congregational life. For example, a congregation is usually more able to focus on mission of it isn't being dragged down by a lack of "fit" between its vision for life and ministry and its income and expenses.

B. A Vision of the Faithful and Healthy Parish

A statement of what constitutes a faithful and healthy parish can serve to educate, be part of the dialogue between parish and diocese and help focus diocesan resources. I think it's most effective if the vision statement is drafted by the bishop, in consultation with others, rather than the work of a committee.

Three types of statements can be used in clarifying the vision:

1. Descriptions that speak to the issues of faithfulness and health in the parish as a community, as an organization and the need for alignment. (See Attachment A for examples.)
2. Frameworks that stress the core elements of a parish's life (see Attachment B for three examples)
3. An image of the parish's primary task (see Attachment C - Renewal-Apostolate Cycle)

C. A Focus on the Primary Task of a Diocese

Parish development needs to be seen as the primary task of a diocese. My understanding is that there are three important, central tasks of a diocese:

1. Parish development by actively nurturing faithful and healthy eucharistic communities.
2. Engaging the society and culture of the geographic region that makes up the diocese. Issues of justice, compassion and evangelization that are regional in nature require the attention of a regional body, the diocese, Much of this engagement can be done in collaboration with congregations and other denominations.
3. Participation in the wider church by its connection with other dioceses, the national church, the Anglican Communion and ecumenical bodies.

All three of these ministries deserve our attention. Together they can release an exciting energy and enhance each other.

All the work of the diocese is within the context of the Church's nature and purpose. Each is about being a local manifestation of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church with its mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other through Christ.

A diocese is properly involved in carrying out many functions and tasks ranging from ministry development, to search processes, to financial management and development. Clarification regarding our primary task can help to integrate and give a sense of unity to our work.

III. A Diocesan Strategy for Acting on the Task of Parish Development

The strategic task is to navigate the diocese in a direction:

- That sees parish development as the primary task of the diocese and
- That enables vital communities of faith with an effective organizational life in which there is an alignment among vision/goals, structures and processes, resources, the commitment and competence of leaders and members, the organizational culture, and the external forces that impact the congregation.

Navigating involves:

- A. Establishing strategic goals** (goals that are toward the parish's long term health, or are systemic, or address a crisis that is a serious threat) that-
 1. Build on existing diocesan strengths;
 2. Cope with its weaknesses;
 3. Fill in the blanks of the elements needed in a diocesan congregational development system; and

4. Seeks the opportunities and copes with the threats that come from external cultural, political, economic and national church forces and trends.

It is in setting strategic goals that decisions are made to establish new parishes in one region, a cluster in another to revitalize a declining congregation in the city, and to take action toward a working congregational development system.

My own experience suggests that our efforts at parish development are most faithful, effective and efficient when:

- We select priests who are capable of providing good leadership and pastoral oversight in the particular situation (see Attachment F)
- Priests and lay leaders are trained for congregational development
- There is a strategy for the particular congregation that is "owned" by the priest, lay leaders and the bishop's office (as seen in well done three party agreements/congregational development agreements - see Attachment D)
- The bishop's office and other diocesan authorities provide leadership, vision, resources and stable support.

B. Having structures, processes and leadership that monitors and initiates movement. This includes creating a climate of diocesan support for development. The bishop and other leaders need to encourage the parish leaders who have given themselves to this ministry.

The primary structure that enables parish development is the monitoring team discussed in Section I. There are also other structures and processes that have proven useful.

1. **Three Party Agreements** worked out among congregations, priest and diocese for limited periods to focus everyone's energy and resources in an approach for the development or revitalization of a particular parish (See Attachment D for a model). Agreements include a statement of vision/broad direction, some specific objectives to accomplish that move in the direction of that vision and brief statements of what each party will do to move toward the vision (e.g. specific steps and/or action to build overall capacity and/or behavior changes). All parishes that receive any diocesan financial assistance would have an agreement. Every parish would be invited to work out an agreement. From the diocese's position, agreements are an "adult" way to bring diocesan parish development hopes and expectations into a particular situation. Agreements are a method that allow for honesty about the present capacity, commitment, and competence of the parish. Agreements build maturity over time and avoid paternalistic or bureaucratic methods. The diocese plays a critical role by insisting on long-term, systemic, proven approaches as part of the agreement. The parish may need the assistance of a consultant to effectively enter into the process of creating an agreement. Priests who have comprehensive church development training will help to produce a more integrated result. The diocesan role is best done by a person or limited number of people, with the bishop's direct involvement. The task is not usually well done by a committee or a department of missions.
2. **A Process of Mission Study, Reflection and Planning** has been used by a Lutheran Synod with good results. The process is used to: establish a vision for mission, determine the parish's "service area" (geographical or special focus), evaluate the

parish's mission ability, develop plans, and strengthen the relationship between the parish and bishop.

The process takes three to six months and involves:

- Parish leaders writing a paper based on their assessment of the life and ministry of the congregation in response to the bishop's statement of vision for a congregation. Share the paper with the bishop.
- The bishop writing a response to be shared with congregational leaders by the bishop or the bishop's representative. This is an opportunity for the bishop specifically to discuss congregation direction and capacity with its leaders.
- At a meeting that includes the bishop (or a representative) and congregational leaders discussing the bishop's response and exploring possibilities for the congregation's service area.
- The congregation arranging for a leadership retreat with outside assistance to make plans for the parish's development and steps to take in regard to its service area.
- Having a follow-up meeting with the bishop (or representative) and the congregational leaders to review progress on the plan.

3. **A Diocesan Leader with a Call for Enabling Parish Development.** Dioceses that make significant breakthroughs in their efforts, seem to have a person in a position of diocesan leadership (usually a bishop or staff person); who has a sense of "driveness" about parish development, the authority to move things along, and good judgment about strategy and resources.

C. Building the overall capacity of the diocese for parish development.

Building capacity includes

1. Developing and maintaining a critical mass of clergy and lay leaders with in-depth training in parish development so they might serve the whole diocese by joining in strategy formation, becoming trainers and consultants, and shape congregations that can serve as models. Diocesan leaders will enable a more integrated, focused effort if they join in being trained.
2. Having some successes. Give enough attention and resources and time to a few situations that have the potential for successful development.
3. Gathering the financial resources needed to fully act on your goals.

D. Creating diocesan principles for parish development that can help provide for stability and flexibility by stating core values and guidelines. Principles might include:

- We will seek to revitalize and develop parishes of all sizes. A full Christian life is possible in a parish of any size.
- Parishes may take many forms — the parish church (with staff, buildings, and possibly several congregations with different styles); house churches; autonomous congregations using the space of a parish, etc.
- We will use the term "parish" to emphasize the value of a church's relationship with some community beyond itself whether geographical or special interest and in recognition of our tradition.

- We will encourage regional strategies and structures. Cluster and team ministries will be established as appropriate. Local ordinations of deacons and priests will be considered as part of a total strategy for development.
- We will open new parishes.
- We will encourage the development of congregational styles and cultures that serve a variety of people while staying grounded in the essentials of Anglican tradition.
- We will emphasize the ministry of all people, resourcing congregations to equip people for ministry in the work place, civic life and with family and friends.
- We will focus our attention on helping declining parishes be clear what they would need to do to revitalize their life and ministry rather than targeting congregations for closing. We want small or troubled parishes to know that their willingness to collaborate with diocesan leaders will be for their well being, not a threat to their existence. (Note: One Lutheran bishop responds to the sense of threat by saying "We don't want your buildings; buildings are a headache; we want your faithful ministry").
- We will enable congregations to increase their inclusiveness, value diversity and engage in ministries of compassion and justice.
- We will work with congregational and regional leaders in collaborative processes for parish development. We want to match our level of collaborative decision making with the level of competence and commitment for development among local leaders.
- We will offer resources to congregations in the form of leadership training for congregational development, third part help, and loans and grants for making transitions.
- We will work to empower all congregations. This will include action directed at the long-term health and capacity of congregations and the monitoring of our diocesan system to remove policies and practices that restrict or undermine self-responsibility and initiative.
- We will search for the best qualified clergy leadership for each parish and provide support that enhances their ability for leading congregational life and development.

E. Revitalizing Financially Aided Parishes/Missions

The congregations that have been traditionally thought of as "assisted parishes" or "missions" need to be put in a broader context that fits any congregation receiving a diocesan grant or loan. This might include an understanding that:

1. The funding is to assist in a transition. The transition may take a few months or a few years but it is a transition not a permanent category.
2. There is a three party agreement (see III, B1 above and Attachment D).

In addition to understandings that fit all parishes receiving loans and grants, there is usually a need for additional mentoring, resourcing and support systems (see Attachment E for an example)

F. Relating the Selection of Ordained Leadership, Emerging Patterns of Ministry and Parish Development

Diocesan leaders are increasingly confronted with the need for various staffing structures to fit particular situations (clusters, teams, full time rectors, etc.). There is a need to take this into account in the process of selecting candidates for ordained ministry and in regard to the continued education of clergy (see Attachment F for some ideas).

IV. Resources

Diocesan leaders can encourage the use of resources by advertising, informal suggestions, and as part of an intervention. Establish a norm that a healthy congregation takes responsibility for resourcing itself. Take the initiative by identifying congregations that are ready for development and leaders that could benefit from training.

There are three types of resources needed:

- Training in church development leadership
- Third party assistance
- Financial grants and loans

A. Training in Church Development Leadership

1. In-depth training for a critical mass of parish and diocesan leaders. This includes a minimum of 110 workshop hours, reading in the field and supervised application. This group can form the needed core of strategists, third party facilitators, local trainers, and local success stories. Currently such training is available from the Church Development Institute (national program and in several dioceses. Each is an integrated core program in church development (see Attachment G for an outline of needed training).
2. A broad-based training effort in the diocese to equip parish leaders. This needs to be grounded in the core models and methods of whichever in-depth program the diocese uses. Part of any successful parish/organization development effort is establishing "common language" i.e. a common base of conceptual models and methods.

Two approaches to consider in providing broad-based training are:

- a. A series of separate workshops that equip teams from congregations in how to understand, assess and plan for parish life, ministry and development, evangelism, nurturing the spirituality of the congregation and individuals, group facilitation skills, enabling ministry in workplace, civic life and the family, structuring the congregation to fit its current and projected size, stewardship, etc. Each workshop needs to provide enough training in methods and skills so that the teams can really provide leadership. This means teams of at least three people including the vicar or rector, engaged in 12 to 25 hours of training in each area.
- b. An open-registration training program that offers a diocesan certificate for completing a basic course of studies in church development. For a number of years in the 80's Arkansas ran the Bishop's School for Pastoral Oversight. It is a good example of this approach.

B. Third Party Assistance

Fully trained church development practitioners can help parishes renew their life and ministry by coaching leaders, conducting gatherings for vestries or the whole parish community and providing tools and methods for understanding and transforming parish life.

Practitioners may be external consultants, diocesan consultants or diocesan staff members. For many years The Diocese of Arkansas used a system of canon missionaries, highly trained clergy, who also served as vicars of congregations. The canon missionaries provided leadership in shaping and implementing the diocese's congregational development strategy as well as providing third party help that brought together diocesan authority with consultation skills.

Many other dioceses have created consultant networks. This is a lay-clergy group that serves the diocese as internal consultants, operates within diocesan guidelines and is paid fees and expenses for their work. It is worth the cost in time and money to develop one top-flight consultant group that serves all the dioceses' needs for third party consultation. In the long run this is a more integrated, productive and easier to manage approach than having several "consulting resource" groups each claiming its turf for evangelism, stewardship, etc. (See Attachment H)

Third party practitioners need at least four weeks of core congregational development training (see Attachment G); and a week each of human interaction, group development, consultation skills and design skills; a supervised internship; broad reading in the field and the agreement of other facilitators and groups served that they would recommend this person for basic congregational development facilitation work. The training and support structures to equip people for this ministry is available from the Church Development Institute (CDI) and the Leadership Training Institute (LTI).

If your target is to end up with a skilled group of church development practitioners, it is more effective to start with high standards for training than to start low and hope to raise them later. practitioners with limited skills can too easily become a lobby to keep standards low. In the long run it will better serve the diocese to put in the needed time, money and attention at the front end.

C. Financial Grants and Loans

The goal of all grants and loans is to help parishes make transitions and have new beginnings. The transition may be from decline to growth or to smaller or large facilities to fit the long-term demographics of an area, or for the parallel creation of a new congregation alongside existing congregations in the parish. The transition may involve a one-year infusion of resources to move a parish from a static place in growth, service or spirituality; or it may be a ten year effort to revitalize a congregation that has experienced long term decline; or it may involve beginning a cluster or planting a new congregation. Loans and grants are directed at renewal and development not maintenance. A diocese might designate about 10-20% of its budget to this purpose. A diocese needs to seek opportunities to offer grants and loans in situations that show promise.

V. The Heart Of the Matter

At the heart of our efforts for parish development is the need to do three difficult, strategic things:

- Manage the "demand system"
- Develop trust between parishes and the diocese
- Build the diocese's capacity for parish development

A. Manage the “Demand System”

A diocese, like any other organization, is pulled and influenced by the hopes and demands of internal constituencies and external forces. The pressures range: traditionalist — progressive, the needs of parishes in the cities and parishes in the growing fringes, ethnic and racial struggles, a changing culture and economy, the bureaucratic tendency to create more processes to protect us from the latest series of misjudgments or our inappropriate/destructive behavior, and more. The bishop is invited to speak to dozens of groups and serve on the board of many worthwhile organizations; expected to provide effective leadership, management, administration and spiritual oversight of the diocese; and to wisely respond to the needs and frustrations of congregational leaders. Our efforts are informed, grounded in contemporary life, as well as fragmented by this system of expectations and demands. It will not go away.

Too many dioceses have allowed their approach to congregations to become either overly bureaucratic in the administration of processes or centered around an ever changing menu of programs. While we will need to administer processes and conduct programs we will need to be more and more in the service of the diocese’s strategic vision for parish development.

What we can do is work at managing this “demand system” without pretending that it can or should be totally in our control. Part of the task is discernment; part a setting of appropriate boundaries and limits. The most important thing we can do is create the “demand system” we want, a system of pressures and expectations that draws us to give focused attention to the primary task of the diocese, the building up of the church in the revitalization and development of parishes. We create that helpful “demand system” when we establish a group to monitor parishes, create a resource system, and train a critical mass of leaders in church development.

It may take up to five years to create a complete and competent system of congregational development. Once established, it needs to be used, maintained and improved.

B. Develop Trust

In many dioceses the relationship between congregations and the bishop’s office is characterized by suspicion, mistrust of motives, fear and blame. Some diocese have tried to address the concerns of the financially stronger parishes by having more open processes for budget and program development and financial monitoring. Fewer have intentionally worked at building trust between weaker more vulnerable parishes and the diocese.

Diocesan congregational development efforts are strengthened when there is a sense of partnership, mutuality, openness, responsiveness and reliability; and the structures and processes to support that mutuality. The primary need is for diocesan leaders to accept responsibility and create an action plan for trust development.

Learning and using the methods to provide quality service and empower employees might help diocesan leaders. An important aspect of that effort is to focus on how to improve and develop rather than on how to avoid mistakes, minimize risk or find blame. In some places we seem to be setting ourselves up for failure with practices and behavior like the following —

- Taking the diocesan fair share/assessment out of a mission grant before it goes to the parish or not expecting missions to give a fair share to the diocese
- Diocesan leaders openly talking about closing parishes

- A diocesan history of closing parishes in urban or rural areas
- Staying distant and uninvolved with a parish and then suddenly becoming over-involved and over-demanding
- Years of not providing adequate training, competent clergy leadership, consultative help, overall guidance and direction and then blaming a parish for its decline.

Some of the actions we can take toward trust development are:

- **Stay in contact, build a relationship** - one bishop, in a large diocese, made it a practice to stop in on priests while on the way to a meeting in that area (he called ahead); another bishop encouraged urban team ministries by frequently attending the meetings of the clergy team.
- **Have high, expectations of clergy leadership** - expect full church development training and finance it; expect a priest to stay long enough to turn a situation from decline or stagnation to healthy stability to growth and/or renewed life; etc.
- **Have a no-surprise norm** - don't catch rectors and vicars off guard with public statements or plans that effect their parishes; consult, test and if possible collaborate in advance; expect the same from them. Don't meet with lay leaders who are unhappy with clergy leadership without having the priest involved.
- **Train leaders in group facilitation skills** - start by training as many clergy as possible in skills for up front facilitation and methods for group assessment, strategy formation and problem solving. A reasonable amount of training is about 25 hours. Common skills and a problem solving orientation enable trust.
- **Get timely, accurate, open information** - the key here is to establish in the diocese some of the same structures and processes we encourage for the parish church.
 - Have a yearly, full day, professionally led event that does a formal assessment of the diocese (as a system, its programs and ministries, in relation to the trends and forces of the culture and economy); identifies strategic issues, does some initial problem solving/strategy formation and establishes specific next steps.
 - If the assessment process identifies that there are areas where a significant number of people have false information or inadequate training to offer competent work, do something to provide the information and training.
 - Rotate participants each year to enable different types of discussion. One year invite clergy and lay congregational leaders, another year just clergy, at times just lay leaders. In large dioceses you might want to keep the size manageable by rotating among various sizes and locations of congregations. The first few times are likely to be awkward. Some participants will hesitate to assess the diocese in specific terms because they are not fully informed, diocesan leaders may feel defensive, etc. Each will sort out in time. One caution: do not bureaucratize this by making it a formal part of the program-budget process. It will influence those decisions in a more constructive manner and help build trust if you do this as a process that is more reflective, discerning, contemplative and innovative in tone.
 - Other information gathering tools can be woven into the occasional gathering of clergy or lay leaders. Use a regional clergy meeting for a fifteen minute focus group activity or a specific concern; or ask a deanery meeting to give you twenty minutes to gather a list of emerging issues and opportunities (use a simple process to prioritize the list).

C. Build Long-Term Capacity

See it as a five to ten year effort to establish a diocesan parish development system that is sustainable; long range and systemic in perspective; has an integrated, coherent, and flexible approach; is set up for continuous improvement by built-in processes of assessment, discernment and innovation. Building long term capacity for congregational development includes:

1. **Training that is comprehensive and broadly inclusive of leaders.** For example, you could set a ten-year target to have -
 - a. A third of all full time clergy with a certificate or degree in congregational development from the Church Development Institute.
 - b. A fully trained, sustainable consulting team.
 - c. Half of all parishes with a leadership team that has had nine days of training in group problem solving and parish development (including strategies for growth and evangelization and stewardship)
2. **Common church development models and methods.**

There is a need to ground our models and methods in Christian faith as lived in the Anglican tradition and in contemporary knowledge about organization behavior and development. We need something that can be build-on and enhanced not something that is so ungrounded it will give way to the next quick fix solution. One of the strengths of the Church Development Institute is that they are rooted in faith-based models of congregational life and dynamics.
3. **Capital investments.**

This certainly includes new parishes and space renovation in existing parishes. Renovations and new construction need more "both/and" type thinking; how to have more flexible spaces and how to have a sense of sacred space, etc. Another capital investment is likely to be in the area of new technologies for communication and education.
4. **Creating a clear, positive self-definition and image of the Episcopal Church.**

Dioceses need to take the lead in doing the research and marketing that presents us at our best in ways that speak to the population of the area that the diocese covers. We want to present ourselves in a manner that increases our own self-understanding; is clear; addresses the concerns of people; and is attractive, interesting and exciting.
5. **Financial resources to do all the above.** This means having the vision and doing the political work needed to adequately support our capacity building.

Attachment A

Three Statements Envisioning a Faithful and Healthy Parish

Parish Revitalization Goals

1. Strong overall parish life and ministry (worship, doctrine and Christian action of service, evangelization, and stewardship) rooted in our tradition, adapted to the local context, and appropriate for the particular group(s) of people being drawn to the congregation, and
 - a. That nurtures and equips the ministry of all baptized people according to their vocation and gifts.
 - b. That nurtures the Christian life of all people at all phases of maturity; coaches and equips those of apostolic faith and practice for ministry; and encourages all toward a more prayerful, disciplined and compassionate Christian life.
 - c. That renews people in their baptismal identity and purpose and sends them, in Christ, for an apostolate in their families, work, communities and/or internal church ministries.
2. Priest and lay leaders working faithfully and effectively together. Leaders trained for the ministry of parish revitalization.
3. Clear, functioning grasp of mission strategy, including being engaged with the community in service and evangelization; moving to reflect the community in membership; a definition of the parish's relationship to the community. A focused scope of outreach – is it the neighborhood or a region, is it geographical or a special relationship/purpose?
4. Processes and structures for ongoing revitalization are functioning (e.g., parish focused on the essentials of the Christian life; has a way to monitor, assess and envision life and development, etc.).
5. Improved institutional life (e.g., increased attendance, pledge units, average pledge, has workable financial strategy, property plan, etc.).
6. Continued participation in a support-accountability system beyond the parish (e.g. makes use of outside resources, receptive to influence and collaboration, etc.).
7. Financial self support based on sacrificial and proportionate pledging.

The Healthy Parish

To enable the congregation to be an even more faithful and effective local expression of the Body of Christ

- Entering into and reflecting the unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.
- Pursuing more faithfully and effectively the mission of the Church "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."
- Entering into and reflecting the mind, heart and work of Christ through a strong, "rooted" congregation life of worship, doctrine, action and oversight.
- Enabling a congregation life, a "holy environment", in which people may rest in God; offer their lives to God; give themselves to the identity and purpose they share in the Body of Christ; and so be transformed more and more into God's likeness that they may be instruments of God's love.

To enable the congregation to become a stronger, more effective institution

- Developmental structures and processes built into the fabric of congregational life, such as: annual assessment of life and ministry; annual leadership and clergy assessment; a process of planned change; a base for Christian discernment; use of a framework that focuses the congregation on the essentials of the Christian life; clear means for identifying and developing future leaders; a policy of encouraging people to find new and better ways of doing their work; a way to monitor life and development; etc. The concern here is to establish a process of reflection, planning and acting in congregational life that fits its size and culture.
- Receptivity to appropriate influence and collaboration, expressed, for example, in: a policy that the congregation lives within the life and way of the wider Church; a collaborative and receptive relationship with the Bishop's Office; a collaborative relationship with other congregations; making use of consultants and other outside resources, etc.

- Enough time from competent ordained leadership to maintain the congregation's life and ministry and enable its further development.
 - Leaders that are well grounded in Christian faith and practice as lived in the Anglican tradition and are competent for the parish ministries for which they are responsible.
- Stable or growing membership and attendance supported by an ongoing ministry of evangelization and incorporation.
- A pattern of regular upkeep and improvement of buildings and property that results in quality liturgical space, room for membership growth, buildings well-used and in good condition, etc.
- A positive relationship with the surrounding community/neighborhood — service, evangelization and presence.
- Maximum responsibility for financial self-support based on sacrificial and proportionate pledging.
- A capacity to cope effectively with changes in the neighborhood/community, the society, the wider Church.

Signs of Parish Revitalization

1. Overall Parish Life and Ministry

Strength and stability of parish's life and ministry in worship, doctrine and action; sense of being a local expression of the Body of Christ; sense of mission, etc.

2. Rector or Vicar

Competence for oversight and leadership of congregational life and development, quality of relationship with the congregation; has a disciplined spiritual life; accepts identity as a priest, etc. If a leader of a regional ministry has training in such a ministry and training in the development of larger, more complex systems

3. Lay Leadership

Theologically grounded and articulate; have a disciplined spiritual life; aware of vocation and gifts; etc.

4. Congregational Development Structures

Yearly evaluations of congregational life and ministry; a yearly clergy assessment; a process of planned change; a parish base for Christian discernment; use of a framework that focuses the congregation on essentials of the Christian life; has a way to monitor congregational life and development; etc.

5. Relationship to Community/Neighborhood

Membership reflects the diversity of the community; involved in and serving the community; ongoing ministry of evangelization; a plan for the inviting and incorporation of people; open/welcoming; good physical location, etc.

6. Financial

Sacrificial and proportionate pledging; adequate endowment fund; potential for self support of priest full time and a full congregational life and ministry (in 5 years, 10 years) - or an alternative that provides for a long term, stable priestly ministry with adequate time to support ongoing ministry and development; not dependent on fund raising activities; etc.

7. Buildings and property

Proper condition, energy efficiency, pattern of regular upkeep and improvement, adequacy for membership growth; quality of liturgical space; long range property plan; etc.

8. Receptiveness to appropriate influence and collaboration

Relationship with Bishop's Office and Diocese, other parishes, deanery; use of consultants and other outside resources; living within the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church; etc.

9. Efforts in program and ministry

Rooted in the Christian faith as known and lived in the Anglican tradition; working to build lasting structures and an institutional base rather than the ad hoc projects; designed for long-term staying power; etc.

10. Potential

Potential for expanding, enriching, deepening the parish's life and ministry in the foreseeable future? - spiritual life, membership growth, outreach; etc.

Attachment B

Three Frameworks on the Core Elements of Congregational Life

The Christian Life Model ¹

This model is concerned with the strength, interdependence and balance of the three elements of worship, doctrine, and action. Oversight is the task of facilitating the congregation into a full and strong participation in the Christian Life.

1. *Worship* - "continue in the breaking of bread and in the prayers" (BCP p. 304)

How well we worship as a community. Equipping people for participation in the Eucharist and the use of the Daily Office and personal devotions. Climate: issues of style, beauty, flow; appropriate use of the Holy Eucharist and Daily Office; teaching and coaching the congregation for prayer life and participation in liturgy; functioning of guilds and individuals that play special roles; schedule; participation, etc.

2. *Doctrine* - "continue in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship" (BCP, p.304)

The parish's awareness of what has authority in the Christian Life. Competence as a congregation and individuals in relating those sources of authority to decision-making. Teaching the basics of Scripture and Holy Tradition. Helping people to know The Story of the People of God as their story. Providing the necessary offerings and support structures, adult foundations course, church school, etc; how well we know the teachings of the Christian faith and can apply them in workplace, family and civic life.

3. *Action* - "to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be" (BCP, p 855)

Enabling ministry in workplace, family and civic life. The congregation's corporate ministries or relationships of service, stewardship and evangelization.

4. *Oversight* - "That your Church, being preserved in true faith and godly discipline, may fulfill all the mind of him who loved it and gave himself for it." (BCP p. 255)

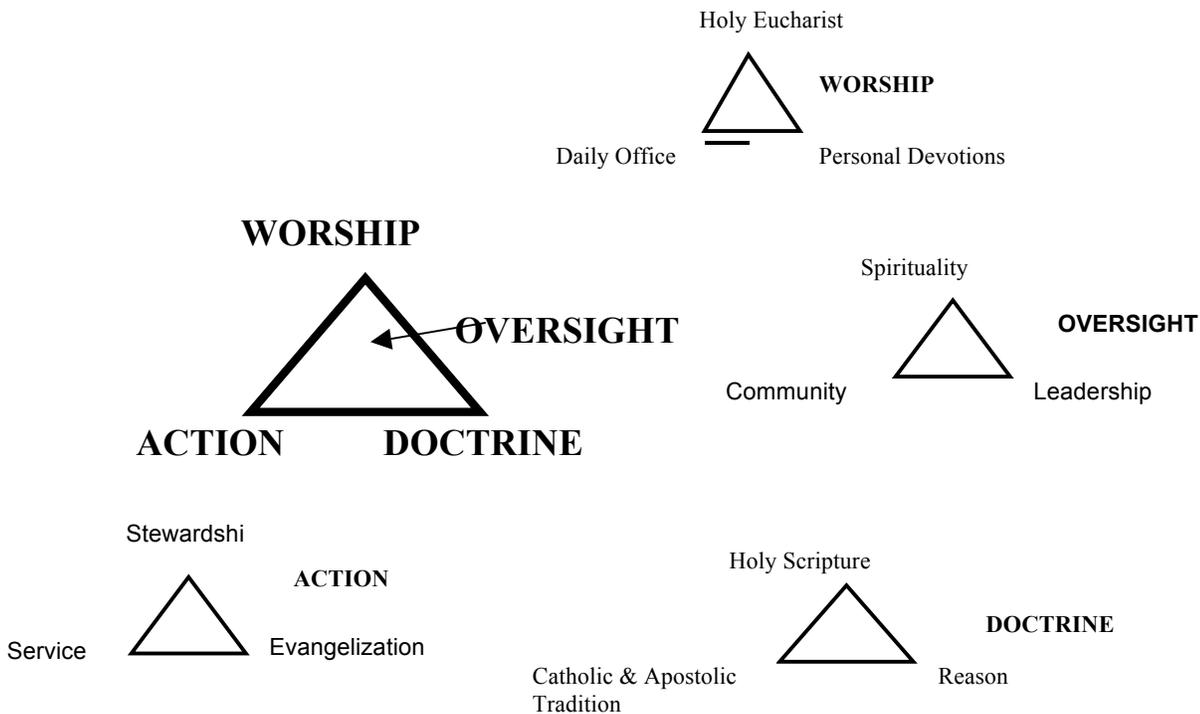
Competence and commitment of leaders , clergy and lay, for leadership and management; building community; and deepening the congregation's spiritual life; leaders serving, guiding, leading and managing the parish into an appropriate and full living of the Christian Life: bringing and preserving a proper order/shape in the parish's life; methods for reflecting, discerning and planning in parish life; lay-clergy relationships; sense of direction, etc.

The Christian Life Model: A Diagram Overview

In a world where carpenters get resurrected, everything is possible.
Eleanor in *The Lion in Winter*

For many years Mother Mary Laney was vicar of Saint Gabriel’s Church in the Olney neighborhood of Philadelphia. Olney is a community of African Americans, Asians, Arabs, Africans, Hispanics, and some whites, the remains of a once large German American population. It’s one of the most diverse communities in Philadelphia. It’s also a community struggling with crime, affordable housing, and employment. It was a small parish dependent on the diocese for assistance, serving the Olney community with efforts of community organizing, employment and education, and holding together a diverse membership. Saint Gabriel’s had a motto “With God all things are possible”. What held them together and allowed them to move forward in service? Liturgy and prayer were certainly at the heart of it. Another one of the tools Mary Laney used was this Christian Life Model. It offered a way of thinking about the elements and dynamics of life in a Christian community.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE MODEL



- Each element is a way in which Christ comes to us and in which we seek Christ. Each is an entry into, and participation in, the unity to which we are called. In them we are called into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ - the heart of Christ, the mind of Christ, the work of Christ.
- The model can be used by parishes for self assessment, as a framework for planning, as a way to focus the parish on the essentials of the Christian life, and as a resource to individuals in shaping a Rule of Life. Each triangle is a system of mutual influence in which the elements strengthen and impact the other elements.

Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1975, 1982, 2006

For more on the model see Robert Gallagher’s *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, 2006 and *Power from on High: A Model for Parish Life and Development*, 1982

Next Step In Mission²

An evaluation by the parish of how it is carrying out the Christian mission in terms of Service, Worship, Evangelism, Education and Pastoral Care.

- 1. Service** - In evaluating its service to the larger community of which it is a part, a congregation might take a look at how it is meeting the needs of people who are not members. What are the greatest human needs in the local area and how might the congregation be a part of meeting them? Each congregation also needs to take stock of how it is serving those in other places through its support of the United Thank Offering, the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, diocesan outreach programs. It should be remembered that the support of the diocesan budget and of the Episcopal Church's General Budget is also a way of meeting human needs.
- 2. Worship** - Each congregation needs to examine its approach to and its conduct of worship. It needs to know how such worship is perceived by participants — both actual and potential. Each congregation needs to think about what conclusions might be drawn by those experiencing its worship. There is a need to think about how well worshipers understand their participation in a corporate act that transcends both time and space.
- 3. Evangelism** - Each congregation needs to make every member aware of his or her own responsibility to share the Christian faith with others. Every member needs to be aware of our Lord's commission to put the Gospel as a living option before as many people as possible. Every member needs to be aware that this commission is given to every Christian at baptism. Each congregation needs to take stock of how it views its responsibility to support the Christian mission in other places.
- 4. Education** - Each congregation examines whatever provision is being made for continued learning by all members in every age group. Such learning is understood to be derived from day-to-day experience as well as from the study of scripture, tradition, and history. Each congregation needs to define a minimal standard of knowledge to be expected from all members: the life and basic teachings of Jesus, a general outline of the Bible and its contents and place in the Christian tradition, some idea of the examples of Christians who have gone before us in the light of faith. Each congregation needs to offer opportunities for its members to increase their consciousness concerning the vital issues of the day, such as peace, racism, human rights, sexism, ecology — to name but a few.
- 5. Pastoral Care** - Each congregation should be a place where understanding, listening, compassion, and help are readily available. Members should be ready to turn to one another in times of need, and to be alert to the needs of non-members as well. The particular gifts and talents of those who have special vocational callings and who have had special training in pastoral care must be recognized and used.

New Directions in Ministry³

This model suggests that the abiding pattern of the church's ministry includes five constants: worship, evangelism, service, formation and intercession. It is this pattern that can be used as a lens through which we may view the life of the church and test it for adequacy.

- 1. Worship** - Worship is the most fundamental form of service we perform. When we gather day by day and week by week for worship we do nothing less than participate in and make known the end for which the worlds were made. In worship we come to know and adore God. We believe that is the destiny He has appointed for us and we believe that this destiny fulfills the deepest longing of the heart, namely, to find something worthy of adoration. We believe that in our worship of God's purpose for all life is brought to fruition and we believe the fulfillment of that purpose is the only thing that will satisfy the longings of the soul.
- 2. Evangelism** - The love of God unveils the unique quality, value and beauty of each person. The love of God brings with it delight — delight in God and delight in all that he has made.

When then is it that we can offer the many creatures whom we learn to love and in whom we learn to delight? Again, the answer runs against the grain of the mind of our society and we often are embarrassed to say it. Nevertheless, it is still the case that we can offer first of all and to everyone regardless of their social place and circumstances is the knowledge of God and the love of God. These have come upon us by grace and we have not greater offering to make to a fellow creature.

If the church is true to the beliefs which inform its life, if it is indeed to serve God and the ends he has appointed for us all, the Church cannot avoid the ministry of evangelism.

- 3. Service** - No matter what the time, place or circumstance, however, there are certain directions or lines the service of the Church must follow if its witness is to have power to move and convince.

The first line leads to the people who are close by. The first direction in which Christ leads is toward the people we see every day. It is tempting, when talking of the ministry of service, to think first of people who are far away or of some obvious need or injustice in society. Christ, however, never allows us to trade the people we know for those we do not.

As soon, however, as we see the people who are near, Christ turns us in another direction and points to those who for one reason or another we consider far away. They may be richer or poorer than we are, Distant neighbors may be defined by many different factors. The one thing they have in common is their distance. They are not of our world.

Christ leads us also to these people and He demands that we draw near them. He insists that we cannot simply love those who are like ourselves.

- 4. Formation** - We must once again give theology the place it deserves in the life of the Church. Apart from theology we will have nothing to say and our common life we will reflect little but the life of the society in which we find ourselves. Apart from theology, and more, apart from a theologically literate church, we will simply be swallowed up without remainder. As P. T. Forsyth once so nicely put it, "If within us we have nothing above us, we soon succumb to what is around us." If we are to form our mind and common life in Christ Jesus the church must look at three rather traditional ministries with fresh eyes, e.g., preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.
- 5. Intercession** - Worship, evangelism, service and formation compose the structure of the Church's ministry. Each, however, depends upon the prayer of the Church. It appears to be an aspect of God's providence that He both requires and answers our prayers. Prayer one might say is the very engine of his providence. At the heart of the church's life is its prayer.

¹ More information on this model may be found in Robert A. Gallagher's, *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Ascension Press, late 2006; *Power from on High*, Ascension Press, 1982. The *Parish Assessment Workbook* is also based on the model.

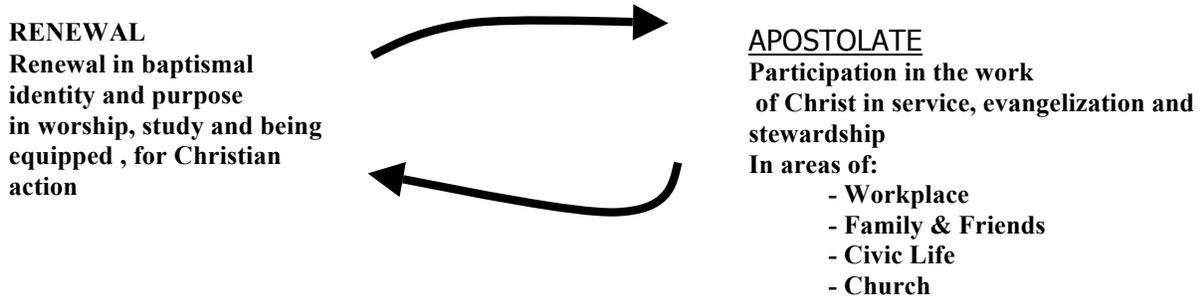
² More information on this model is available from the Office of Communications, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

3. This model comes from Philip Turner's "New Directions in Ministry", *Forward Movement*, 1981

Attachment C

The Renewal – Apostolate Cycle: A Diagram Overview

The Renewal - Apostolate Cycle is a way of describing a central dynamic of Christian life. The Cycle focuses our attention on the Christian’s movement between being renewed in baptismal identity and purpose and living as instruments of God’s love and grace in daily life. The Cycle is interested in both the individual’s movement and in the ways in which the parish church supports and facilitates that movement.



A Cycle

The cycle is between a conscious and intentional attention to God, prayer life, our relationships, Christian formation **and** a subconscious reliance upon God as members of the Body of Christ, in the workplace, family, civic life and congregational life.

In that Cycle:

We need:	Which is helped by:	Which the parish helps by:
To accept our dependence on God	Openness to spiritual guidance	An emphasis in its life on worship; nothing comes before the Eucharist and Daily Office. Also, more attention to formation and spiritual growth than other programs or ministries.
To accept responsibility for ordering our spiritual life	Establishing a rule of life	Offering programs and guidance in creating, experimenting with, and revising a spiritual discipline.
To accept our interdependence with others in the Church	Life in Christian community, a parish church	Being a healthy and faithful parish church and by helping people relate to the parish community in ways appropriate to their personality and the parish’s capacities.

Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1985, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006.

For more on the model see Robert Gallagher’s *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Ascension Press, late 2006

Attachment D

PARISH DEVELOPMENT OR REVITALIZATION AGREEMENTS

A congregation-priest-diocese expression of mutual support and accountability

These agreements are made among the bishop, rector/vicar, and congregation's lay leaders. An agreement is intended to establish a direction that enables the congregation to take the next necessary step in its development.

The purpose of an agreement is to state the overall vision and primary objectives for revitalization and development over a specific period of time. The agreement focuses on and highlights those objectives or ministries that will receive the special attention of the congregation, priest, and bishop's office.

The agreement is created in a consultant-led process that includes a study of standard development goals and methods; a review of the community's needs and trends; a self-assessment of parish life and ministry; possibly a peer visit and report; and a consultant-led process of reflection, discernment and planning. The priest and lay leaders work together to draft statements that are shared with the bishop, who responds with additional suggestions and any needed clarification of diocesan expectations. An agreement will usually go through two or three drafts in its development.

The following provides the general outline that is used in creating an agreement.

BACKGROUND

A brief statement of the parish's efforts toward development or revitalization and the process leading up to the agreement in the last few years. What are the external forces impacting the congregation and the internal strengths and weaknesses that are related to the direction being taken?

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

A statement regarding the broad vision of the revitalization ministry and a list of the primary objectives for the period of the agreement. The objectives should clearly fit the congregation's current place in its life cycle, stage of development and community context. If there is a longer, more detailed vision statement it can be attached.

TIME PERIOD

A statement of when the agreement begins and ends. First time agreements or agreements involving seriously troubled congregations or untrained clergy are best made for one year, with frequent "check-ins", otherwise agreements might be for two to three years. Include a statement to the effect that the agreement may be revised by mutual agreement. We need to assume that new opportunities and challenges will emerge during the life of the agreement.

THE CONGREGATION WILL:

A statement of what the congregation's lay leaders will do over the period of the agreement to accomplish the vision and objectives. This might include the equipping of people for the ministries, the use of workshops and a consultative relationship.

THE RECTOR/VICAR WILL:

A statement of what the rector or vicar will do to provide leadership toward the vision and objectives. This might highlight parts of the priest's job description which need special attention.

THE BISHOP'S OFFICE WILL:

A statement of what the Bishop's office will do including a general statement of support for the vision and objectives; commitment to any special funding of new ministries, new fellowship, or other evangelization ministry; an understanding of how often the bishop or a representative will meet with the priest, development team and/or vestry.

Attachment E

ELEMENTS FOR FINANCIALLY AIDED PARISHES

A. Purpose of Financial Aid

To provide a system of support and accountability in which congregations may develop:

1. As a community of faith, a more faithful and effective local expression of the Body of Christ, the People of God. A strong and deep life of worship, doctrine and Christian action of service, evangelization and stewardship rooted in our tradition.
2. As a strong institution playing its full role in the life of the community and the diocese.

B. The Process of Development

Parishes need aid for several reasons. Some have declined because of poor leadership, mismanaged conflict or an inability to cope with changes in the community. Others are growing communities which offer an increase in members if an adequate response can be made. Some parishes carry out a special form of mission on behalf of the diocese.

The general goal is to establish an alignment among vision, ministry structure and costs.

If we want to revitalize a congregation toward a size of about 150 average attendance, it may require at least seven years of developmental work with a full time priest to help turn around a declining situation, stabilize life, and begin to make progress in revitalization.

We also need to consider options such as creating a cluster ministry of three to six congregations. A staff team can be formed to serve all the congregations. This means moving beyond the image that the only right ministry structure is "one priest, one parish".

Another approach would be to use clergy trained in methods of empowerment and self-managing teams. They would be charged with establishing a parish that is small, financially self supporting; and works with a combination of a community vision, regular community meetings to shape action based on the vision, and self managing teams to carry out those actions within the framework of the guiding vision. This may mean letting go of having a vestry (or a vestry that meets) and having a priest serving as the primary agent of pastoral care.

Regardless of the structure for ministry, most financially aided parishes have two broad areas requiring special attention. The hope is that work in these areas will increase the parish's or cluster's capacity for financial self-support (e.g., increased pledge units and average pledge).

1. A developmental rather than administrative or program driven self-definition. Understanding ourselves as "missionary and apostolic communities as well as "settled" congregations. This may include -

- Vicar's and lay leader's time focused on the primary task. Attention to creating a congregational culture and structures that effectively support the Renewal-Apostolate Cycle.
- Special attention to establishing and nurturing Eucharistic fellowships and new ministries that reach new populations, incorporation of new members, lapsed ministry, coaching those of apostolic faith, etc.
- Vicar keeping the developmental need and goals before the parish leaders.
- The need for efficiency regarding administration (better planned, shorter meetings; two groups or more meeting on the same night; vicars getting very selective about which meetings to attend, reducing the number and frequency of some meetings).

- Focusing on leading and managing “the whole”, not administration or bigger and better programs. Getting decisions made and implemented, more frequent meetings of the congregational development team, etc.
- Special attention to developing and refining strategy especially in collaboration with the congregational development consultants.

2. A renewed and expanded approach to evangelization ministries.

- A goal to move rapidly toward becoming a parish of 150 adults average attendance or a financially self-supporting cluster ministry.
- Continued efforts on overall and rooted parish revitalization. This is related to the faithfulness and effectiveness of organic evangelization.
- Continued work on the incorporation process with a significant increase in the emphasis we give to inviting.
- Reach new populations by:
 - Establishing new eucharistic fellowships as extensions of the parish’s eucharistic life. This involves reaching out to populations presently under-represented in the congregation by creating fellowships which may exist for several years outside the Sunday by Sunday life of the parish. They may be more fully incorporated at some point.
 - Creating new ministries that touch large population groups and/or under-represented groups.
- Redefining the congregation’s relationship to the community, e.g., what is the assumed geographical or interest area we cover? Should it be expanded? Focused? How do we view ourselves? How do we invite the community to see us? How does the community see us? How can we change all this in directions that serve evangelization?

C. Why Parishes Are Funded

All parishes receiving financial aid are responsible for their own development as an even more faithful and effective expression of the Body of Christ. Each is called to a strong and deep life of worship, learning, service, evangelization and stewardship. Congregations do not receive funding simply to support a settled parish life. Dioceses need to avoid the attractive illusion of eliminating all financially aided congregations by clustering, closing and merging. In time additional congregations will face decline. If we want something other than a smaller and smaller diocese that is focused increasingly on the wealthier segment of the population we need to spend money on revitalization and growth as a strategy.

Congregations are also funded within a specific category. They are responsible for movement toward goals that are related to the category. The categories are:

1. Descending Grant Agreements: Congregations receiving aid that have the potential for financial self-support of a full parish life and ministry are expected to develop a set of realistic targets for a step-by-step movement toward self-support. The targets are made part of Revitalization Agreement. When the agreement is revised targets are established for the next time period. Agreements include a special emphasis on increasing the parish’s attendance and pledging.

2. Ministry of Special Need and Opportunity: For congregations with a special servant ministry among the poor and oppressed. This may especially apply to the development of strong congregations in the inner city and some rural areas. The Revitalization Agreement needs to describe the special need and opportunity of service being addressed. Congregations will be encouraged to accept as much responsibility for financial aid support as seems reasonable in the situation.

3. Development Clusters: For clusters or congregations within clusters. Each participating congregation would have a Revitalization Agreement that describes its developmental objectives and the cluster’s role in accomplishing those objectives. Clusters may be long term structural arrangements or part of a short term strategy for revitalization

4. Transitional Funding for Revitalization: For parishes on the way to one of the above categories within an agreed period of time. The Revitalization Agreement would state what stage or concern was being addressed, e.g., stabilizing a parish that was in decline, coping with an internal crisis situation or transition in the community, moving off a plateau of attendance or pledging, etc.

D. A System of Support and Accountability for Parish Revitalization

All congregations of a diocese need to have available to them a system of support and accountability to encourage and enable the development of their life and ministry.

Aided parishes can be assisted in their revitalization by a system of support and accountability that includes:

1. **Revitalization Agreements** that state the congregation's primary objectives for revitalization and development over the next two to three years and what will be done by the lay leaders, the vicar, and the diocese to accomplish those objectives.
2. **Direct attention from the Bishop's Office** that provides broad revitalization goals and standards; and a process of monitoring that provides encouragement, feedback and direction.
3. **Three forms of evaluation**
 - a. A self-assessment process done in the congregation each year.
 - b. Peer visits in which a team from one parish visits another parish to learn about and encourage its developmental effort. Peer visits are timed to contribute to the creation of a Revitalization Agreement.
 - c. A consultative evaluation in the bishop's office.
4. **A Congregational Renewal Coalition** that provides a framework for mutual support, encouragement and accountability in the ministry of revitalization. A coalition can meet several times each year as a council of advice to the Bishop's Office. Have a yearly gathering focused on peer visit reports and a second gathering for education and fellowship.
5. **Congregational development resources are available.** Expect every aided parish to make regular use of consulting and training resources. Expect all vicars to receive significant congregational development training.

E. The Results

Working with financially aided parishes when the diocese has a strong congregational development system for all congregations (i.e., monitoring-intervention team, sense of direction, strategy, resources, etc.) and a disciplined, collaborative approach with those receiving assistance can have significant results over a period of years.

In one southern diocese, over a ten to fifteen year period –

- there was a shift from mission congregations costing the diocese \$73,000 (the difference between assistance grants and giving to the diocese) to missions benefiting the diocese by \$20,000.
- two new parishes were starting and are now among the largest in the diocese.
- seven missions were targeted and transformed into growing pastoral-size churches; some are growing beyond that.
- there was an improvement in mission clergy morale, and the relationship between the diocesan office and mission.

In a large northeastern diocese

- Nineteen of twenty-one aided congregations moved to descending grants or a stable level of funding over a six year period.
- After an initial increase in aid to finance congregational development resources for missions, the percentage of the diocesan budget used for financial aid decreased from 9.6% to 7.8% in four years.

In a five-year period the aided parishes increased their average pledge by 68% and attendance by 15% (In congregations with leaders fully trained in congregational development the figures were 80% average pledge increase and 24% in attendance.). NOTE: These results are much better than those reported in the Diocese of Texas approach.

Attachment F

On the selection, formation and placement of parish priests

Possibly the most significant force in shaping effective and healthy parish oversight is the parish priest. We have all know clergy who just “got into the wrong business”. People who were moved through parish and diocesan discernment processes and rewarded for their ability to jump through hoops and survive. Often there are long lists used in such processes; much too long to provide the focus needed. I wonder what it would be like if early in these discernment processes a designated person, with an ability to deliver hard news, just said to the candidate – “John, I’m not commenting on you as a human being or as a member of the Body of Christ. I am saying that we do not see in you something essential for effective priestly ministry in a parish church. Specifically, we have not seen ... (say something about capacity for leadership, spiritual maturity, emotional intelligence).”

I’m not suggesting that the candidate should be showing strength in all these areas as they begin a discernment process but that we should be able to see real potential. “Real” potential, not the abstract potential that is in effect saying, “well anything is possible.” (meaning that when pigs fly we would expect to see this particular person growing in the needed manner). We should see the person actively engaging the work needed to develop these capacities. The discernment process might continue its work as long as the person is making good progress. If there isn’t the needed engagement from the candidate it might be better to allow the process to go on “hold.” That would keep the responsibility where it belongs – on the candidate. Otherwise rectors and discernment committees are likely to over function and keep seeking some way to help the candidate understand what is needed. It’s too much work from the rector and committee and too little from the candidate. We have been aware for some time that once a person gets past the early stages of “the process” there’s a good chance of ordination in a few years and then of being in a position of leadership in a parish. Two things might help the whole process:

Training people involved in the ordination discernment process.

The church’s decision over the past 40 years to expand the number of people involved in the process was a needed action. At the same time it has created predictable problems. We have made a basic error in empowerment. Our theology and ideology led us to involve more people, but we failed to equip them for the work they faced. For example, there are people involved in the decision-making process without the competencies needed to make sound decisions; too many have little grasp of the leadership needed to work with parish dynamics and issues. Many don’t understand basic group decision-making and discernment processes.

For any organization to achieve the results it seeks, and to do that in a manner that increases participation in the process: 1). The participants need adequate training and coaching related to both the process itself and final outcome being sought, and 2). There is a need for clarity about where the final authority lies at various stages.

A focus on the outcome of the process -- priestly leadership in a parish

All lengthy decision making processes have the tendency to become focused on the short-term elements of the process; i.e., we put our energy into doing the piece of the task we have been assigned. It’s necessary to do this if we are to be productive in our work. But along with it we often lose track of the final outcome of the process. Decisions are more fruitful when individuals and groups in the ordination process hold in front of them that most of the people who move through this process are going to end up as parish priests. That’s the bottom line to which successful discernment groups keep returning. What is this person going to be responsible for if they get through this process? And, so, do we see those capacities in this person?

So, what is it that we might look for in the discernment process that leads to ordination as a priest? Four elements come to mind.

1. Leadership ability – This is the ability to get others to take action. It's the ability to engage in a complex set of behaviors, including

- To facilitate others in listening and responding to one another and to the movement of the Holy Spirit in their common life
- To facilitate the parish in seeing the needs and opportunities before it
- Having political common sense
- To have an adequate longer-range perspective, and clarity about to the priestly role in a parish's life, so that the parish is moved toward greater health and faithfulness.

2. Emotional maturity – This includes abilities such as:

- Having an awareness of his or her emotions and accepting responsibility for how they act on the emotions
- An understanding of the impact of his/her behavior on others
- Self-confidence
- Self-control
- The ability to stay with something while being flexibly
- The capacity to negotiate with others
- The ability to be part of the group as well as to stand apart from the group

3. Spiritual Maturity – Priests need to be people of Apostolic Faith. That would usually include behaviors such as:

- Maintaining a spiritual discipline that is grounded in Anglican spirituality. Generally accepting responsibility for his/her spiritual life.
- Stability as seen in a productive connection with a parish church and the Episcopal Church.
- Action that shows the character needed -- "an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works" and signs of "humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance born of love, eagerness to maintain unity in the bond of peace, truthfulness mediated in love, mutual kindness, tenderheartedness and forgiveness"; "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

4. Competence in many of the skills related to effective priestly ministry – Presiding at liturgy, preaching, spiritual and pastoral guidance, Christian formation, etc. In each there are skills related to designing as well as implementing.

The norm we might establish is that a person who is to be brought into the formation process for ordained priesthood is a baptized Christian of apostolic faith and practice (or actively progressing toward that); with adequate psychological and emotional maturity; and a demonstrated capacity for leadership and pastoral oversight of a Christian community

The process of formation before and after ordination needs to continue equipping and nurturing the capacities identified in the selection process (i.e., apostolic faith and practice, psychological and emotional maturity and leadership and pastoral oversight) in an integrated program of academic and experiential learning and supervised application. The formal formation process begins with the early discernment process and continues through the priest's third year in charge of a parish.

Leaders with the Ability to Develop the Parish

In the formation process we can also look for ways to equip the skills, knowledge and stance needed for a developmental approach to parish ministry. We need to look at the candidate/priest's experience. If we don't see any of these things in that experience we may want to reconsider the vocational question. That might include the following areas.

There is a growing awareness of a need for leaders who can: 1) Define and present their own vision and sense of direction for a community of faith; be in touch with the needs and desires of the congregation, be as collaborative as the commitment and competence of members allows; cope with their own tendencies toward excessive control and/or passivity; and efficiently deal with dependent personalities. And 2) Modify their approach to leadership to fit the current needs of the particular parish, sub-group or individual. An ability to match their leadership style to the system's competence for a task: maturity in faith, practice and emotions, and level of commitment.

Under discussion in many areas is the degree of "positional authority" needed by a presiding priest to accomplish these leadership functions. Some suggest that the authority should be increased, possibly with more accountability to the congregation through mutual assessments, and more collegial support and supervision with other priests and the Bishop. Some would urge that positional authority be reduced and dispersed; still others that it remain as it is but be more clearly defined. If positional authority is dispersed, it may become more difficult to provide for competence and accountability in the parish system. The better approach is probably to allow for strong positional leadership that is accountable for making a competent effort toward goals related to the oversight areas and activities connected to the primary task of a parish, e.g., formation, development of spiritual life, and bringing people into that process of formation. Pastoral oversight is more and more understood as a primary aspect of ordained priesthood that is deeply related to the ministry of sacrament and Word. One presides at the Eucharist because – and for the same purposes as – one presides in the overall life and ministry of a Christian community.

The abilities needed for pastoral oversight include:

- A capacity to develop pastoral strategy for nurturing and revitalizing life and ministry that is grounded in: sound pastoral theology; a grasp of the primary task of a congregation, and an understanding of the congregation's dynamics and its role in its community. The congregation's primary task is best described as a cycle: nurturing and sending; renewal in baptismal identity and purpose and apostolate in family, work and community; an oscillation between conscious attention to God and formation and subconscious reliance upon God as incorporated members of Christ's Body.
- Authenticity, seen in a congruence: between the priest's beliefs, intentions and behavior: and between the public and private dimensions of life.
- A capacity to cope with the typical stages of relationship between priest and congregation, revolving around acceptance of the priest as both symbol and person.
- A collegial spirituality, that is rooted in Anglican spirituality, appropriate for the context of the priest's life and involves some form of common life with other priests. In some dioceses the clergy gather each week for bible study and prayer. In others the clergy join together in groups around a discipline of prayer, study, work, stewardship, and rest/recreation. There are also religious orders and Christian communities that offer connection and support for parish priest. The Order of the Ascension brings together clergy and laity for a week of retreat, study and community each year and provides a Benedictine way of life in work, civic life, family and friends.
- Mutuality in decision-making is a more common expectation: within the parish, among priests, and with the Bishop. Consultation with others in the parish and diocese is being looked for in all significant decisions. Priests increasingly need a capacity for such mutuality. Mutuality requires both firmness and flexibility on the part of the priest, qualities we often tend to separate. The methods used in many organizations to empower people and establish self managing teams needs experimentation in more congregations. Mutuality in ministries of worship, education, formation and Christian action is now often looked for by lay members

performing such ministries. Priests are increasingly asked to include people in the planning. The parish priest needs training and guided experience for assessing and acting on the leadership style needed in a particular situation. Along with a capacity for mutuality, the church needs priests who are able to self define themselves and make difficult and at times popular decisions for the well being of the parish.

Discernment is frequently held up as a mode of decision-making fitting for the People of God. Our planning processes and development of mission strategy can become more grounded in a process of respectful listening, meditation on the Scriptures and waiting on God in prayer. A priest's spiritual formation might appropriately include training in communal discernment methods and group development.

There is a renewed emphasis in the primary ministry of the laity in work, family and community. The priest's first task may be to listen to peoples' stories and struggles, see the prayer and work of Christ in them, and learn to be efficient about parish institutional needs so as not to draw people away from their primary places of ministry.

There seems to be an increasing sense of diocesan responsibility for several areas:

- A supervision and training function as transitions take place, e.g., from the testing-training stage to functioning as an ordained minister; the first time a priest serves as a rector or vicar; from one staff structure, size or context to another.
- A support/accountability role in relationship to congregations that are the most vulnerable to contextual influences, e.g., those that are small, lack resources, have an unstable history, or are in transition, (of size, life cycle or community context), etc. Ongoing collaboration between such congregations and the Bishop's Office can help the congregation more effectively respond to the situation it faces.

The placement of parish priests

This section is a set of observations and wonderments about our placement system.

Back in the 1970's we linked the parish's search process to its developmental process. There were reasons to do that at the time. The link no longer makes sense. The thinking then was that when the parish was between rectors this was a "prime time for renewal." Dioceses had the ability to intervene with developmental processes and well-trained consultants and assist a parish in exploring its history, needs and gifts as it prepared for a future with a new priest.

The model has worked well in some cases and been a disaster in others. (A caution: That will be true, to some extent, of any model we replace it with.) There have been several issues: Many parishes have an ongoing process of development taking place. On the whole there is more parish-based competence in that work. Many priests and lay leaders have received training in the Church Development Institute and the Leadership Training Institute, or just priests, at Seabury Institute. The link between developmental work and the search process has been severed. There is generally less competence for the developmental work at a diocesan level. Deployment officers are frequently focused on a human resources approach to deployment and the search process (though they often lack HR training). They are almost never people with training in congregational development or the process skills assumed in the existing process. They are usually intelligent people, who learn a lot on-the-job, and do the best they can. When the current process was being established more and more dioceses were creating networks of highly training consultants. Most of those networks no longer exist. In their place are systems of overworked diocese staff who make a visit or two and deliver a manual of steps through the process, or people

being called "consultants" after a day or two of orientation to the diocesan manual. We are taking the same amount of time for parishes to go through the search process but without the resources that made some sense of why we should take all that time. The process has become bureaucratic in the worst sense.

The assumption may still be true that a search process is a time when a diocese can intervene and have a parish look at itself. But that doesn't mean that since we went down this road most parishes have had a readiness for such work. Often the readiness would be stimulated by the skilled efforts of a consultant and the parish would end up having a productive experience.

We have the parish set goals for the future without the primary leader in place. That sets up the implication that the new rector is coming to carry out our predetermined goals. So, we don't really need a collaborative leader, we need an administrator or manager. We are undermining the new priest and the process of relationship development that needs to occur between the priest and lay leaders.

We have separated the search process from the real power in the parish. Vestries get reduced to approving a person selected by the search committee with limited vestry participation. A new rector arrives with a search committee, now disbanded, that knows the priest fairly well and has great hopes, and a vestry that has almost no experience with the priest but has to do the real work with the priest. In most cases clergy and lay leaders work things out. But the additional hurdle just makes it more difficult.

The transition process has some large blind spots. The time that elapses between one priest leaving and the other arriving, combined with a tradition of not talking with your predecessor, means that critical information is not passed on. Frequently the exiting priest leaves notes about pastoral care issues. That's fine. But from a leadership perspective what's needed is an understanding about why some decisions were made about processes, structures, liturgy and ministry. The new priest needs to have this information to make sense of what he or she is experiencing and to make wise decisions about any changes. There's also a need for the two clergy to talk when there are interruptions and "odd" behavior during the first couple of years.

Things we might try out

1. Many dioceses have been quietly breaking with the old ways. Let's gather them together and hear the stories. Include a couple of outside people skilled in organization development who can challenge, prop, and coach the participants.
2. Diocesan leaders need an ability to be strategic in the search-deployment process. Some parishes need a priest in place before the current one has left, others need a long interim period. Some need to be closed for six months and reopened with a new leadership. Some will need a priest who will work in a very collaborative manner, other will need someone to get in there, take charge, and make changes. For diocesan leaders to make such decisions they need training, or resourcing, in assessing parish culture, understanding life cycles, and negotiation skills.
3. The keys to developing the health and strength of our parishes include: priests and lay leaders training in parish dynamics and development, the availability of skilled third party consultants, attention to fostering readiness to engage the developmental task, and diocesan leaders working in support.
4. The search - deployment process does need to include having a profile that describes the context of the parish, the parish's life and ministry, and the results of an assessment. In most cases that would be the task of the parish leaders. In some cases a team in the diocesan office. Candidates need the information in considering the position.

5. The new priest needs to start with the assumption that the task is to build on what has been done. There is a narcissistic quality involved when so many new rectors see a need to dismantle what went before. Unless we come in with, or discover, contrary information, an appreciative stance needs to become the norm.
6. We need a strong integration between the lay leaders and power brokers that the priest will need to deal with once in the position and the search process. Have vestries making the basic decisions. In larger parishes help the vestry delegate many of the standard oversight functions to a working group while it pays attention to the search process
7. The new priest needs to talk with his or her predecessor several times during the first two years.
8. We need more attention to monitoring, and as needed intervening in, the two years of transition beginning with the new priest's arrival. There are unique transition dynamics and issues that few clergy understand.
9. A second assessment of parish life and ministry needs to take place once the new priest is in place. That can serve as a starting place for setting common goals.

[Note: Most of the above is from Robert A. Gallagher's, *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Ascension Press, late 2006]

Staffing Structures

The task is to provide for an adequate ministry of pastoral oversight, sacrament and word in congregations. Most dioceses tend to take a pragmatic approach that seeks a workable arrangement for a particular congregation or region. Staffing structures are shaped by: contextual factors such as a decline or shift in population and the oversupply or under-supply of priests in an area; the congregation's needs, desires and resources; and the diocese's mission strategy and resources.

Each model has the potential for faithful and effective ministry. Each has its own likely drawbacks. There are disagreements over which, if any, is the best model apart from any limitations caused by contextual factors.

1. Full Time Rector or Vicar (one congregation - one priest).

This is the most common image of a pattern in this country. Parishes tend to be in the range of 90-200 average-adult-attendance on Sunday. These congregations may face a challenge remaining economically viable. The priest is usually involved in oversight and leadership in all areas of the congregation's life and ministry. Leadership tends to be effective when used to focus the congregation on its objectives and to equip and coach members for ministry. There is a special need to know how to operate collegially with other priests and the Bishop. Priests in these parishes need special skills in dealing with an appropriate dependency, being accessible as a symbol and a person, developing leadership and empowering people, managing conflict and performing a broad range of ministry functions, (e.g., leading worship, teaching, spiritual guidance, enabling a sense of identity and direction in the parish, etc.).

2. Full Time Rector with a Staff

This staffing pattern tends to fit what Doug Walrath saw as a Moderately Large Congregation of 150 - 400 average attendance with a diverse make up and diversity in its ministries, or a Very Large Congregation (over 350 with a comprehensive ministry and program). The rector cannot effectively maintain personal pastoral contact with the whole congregation. More responsibility for oversight of the parish's life and ministry must be delegated to staff members and lay leaders. The rector's

position usually needs strong management and administrative skills, a sense of vision, and the ability to work well in teams. One needs to be comfortable with being more of a symbol and being less involved in all aspects of the congregation's life.

Priests willing and able to serve as long-term assistants make a significant contribution to this model. They may have specialty areas of ministry. There is a need to be responsive to the rector's sense of overall direction and have sensitivity to authority issues.

3. Clusters (three or more congregations, more than one priest)

A cluster involves at least three congregations sharing some significant resources and usually staffed by a clergy team. Each participating congregation would usually maintain its autonomy. Clusters normally consist of "Family Church" (0-50) or small "Pastoral Church" size (50-90) congregations. This model may best be served by a full time director who is experienced and has a capacity to work with the lay leadership of several congregations. The director needs to be able to handle the political and pastoral dynamics of a complex, multi-parish cure as well as the leadership of a staff team. Strong skills are needed in congregational development and oversight, evangelization and stewardship.

The clergy team that serves a cluster is likely to include several priests who serve on a part-time basis (bi-vocational) or locally ordained.

4. Teams

In this arrangement the rectors or vicars of several congregations enter into an agreement to join together for regular prayer, reflection on their pastoral oversight and leadership, mutual assistance in shaping a pastoral strategy, and the sharing of special skills.

The team may or may not include lay leaders and an agreement among the congregations to be part of a regional ministry.

Priests participating in this model need a commitment to collegiality, team building skills, and an openness to self and peer assessment.

5. Part-Time Rectors and Vicars

This staffing model will usually involve very small or small congregations served by a bi-vocational priest. They may also be served by a local ordination priest (local residents with alternate preparation). Those locally ordained usually are supported by a strong system of training and supervision. This would also be useful for other part-time cures to keep the congregation adequately related to the life and resources of the wider church.

Priests in this staffing pattern need a clear sense of the primary task of the congregation, the essential aspects of pastoral oversight, and a capacity to manage their time effectively. Skills in the creation of self-managing teams and the dynamics of family systems might be especially useful.

6. Yoking

One priest serves as pastor to two congregations. This pattern calls for an ability to shape and supervise the ministry of lay members in a manner that does not require a high degree of personal involvement. The priest needs to know how to equip lay leaders to such an extent that they competently carry major responsibility for administrative functions and community involvement. The priest needs to be able to offer an emotional investment in each congregation, provide for the

ministry and development of each, and manage tensions between two organizational systems. Special skills are needed in evangelization, stewardship and service ministries.

7. Vocational Deacons

Vocational Deacons are appropriate participants in any of the above staffing patterns. Special training might be provided to help the deacon's ministry fit the needs of the particular model. The integrity of this separate order of ministry is maintained in part by a policy that deacons never take on the presiding position in a congregation.

8. Lay Administrators and/or Lay Pastoral Associates

These may be a useful addition to any staffing pattern. In Program and Corporate size churches and clusters such a person might receive a salary or serve on a volunteer basis as part of a staff team. In other arrangements the person is likely to be a volunteer.

A clear job description is necessary. The presiding priest would be the person's supervisor. A diocese might begin to assume more responsibility for the training, continuing education and broad supervision of such people.

Core Comprehensive Training in Church Development

To prepare leaders who can facilitate congregations in a process of transformation, and understand and manage themselves in the leadership role.

This includes providing knowledge and skill training for:

Assessing the congregation

- as a Christian community with unique dynamics and goals
- as an organization with many of the same dynamics, opportunities, and difficulties as any other organization
- in terms of ministries and programs
- in relationship to the external forces and trends of the larger society and Church

Establishing a clear direction and vision

- which is grounded in the Church's mission and identity
- that attends to a long-term, systemic development strategy
- that fits the particular congregation
- that places immediate needs and crises within a broader approach to the congregation's development

Navigating toward the congregation's vision

- with self-directed and flexible leadership
- using the skills to negotiate movement toward the vision

Managing the dynamics of the transformation process

- dealing with conflict and resistance
- managing the polarity of change and stability
- putting in place the structures, processes, and climate needed for development
- developing leaders in the congregation

Developing a leadership style

- with the flexibility to provide leadership that fits the congregation's culture and life cycle
- that is self-differentiated
- that empowers others increasing the capacity of individuals and teams for self-management
- that attends to the spiritual life of the leader

Content areas that need to be part of the training include:

Congregational strategy for revitalization and development; Shaping the parish to enable Christian formation and spiritual development; Leadership and pastoral oversight; Strategies for growth and evangelization; Conflict management and trust development; Understanding the parish as a system; Diocesan and regional strategies for congregational development; Models for congregational life; Contextual issues and parish development; Building community; Leadership development; Strategic management; The dynamics of change; Increasing participation and shared leadership; Defining the parish.

The training approach needs to be:

Practical — Designed to provide skills and methods, grounded in successful parish and diocesan congregational development efforts.

Grounded in Anglican Spirituality and Identity — Focuses on the spirituality of the community, its character and culture; on the spirituality of leaders and its effect on the parish community and on models for development rooted in Anglican tradition.

Innovative — Draws on the emerging methods used in non-profit, corporate, and church organizations.

Competency Oriented — Equips leaders with the resources they need. The desired outcome is competent leadership on the part of parish and diocesan staff and consultants that is rooted in the experience, research, and methods of congregational and organization development.

Attachment H

DIOCESAN PARISH DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

This is expressed as an invitation that might be made by the Bishop to people seen as having potential as consultants.

A Diocesan Consulting Team

This is an invitation for you to become part of an intern process for the development of a diocesan consulting team. We are hoping to establish a skilled group of consultants able to serve our parishes and other groups. Here's what we are thinking.

The Place of Consultation in the Diocese

1. Consultation in the Diocese is to be congruent with the policies and mission strategy of the Diocese.
2. Consultants need to be practicing Christians. They should know how to use the Church's theology, tradition and resources (its understanding of itself) as a base for consulting.

Scope of Congregational Development Consultant's Work

To provide congregations and other organizations in the Diocese with skilled "third party" help grounded in both Christian faith and the knowledge and skills of congregational development and organization development..

Consultants may in time provide services in the following areas: pastorate start-up, vestry weekends, congregational development weekends, search process, stewardship, evangelization, long-term congregational development consultations, congregation staff team building and/or planning, conflict, helping congregations deal with new opportunities (growth and/or transition in the community, use of endowments, etc.), and developing ministries of service and other related concerns.

A close relationship will be maintained with those members of the Bishop's staff whose responsibilities most directly relate to the consultant's work; specifically with clergy development (in regard to areas such as search process and pastorate start-up), congregational development (in areas such as congregational development, evangelization, conflict), stewardship, etc.

CERTIFICATION

All certified consultants will have the knowledge and skills for basic congregational development consultations. Specialties may be developed in areas such as long-term congregational development, evangelization, search process, conflict, or stewardship.

All certified diocesan consultants should be practicing Christians, active in an Episcopal congregation and be knowledgeable about the Episcopal Church and Anglican spirituality.

Training

All members of the consultant team would have:

- Completed the Church Development Institute or a comparable program (for example – NTL's program in organization development)

- Completed at least four weeks of additional workshops with the Leadership Training Institute (LTI), NTL, or a similar organization. Our assumption is that this would include participation in a consultation skills workshop. Other workshops that would be possible are human interaction, group development, design skills, and conflict management.
- You would be responsible for covering your own training costs.
- If you have received a masters degree in congregational development that will serve you in this work. You may be asked to receive additional training if program you attended did not include adequate experiential learning and a good bit of feedback.

Consulting Experience

All members of the consulting team would have:

- Done two or three consultations under supervision. This initial work might usually be done in teams of two. A minimum of 45 hours of observing and assisting
 - Observing -- (no leadership role) 20-30 hours
 - Assisting (taking an active role in the leadership of the consultation) -- 15-20 hours with at least two senior consultants (once we have senior consultants).
- Received feedback from clients using a provided form.
- Reviewed the feedback with others on the consulting team and with the responsible person on diocesan staff
- It is the responsibility of the intern to arrange for opportunities to observe and assist.

Also

- Any necessary orientation to the diocesan approach for congregational development, stewardship, evangelization, search process, etc.
- Specialization can come after building a solid base (e.g., specialization such as search process, stewardship, evangelism, conflict, overall parish development, etc.)

The Bishop will certify consultants

After the intern program is completed, and all the expectations above are met, the Bishop may certify the person to serve as a diocesan church development consultant. The consultant management team will screen and make a recommendation to the Bishop.

Certified diocesan consultants are paid at a rate established by the Bishop.

Qualifications to Enter Intern Program

- a. A practicing Christian active in an Episcopal congregation.
- b. Has a harmonious relationship with the priest and vestry of his or her parish.
- c. Willing to receive and finance the necessary training.
- d. Willing to work in a manner that is congruent with the policies and mission strategy of the Diocese. Invited by the Diocesan Bishop

Interns Applying for Consultant Status

All previous requirements having been met, interns applying for consultant status need to do the following:

- Present to the Bishop's Office a record of courses completed, readings completed and specific areas of apprenticing accomplished.
- Present two written recommendations from consultants with whom internship has been done.
- On the basis of an interview any special areas of an applicant's competency will be established, i.e., Search, Congregational Development, Evangelization, Stewardship, Conflict, etc. Information will be provided on fees, forms, etc.

- Having completed the above steps, the applicant will be authorized to function as part of the consulting team or not.

Active Consultants

- Are expected to report all contracts made to the diocesan office within three days of the contract being established. If the contract is written, a copy should be sent. Long term and/or complex consultations should have a written contract. If the client is a diocesan committee the chairperson should be asked to inform the diocesan staff person most related to the group. If the consultation involves serious conflict inform the Bishop. Conflict consultations may need to be transferred to a consultant authorized to function in that area.
- Those not engaged in any diocesan consulting for 18 months will be moved from an active to an inactive list. Consultants may ask to be on the inactive list. Anyone on the inactive list for more than another 12 months will be dropped from the consultant list and may re-apply.

Comments on the place of a consultant team in a diocese

A well-trained and supervised team of consultants can significantly increase the diocese’s ability to resource its parishes.

A. The Place of Consultation in the Diocese

1. Consultation in the Diocese is to be congruent with the policies and mission strategy of the Diocese.
2. A variety of groups will be at work on mission strategy in any diocese. Consultants can play an important role in informing the mission strategy through members of the staff and in gatherings called for that purpose.
3. Consultants need to be practicing Christians. Should know how to use the Church’s theology, tradition and resources (its understanding of itself) as a base for consulting. They need to be respectful, curious, and knowledgeable about the various traditions in the church.
4. The diocese will be served by having high expectations of its consultants. In too many dioceses poorly trained people are invited to be consultants. My assumption is that it is important for a diocese to create its consultant group starting with high expectations for training, experience, competence and accountability. It is easier to begin a network with the bar set high and then lower it later or make exceptions as need; than it is to set the bar low in the beginning and try to raise it later.

Attachment I

Three Assessments of Diocesan Stance Toward Smaller Parishes

PART A: Episcopal Oversight of Ministry in Small Communities

<i>To What extent does the Bishop's Office:</i>		<i>Not at all</i>			<i>Very strongly</i>		
1. Pay serious attention to small communities, small parishes, and their needs?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
2. Communicate a positive attitude toward parish life - an appreciation of the basic fruits of the gathering and scattering of the People of God, rather than solely programmatic criteria for success?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
3. Hold a positive view of the small church, neither regarding it as a "problem" ignoring its potential for growth and development?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
4. Establish a mission orientation in the diocese by being unwilling to settle for a "chaplaincy" or "club" model for parishes of any size?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
5. Foster a style of reflection and discernment in planning, evaluation and decision-making?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
6. Use common language and common models which can provide criteria and a challenge for parishes of all sizes? (Such as "next Step in Mission," "The Christian Life," etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7. Have a reputation for realism about local conditions: familiarity with the strengths, problems and resources of each parish?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
8. Demonstrate a consistency between theology and practice, and a willingness to explore the gaps between them?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
9. Establish a long-term strategy; with sufficient institutional support to give it "staying power"?	1	2	3	4	5	6	

Part B: The Role of Diocesan Leadership Groups

To what extent do other structures (the elected Council, Standing Committee, other diocesan committees and commissions, etc.) Support the leadership and development of congregations in small communities by:

		<i>Not at all</i>			<i>Very Strongly</i>		
1. Supporting and collaborating with the Bishop's Office in the development and implementation of strategies	1	2	3	4	5	6	
2. A willingness to be educated about the needs and problems of small communities; about parish development methods; and about mission strategy?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
3. A willingness to devote adequate time to policy issues which affect small parishes and small communities?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
4. A readiness to provide adequate and unbegrudged funding to sustain and develop parishes in small communities; and to foster diocesan excitement about such mission commitments?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
5. Inclusion in their membership of clergy and lay leaders from parishes in small communities, and structuring of meetings so that persons are able to participate?	1	2	3	4	5	6	

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|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Adoption of a style of reflection and discernment in planning, evaluation and decision-making? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Working with the Bishop's Office to develop a unified and pastoral procedure for evaluation, so that congregation's receiving diocesan aid (or other congregations in special categories) are not subjected to redundant or unsupportive evaluation procedures? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Some Principles Regarding Ministry in Small Communities: A form for Assessment of the Diocesan Approach

To What extent does our diocese:

	<i>Not at all</i>				<i>Very strongly</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Foster wholeness in parishes of all sizes? (Do we act as though a parish of almost any size can give full expression to the Christian life, and fulfill its identity as a local expression of the Body of Christ, the People of God?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Use an effective combination of approaches to provide clergy leadership in small communities? (Are the six major approaches used in a disciplined and thoughtful way? With sensitivity both to present realities and to future possibilities for growth and development? With clarity about which more permanent structures of ministry? With sufficient flexibility? Is the effectiveness of the "mix" of approaches monitored and adapted over time? Is there effective use of both stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy; full deployment of retired and bivocational clergy; and an excellent on-site alternative to seminary for the formation and training of certain candidates for ordination, where appropriate?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Foster strength in all orders of ministry? (Are a strong laity, diaconate and priesthood nurtured and equipped in every parish? Is special attention given to intercession and support for the laity in their families, community and places of work?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Expect and encourage collegial support? (Have we established a norm of team relationships and other structures of support among parishes and priests in the same region? Is collegiality build into the structure of ministry?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Expect and encourage strong oversight? (Are clergy and lay leaders nurtured in their capacity for faithful and effective oversight? Is there support and accountability for all three aspects of oversight: spiritual direction, institutional management and administration, and enabling transforming community? Are priests supported and held accountable in their special responsibility for parish oversight?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Promote institutional stability for all parishes? (When structures of ministry are selected, is adequate attention given to ensuring a reliable financial base and continuity in priestly leadership?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Foster a process and pattern of parish development? (Does the diocese expect and encourage appropriate planning methods, and the practice of Christian discernment in decision-making? Does the diocese encourage each parish to choose – as the basis of its planning, evaluation and teaching-some pattern for parish life and ministry which focuses the parish on essentials and encourages depth and balance in parish life – such as "Next Step in Mission," "The Christian Life," or other models?)	1	2	3	4	5	6

From Alice Mann's *Clergy Leadership in Small Communities*, Ascension Press. ¹ Intentional development toward self-support with descending grant; full-time single cures; part time single cures; yoking; clusters; and cures served by local residents with alternate preparation for ordination.

Attachment J

This statement is from a 1993 Diocese of Arkansas statement on working with mission congregations. Other dioceses might want to construct their own list of ways to destroy trust and bloc revitalization in congregations.

As their name implies, Mission congregations ought to be on the cutting edge of church growth. But in late 1981 we realized that we had drifted into patterns (very common in many dioceses) which almost guaranteed that Mission congregations would not experience significant growth. If Screwtape made me a suitable offer, I could provide him a manual on how to strangle the growth of missions. Since I assume he is not in the room, let me lay out for you some (but not all) of the ingredients.

1. Have one minimum salary figure for the clergy. Be sure that figure is paid to Mission clergy without reference to their experience, length of service or competence. And be sure to make it small enough to drive the best of them out of their congregations after a few years of service.
2. Provide weak oversight. The seminaries do not teach the clergy much about church growth. Make sure that nobody else does either. The last thing you want is a priest in a position of leadership who is ready, willing and able to lead. Much current psycho-babble about process is helpful here. Also, of course, the use which can be made of good words such as democracy and Christian love.
3. Start new congregations without regard to demographics and with a tiny handful of members.
4. Let these new congregations put up very small buildings in out of the way locations. A seating capacity of about 85 is perfect.
5. Be sure that the parking lots are small and unpaved, and that support staff and resources for all forms of communication are inadequate.
6. Have them put up signs which are invisible to all those who are not already members, and make sure that they use ecclesiastical language which no non-member could understand if she did happen to see one.
7. Steps 3-6 will guarantee that the church will remain small and will have a perpetual struggle for financial survival. This is also useful in producing artificial guilt as the members will blame their non-growth (in spite of hard work) on themselves, or the clergy, or the supposed fact that all the people in town are already active members of the Baptist Church
8. If any visitors should appear in church, make sure that they are handed a Prayer Book and a number of other pieces of paper with 27 different options for saying the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Psalms. And, of course, be certain that if they make it to the coffee hour, no one speaks to them. This can happen routinely in a congregation in which the members sincerely see themselves as a warm and friendly "church family."
9. Having thus constructed the coffin, nail down the lid with a system of transfer payments which subsidizes operating expenses for Missions until the end of time. Again, this should be done in the name of missionary zeal and Christian charity. The amounts will never be large enough to do any real good and, having removed all economic incentives for good stewardship and growth, you can count on the same results which such economics produce all over the world — namely stagnation, dependency, resentment, poverty and mediocrity.
10. If in spite of all this, a mission should be able to pay its own bills for a year, make it a parish right away. This will guarantee that it stays at a marginal level and is pre-occupied with survival.

Worksheet: Elements of a Diocesan Congregational Development System

5. The diocese effectively dealing with three difficult issues that the diocese always faces:

a. Managing the overall “demand system” so it can give adequate attention to developmental possibilities.

b. Developing trust between congregations and diocese; parish leaders and bishop’s office

c. Building the long-term capacity of the diocese for congregational development

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