

## The Church: Analogies and Images

IMAGE	MISSION/ PURPOSE	ROLE OF PRIEST	EVANGELIZATION	STEWARDSHIP	WHAT HOLDS IT TOGETHER?
CLUB					
FAMILY					
CORPORATION					
SOCIAL CHANGE MOVEMENT					
SOCIAL WELFARE AGENCY					
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER					
PEOPLE OF GOD					
BODY OF CHRIST					

People naturally make the analogy between the Church and other groups with which they are familiar: clubs, corporations, families and so on. References to "organized religion" or "institutionalized religion" reveal the assumption that the Church is just one more form of human organization. While the process of making analogies with the club, corporation, etc., is inevitable, it also creates a problem. "People come to the conclusion that the Church is a "society created by human enterprise and designed to serve particular human ends," that it is created by the "agreement of a number of individual persons who presumably define the terms of their association and its goals." ... "Church means, not corporation and not club, but a collection of people who have been called out together by a voice or a word or a summons which comes to them from outside." (Richard Norris, *Understanding the Faith of the Church*, Seabury Press, NY, 1979)

From *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Robert A Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2008