

Chapter Eighteen

The Main Purpose of the Council

What should be the main work of the parish pastoral council? The clearest answer comes from the church's official documents. The main work of the pastoral council in general, they say, is the threefold task of investigating pastoral matters, reflecting on them, and recommending practical conclusions to the pastor. To be sure, most official references to the threefold task of the pastoral council speak of such councils at the diocesan, not the parish level. But if we define the pastoral council as a distinct type of council that may exist at various levels, then I would argue that the threefold description of its task applies to parish as well as diocesan councils. Vatican documents almost unanimously describe the pastoral council as a body that investigates, ponders, and draws practical conclusions.¹

One may respond that Canon 536 defines the parish pastoral council without reference to this threefold task. It states that pastoral councils merely "give their help in fostering pastoral activity." In my view, the lan-

guage of this canon is vague and unsatisfactory. All Christians are to give such help, we could say. What is unique to the parish pastoral council? I answer that it helps by doing what pastoral councils in general do. It studies pastoral matters, reflects on them, and draws appropriate conclusions.

Council practitioners in the United States increasingly tend to describe the threefold task of pastoral councils as pastoral planning. Planning has not been, generally speaking, the terminology of Vatican documents.² But the threefold task they assign to councils is fully consistent with pastoral planning. Practitioners have spoken about pastoral planning by parish councils since the mid-1970s. In the mid-1980s, they began to describe a comprehensive planning role for councils. The 1989 creation of the Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development signified that pastoral planning was the main task of councils, at least for many diocesan professionals with responsibility for planning and councils.³ The professionals say that investigating parish matters, reflecting on them, and proposing practical conclusions “is” pastoral planning.

To say *that* parish councils ought to do pastoral planning, however, does not explain about *what* councils plan. Yes, they investigate, reflect, and propose. But about what? It does not suffice to say that they plan regarding “pastoral matters.” Efforts to define pastoral matters as more visionary than practical, more spiritual than material, and more consensus-oriented than parliamentary, have not been satisfactory. They do not reflect the church’s official documents, which indicate that “pastoral” means pertaining to the pastor. To be sure, there are many suggestions about the proper focus of pastoral councils—parish ministries, planning themes, and topics taken from canon law. These recommendations about the scope of pastoral planning are helpful, but they cannot settle the matter.⁴ No one can predict with certainty what situation a parish will face.

The scope of pastoral planning is hard to describe because it concerns contingent matters, as we saw in Chapter Fifteen. Pastoral councils seek to represent practical wisdom, wisdom about what a community should do in a given situation. In this chapter we will see that practical wisdom is the key to defining the council’s main work. No one can fully predict it because the situation is constantly changing. What the council needs to plan for depends on the parish and the pastor. The idea of contingent knowledge suggests that we cannot describe with certainty the topics about which a parish must plan.

We can clarify the task of the pastoral council, however, by contrasting

it with the finance council. Canon 537 obliges every parish to have one. Finance councils aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods. What is the difference between the finance council and the pastoral council? As an illustration, let us consider the Church of All Hallows where the pastor, Father Roger LaBonte, faces an enviable situation.

The Church of All Hallows

All Hallows Church (this story has been fictionalized) lies in a north-eastern city that, for many years, suffered an economic depression. Employment was low, and the population fell. Then a major drug company decided to move its corporate headquarters to the city. It built a huge campus with an administrative center, research facility, and factory. Within a decade, the fortunes of the city changed. Employment rose, the tax base swelled, and the population grew. Under the direction of Father LaBonte, All Hallows built a new church according to the latest liturgical principles, with the altar in the midst of the congregation. After years of belt-tightening to erase the debt, the income at All Hallows now exceeds its operating expenses. Father LaBonte wants to know what to do with the surplus. He consulted his pastoral and his finance council about where should he put it and how he should spend it.

The finance council advised Father LaBonte, first of all, that the excess income is not "excess" at all. The councillors reminded him that the parish rectory needs a new roof. Unforeseen emergencies may arise. The so-called extra income, they said, belongs in the bank. It is only prudent to have parish savings.

The pastoral council took a different tack. The councillors opposed the idea of simply banking the excess. They argued that ministry should take precedence over financial security. After years of saving to pay off the debt, they asked, how could Father LaBonte even think of establishing a savings account? Religious education needs books. The choir needs new music. The youth ministry program needs a full-time director. Ministry budgets always lag behind fixed and operating expenses. Extra income belongs in the ministry budgets.

Father LaBonte was dismayed to receive two different opinions about what to do with the extra income. To be sure, he took some consolation in knowing that disputes about a surplus are better than disputes about a deficit. But he realized the danger of serious disagreement about parish income. His finance and his pastoral councillors represented two differ-

ent viewpoints, each of which is reasonable, each of which has its supporters in the parish. To which should he listen?

If he were to pay more attention to the finance council, he would become a fiscal conservative. Under its influence, he would save for capital improvements and avoid additional ministry expenses. But Father LaBonte knows that there is more to parish administration than money in the bank. Pastoral council members were quick to remind him of that. If he were to accept their advice, he would appear more responsive to parishioner needs. With the pastoral council's recommendations, ministries might grow and flourish. But should this happen, he asked himself, at the expense of fiscal security?

The Proper Task of the Two Councils

If we want to better understand the task of the pastoral council, we need to distinguish it from that of the finance council. This distinction is not easy. To be sure, the church's documents speak about the task of these councils in different ways. Pastoral councils have the threefold task of investigating pastoral works, pondering them, and proposing practical conclusions. Finance councils aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods. On the surface, the tasks are quite different.

Two kinds of difficulties, however, can produce confusion. One difficulty is about the scope of the two councils. Are "pastoral" matters really distinct from the "administration" of parish goods? Or is administration part of the pastoral task? The second difficulty involves the relation between the two councils. Are they independent, or is the finance council subordinate to the pastoral council? In order to solve these difficulties (and define more clearly the task of the pastoral council), let us look at each in turn.

The Finance Council

The church's law includes a single canon on parish finance councils.⁵ Canon 537 describes their task as follows:

Each parish is to have a finance council which is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this council the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods.

Aiding the pastor in the administration of parish goods—that is the work of the finance council. Does this mean that pastoral councils have nothing to do with administration? Such was the interpretation of the late John Keating, Bishop of Arlington. He said that, according to canon 537, the administration of parish goods is the province of the finance council. He drew the conclusion that temporal matters belong to the finance council, and pastoral matters belong to the pastoral council. No pastoral council, he maintained, should deal with parish administration.⁶

Bishop Keating's view has proven unpersuasive, however, because it unduly restricts the scope of the pastoral council. That scope has been consistently described as "pastoral matters." To be sure, Vatican documents distinguish between the exercise of jurisdiction or governing power and the consultative role of the pastoral council. But that does not mean that questions of governance or administration are off-limits for the pastoral council. Indeed, the Congregation for the Clergy's 1973 Circular Letter on Pastoral Councils made this explicit. It stated that pastoral councils may consider acts of governance that belong specifically to the pastor as the one who legally acts on behalf of the parish.⁷

Few canonists would admit Bishop Keating's sharp distinction between pastoral matters and parish administration.⁸ To say that the administration of the parish does not fall within the scope of "pastoral matters" curtails the pastor's freedom to consult as he sees fit.

In short, we cannot divide the pastoral and the finance council on the basis of their scope or subject matter. But canon 537 suggests another avenue when it describes how finance councils are regulated. It says that finance councils are "regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop." If we want to know more about finance councils, we have to examine what diocesan bishops say about them.

Diocesan Guidelines on Finance Councils

The intentions of bishops regarding finance councils are expressed in the norms for finance councils published by various dioceses. In 1994, I examined seven different guidelines for finance councils, published by the dioceses of Harrisburg, Richmond, Cleveland, Milwaukee, St. Louis, San Antonio, and Los Angeles.⁹ Each states that finance councils should help the pastor prepare the parish budget. Six out of seven recommend that finance councils assist the pastor in making periodic financial reports. Four state that finance councils advise the pastor on major

expenditures or long-term contracts, oversee the parish's accounts and financial record-keeping, recommend parish investments, and monitor the parish's financial security and collections.

About the relation between the finance and the pastoral councils, however, there are some disagreements. To be sure, all agree that the two councils should coordinate their work. But coordination means different things. In some dioceses, coordination means that finance councils are subordinate to pastoral councils. I cannot say how many dioceses in the U.S. endorse this, but the finance council guidelines for the dioceses of Milwaukee, Harrisburg, and St. Louis (for example) recommend it.¹⁰

The superiority of the pastoral council, however, is not universally acknowledged. The finance council guidelines of the dioceses of Richmond, Cleveland, and Los Angeles state that the relation between finance and pastoral councils should be "cooperative."¹¹ One council is not subordinate to the other. Indeed, many could argue that an attempt to make one council superior to the other contradicts the consultative nature of church councils. How can one consultative group demand that another conform to its wishes, as if the finance council were merely consultative and the pastoral council had administrative authority? The ploy of making one council superior to the other not only lacks universal acceptance, but may well violate the very soul of consultation.

To sum up, there have been two efforts to distinguish between the proper work of finance and pastoral councils. One effort, that of Bishop Keating, has been to distinguish between the two councils on the basis of their subject matter. "Pastoral" concerns belong to pastoral councils, and "administration" belongs to finance councils. This effort, however, does not reflect the intention of Vatican II and unduly restricts the pastor's freedom to consult. In diocesan guidelines we see another effort to clarify how the two types of councils may cooperate. Some guidelines recommend that pastoral councils coordinate finance councils as ministries of the parish, and are superior to them. Others describe the two as relatively independent. There is no single point of view.

An Aristotelian Solution

Past attempts to coordinate finance and pastoral councils by curtailing their subject matter or defining their relationship have not been entirely successful. We have seen that administrative concerns belong as much to the pastoral council as to the finance council. Diocesan guidelines do not

agree that one council is subordinate to the other. Since defining the relationship between the two on the basis of subject matter or a hierarchical relationship do not suffice, another effort is required. I would like to propose a “new” way to correlate the two councils. It is based on the type of knowledge that each council seeks, on the method of each, and on the gifts of councillors.¹² This “new” attempt is grounded on very old principles, the principles laid down by Aristotle.

In Chapter Fifteen we treated the question of ecclesial representation with the help of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle distinguished in Book VI between two types of knowledge. One is always and everywhere true, and Aristotle called it “science.” The other seeks what is best in a concrete situation. Aristotle called it “practical wisdom,” namely, the knowledge that people seek by means of dialogue. This is what pastoral councils seek. They aim at a particular kind of truth, the truth about contingent matters, the truth about how a parish should act in a changing situation. Pastoral councils are “representative” in that they seek to “represent” this practical wisdom of the People of God. Finance councils, by contrast, are concerned about the sciences of finance and accounting. They apply these disciplines to the tangible goods of the parish.

Aristotle’s distinction between practical wisdom and science can help us understand finance and pastoral councils. The two councils not only seek different kinds of knowledge, but employ distinct methods and require different gifts in councillors. We will first examine the types of knowledge that the two councils seek. Then we will show that each proceeds according to its own method, the two methods of demonstration and deliberation. Finally, we will see that each council requires different abilities in its members. Distinguishing between them will help us understand the proper role of the pastoral council.

Types of Knowledge

Science, for Aristotle, does not refer to the “scientific method” as we know it today. It is not merely the work of formulating hypotheses and testing them in a laboratory. To science (the Greek word is *theoria*) belongs every kind of knowledge that is always and everywhere true. It is the knowledge of the expert. Science is the knowledge of those things that cannot be other than what they are.

Practical wisdom, on the other hand, has to do with action. Practical wisdom (in Greek: *phronesis*) concerns deeds that we may or may not

want to do. People with practical wisdom, says Aristotle, have a capacity for seeing what is good. The good that they see is not an abstraction, but rather the best choice of action in a given situation. It is contingent on the pastor and the parish. Those with practical wisdom are able to rightly judge how matters stand with a particular community.

Finance councils are concerned with the realm of what is always and everywhere true. No matter how the finance council categorizes the budget, income can never be more than what the parish has collected. Expenses can be no less than what the parish has spent. This is not mere opinion. The finance council can actually demonstrate its knowledge with collection receipts and check stubs.

Pastoral council members, by contrast, focus on something other than what is presently the case. Their concern is the future: what can and should be. A parish can make many different choices about religious education, liturgy, social justice, parish renovation, and care for the elderly. Everyone will admit that no parish can do everything. That is where practical wisdom comes in. The council with practical wisdom helps a pastor decide what the parish ought to do with limited resources.

So finance councils are scientific, in Aristotle's sense of the word, and pastoral councils are practically wise. Aristotle enables us to distinguish between them. But what are the consequences for the way the two councils run?

The Method of the Two Councils

Aristotle states that scientific knowledge can be demonstrated and taught. If we apply his insight to the finance council, we see the council's fundamentally scientific nature. Finance councils have two main tasks: they make periodic reports, and they help a pastor prepare the parish budget. In making reports, they show what has been collected and spent. And in budgeting, they project next year's income from a history of the last year's income. This is the basis for the following year's payroll, operating expenses, and capital improvements. The goal of the finance council is straightforward. It is to demonstrate the parish's finances and to teach what will happen if income and expenses are as projected. The basic principles of accounting are fixed, unchangeable, and (as Aristotle would say) scientific.

In the pastoral council, however, there is no "scientific" way to proceed. Without a doubt, pastoral councils amass facts, study issues, and calculate with regard to worthwhile ends. They proceed scientifically in the sense

that their goal is knowledge. But the knowledge that pastoral councils seek is not the demonstrably scientific knowledge of finance councils. It is rather a kind of wisdom: the knowledge of what is good for a community and the ability to discriminate about what the community desires. "Reasoning must affirm what desire pursues," wrote Aristotle. The pastoral council must hold up to the light of reason the desires of the parish community, affirming what is good and recommending it to the pastor.

So finance councils proceed by demonstration, that is, by showing and making clear. They manifest the financial reality of the parish, projecting it into the future. They demonstrate this financial reality on the basis of scientific principles of accounting.

Pastoral councils, by contrast, proceed by deliberation. They have no fixed-and-firm scientific method. Why? Because what they deliberate about—namely, the changing needs of the parish—follows no fixed rules. Pastoral councils apply a capacity for seeing the community's good. This capacity, practical wisdom, enables them to consider a number of actions, all of which are good in themselves. Their wisdom is "practical" because it aims at choice and action. Pastoral councillors choose—from among all the good things the parish could *possibly* do—what it should *actually* do.

The Gifts of Councillors

Not only do the tasks of pastoral and finance councils differ; the councillors themselves ought to have different gifts. Finance council members should have expert knowledge. They should be familiar with the science of accounting, should be able to rigorously demonstrate the parish's finances, and should be able to express their conclusions to the pastor. Financial knowledge is the primary criterion for selecting finance councillors.

Pastoral council members, however, need not be scientific experts. Their gift is deliberation. They should know the parish. They should be able to judge how it will respond to new initiatives. They should be able to express their opinions well and to listen attentively to the opinions of others. Above all, they should be able to synthesize the various opinions, clarifying them and making sound recommendations. Their goal is not to gain an advantage for one group at the expense of another, but to seek the common good. By controlling their passions, Aristotle said, the wise preserve the ability to judge correctly.

Ordinary parishioners can discern among themselves, as we saw in

Chapter Sixteen, about the gift of deliberation. It is wise to involve the parishioners in the choice of pastoral councillors. But no guideline suggests a popular election of finance councillors. They are experts and should be chosen for their expert ability. Not everyone can serve as pastoral and finance councillors. People without scientific knowledge of accounting should decline the invitation to be finance council members. Those who are impatient with discussion, who lack the ability to consider all sides of a question, and who want to impulsively “get on with the job” of the parish, need not apply for the pastoral council.

Whose Advice?

Father LaBonte received conflicting opinions from his finance and pastoral council about what to do with the surplus at All Hallows. He had two questions: where should he put the surplus and what should he do with it? About the first question, I agree with the finance council. Extra income belongs in the bank, at least until the pastor decides to spend it. The finance council was able to demonstrate the extent of the surplus and to recommend an account in which to put it.

Banking the surplus was an appropriate recommendation for the finance council. It recognized that its job is not to decide how to spend the money, but to keep track of it. Finance councillors knew that their goal was the application of the principles of finance and accounting, scientific principles that are always and everywhere true. They were wise not to recommend spending the money, for that is a question of right action, and beyond the finance council’s scope.

Father LaBonte’s second question was about how to spend the money, namely, a question about action. This was an appropriate question for the pastoral council. Since there is no scientific rule about how best to act, Father LaBonte wanted to deliberate about it. He did well to consult the pastoral council, because its members are good at deliberation. The councillors know that there are many opinions among parishioners about where the parish should spend its money. These opinions have to be collected, understood, and weighed. Only then is it possible to wisely discriminate among them.

Father LaBonte was aware that some parishioners resented the constant fund-raising efforts necessary to pay off the parish debt. At the same time, he knew that parish donations were still high and there was a good esprit among the people of All Hallows. He wanted to maintain that

esprit, and did not want to simply spend the parish money on this or that good idea. With the parish debt gone, his church was in a fundamentally new situation and enjoyed a freedom that it had not known for years. Father LaBonte wanted to know more about this new situation. He asked the pastoral council to help him conduct a series of parish assemblies. Their purpose was to listen to parishioners, inquire about how the parish mission had changed, and build commitment to that new mission. In this way, he recognized the fundamental purpose of the pastoral council, namely, to deliberate and so to make present the community's practical wisdom.

Conclusion: Science and Practical Wisdom

Pastors should consult the finance council in order to know the parish's financial reality. They should consult the pastoral council when they want to deliberate about what to do in a particular situation. That is the lesson of Aristotle.

Pastors who distinguish between pastoral and finance councils along Aristotelian lines may still receive conflicting advice. But if they know what each council is good at, they can ask the questions that pertain to each. There are, of course, no impermeable borders between the two councils. Aristotle himself recognized that discussions of truth admit only the precision that the subject at hand allows. Scientists aim at strict demonstration, he said, and the practically wise aim at what is probably good. By distinguishing between the two, a pastor can invite his councilors' best efforts. The doctrine of Aristotle suggests that each council pursues a different goal, proceeds in a different way, and requires different talents. Pastors should be aware of this and tailor their questions to the abilities of each council.

The pastoral council seeks practical wisdom, that is, the knowledge about what the parish ought to do in its concrete situation. When the church asks councils to investigate pastoral matters, ponder them, and propose practical conclusions, it invites them to seek such wisdom. Catholics in the U.S. call this search "pastoral planning." It is the main task of councils.

goals and objectives determined by the parish council" (p. 48). Pastoral concerns, not financial, are to remain paramount. The Harrisburg and St. Louis guidelines affirm this view. Harrisburg's *Parish Council Policy and Guidelines* (1985) and St. Louis' *Guidelines for the Ministry of Parish Councils* (1985) insist that finance council members be appointed after consultation with the parish council, thereby ensuring the pastoral council's primacy.

11. The 1991 *Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines* for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles describe the responsibility of the finance council as "fiscal stewardship" and make it somewhat independent of the pastoral council. "While the Finance Council has responsibility for the stewardship of parish financial resources, it is not the role of the Finance Council to recommend directions, priorities, or programs other than those related to its delegation namely, fiscal stewardship" (p. 18). Richmond's 1991 *Norms for Parish Finance Councils* and Cleveland's 1991 *Parish Finance Council Policy* also agree that finance and pastoral councils should cooperate, because finance councils are not standing committees of the parish council.

12. Fischer, "When the Parish Council and the Finance Council Disagree."

Chapter Nineteen: The Meaning of Consultation

1. William J. Rademacher's *Lay Ministry: A Theological, Spiritual, and Pastoral Handbook* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991) marked a break from his council publications, the last of which had been written with the help of Marliiss Rogers, *The New Practical Guide* (1988). Chapter Eleven discusses Rademacher's role in the council movement.

2. William J. Rademacher, "Parish Councils: Consultative Vote Only?" *Today's Parish* 32:3 (March 2000): 6-9.

3. The Vatican's 1997 "Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priest" seems to take a negative view of consultation. The absence in the document of any affirmation of councils, and its repeated warnings, such as the statement that councils "cannot in any way become deliberative structures" (§ 2) and that their decisions are "null and void" if the pastor is not present (§ 3), may suggest that the phrase "consultative only" means "without authority." See Pope John Paul II, "Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priest," written by a committee representing the Congregation for the Clergy, the Pontifical Council for the Laity, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the Congregation for Bishops, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, and approved "in forma specifica" by Pope John Paul II and promulgated on August 15, 1997. Posted on the Internet at the Catholic Information Network web site, November 13, 1997.

4. We have already treated the consultative-only vote of councils (Chapters 9 and 12) and the pastor's presidential role (Chapter 6). The threefold task of councils (Chapter 19) may seem narrow in light of the multiple roles that many theorists have assigned to councils (Chapters 3 and 8). Early advocates of co-responsibility (Chapter 10) and of the popular understanding of "pastoral" (Chapter 13) may appear to have had more appreciation for councils.

5. Canon lawyers often treat the subject of consultation within the context of "shared responsibility." See Kennedy, "Shared Responsibility." The most important theoretical studies of shared responsibility since the publication of the 1983 Code of Canon Law are by Provost, "Canon Law"; by Kim Se-Mang, *Parish Councils*; and by Renken, "Pastoral Councils." Chapter Ten discussed earlier views of co-responsibility.

6. The theory of situational leadership was developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources* (first edition, 1969), Sixth Edition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993). Keating applied it to church governance in *The Leadership Book*. For an explicit application to councils, see Mark F. Fischer, "Parish Councils: Why Good Delegates Don't Always Make Good Leaders," *Today's Parish* (March 1997): 27-30.

7. Appreciative inquiry was first treated by David L. Cooperrider, Suresh Srivastva and oth-

ers, *Appreciative Management and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990). Other writers have applied the principles of appreciative leadership in David L. Cooperrider, Peter F. Sorensen, Jr., Diana Whitney, and Therese F. Yaeger, editors, *Appreciative Inquiry: Rethinking the Organization Toward a Positive Theory of Change* (Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing LLC, 2000). The application of appreciative leadership to parish councils was treated in Mark F. Fischer, "Breathe Fresh Spirit into Your Parish Pastoral Council," *Today's Parish* (January 1997): 29-31.

8. Vatican Council II, "Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People," no. 10, in Vatican Council II, *The Documents of Vatican II*, Flannery, General Editor, pp. 777-778. The Latin text is: "Assuescant laici intime cum sacerdotibus suis uniti in paroecia operari; problemata propria ac mundi et quaestiones ad salutem hominum spectantes, collatis consiliis examinanda et solvenda, ad communitatem Ecclesiae afferre; omnique incepto apostolico et missionario suae familiae ecclesiasticae adiutricem operam pro viribus navare." See Vatican II, "Decretum: De Apostolatu Laicorum," no. 10, in Vatican II, *Cura et Studio Archivi Concilii Oecumenici, Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani*, Volumen IV, Periodus Quarta, Pars VI: Congregationes Generalis CLVI – CLXIV, Session Publica VIII (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1978), pp. 609-632, at p. 617.

9. See Pope John Paul II, "Christifideles Laici: Apostolic Exhortation on the Laity" (January 30, 1987), based on the 1987 World Synod of Bishops, *Origins* 18:35 (Feb. 9, 1989): 561, 653-595. It stated, "The [Second Vatican] council's mention of examining and solving pastoral problems 'by general discussion' [footnote reference to *Apostolicam actuositatem*, no. 10] ought to find its adequate and structured development through a more convinced, extensive and decided appreciation for 'parish pastoral councils,' on which the synod fathers have rightly insisted" (no. 27, p. 574).

Thomas J. Green, an American canon lawyer, was among the first (as far as I know) to see *Apostolicam actuositatem* 10 as a source for parish councils. See Green's "Critical Reflections on the Schema on the People of God," *Studia Canonica* 14 (1980): 235-314. Green criticized the lack of attention to PPCs in the draft schema for the revised Code of Canon Law, p. 254. In a footnote about parish councils he wrote, "The schema does not seem to refer to corporate bodies at the parish level," adding that "The thrust of *Apostolicam actuositatem* (nos. 10, 26) and the Directory for the Pastoral Office of Bishops (no. 179) took a different view on the matter."

10. See Paul VI, Pope, *Ecclesiam Suam: Encyclical Letter on "The Paths of the Church,"* (August 6, 1964), with a Commentary by Gregory Baum, OSA (Glen Rock, NJ: Paulist Press, 1964). The sentence by Baum is on p. 11.

11. We are using the word "dysfunction" in the sense pioneered by Murray Bowen's "family systems theory" of the '50s and '60s and presented in Bowen's *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 1985). Family systems theory starts with the assumption that spouses ought to have a complementary and cooperative relationship, that parents ought to care for the children who depend on them, and that children ought to respect their parents. When relations break down, for example in the presence of alcoholism, some members of the family cease to function and others try to compensate for the dysfunction. Although a pastor is not the biological father of his parish council, his relation to the council is akin to a family relation. See Mark F. Fischer, "When Your Pastor Is Dysfunctional," *Today's Parish* (September 1994): 11-13, 23.

12. The difference between sociological and psychological dysfunction hinges on effectiveness and freedom. Sociological dysfunction describes the council that is no longer effective. Psychological dysfunction describes those people whose own freedom to enter into a sound relationship with the council is hindered and who therefore hinder the freedom of the council to do its job.

13. A 1990 study noted that council guidelines published by the dioceses of Harrisburg, Raleigh, Louisville, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Fargo, Omaha, and San Bernardino, for example, allowed appeals in the case of pastor-council conflict. See Fischer, "Parish Pastoral Councils" (1990), p. 9. For a critique of the process of appeal, see Basil Cole, "Conceiving, Creating and Sustaining the Parish Council." *The Priest* 34:9 (September 1978): 30-33.

14. Arnold Kurtz describes the pastor's role in "The Pastor as a Manager of Conflict in the Church," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20.2 (1982): 111-126.

15. For the basic principle of conflict management, see John W. Lawyer and Neil H. Katz, *Communication Skills for Ministry* (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1987).

16. Richard C. Cunningham, "The Laity in the Revised Code," in James H. Provost, Editor, *Code, Community, Ministry: Selected Studies for the Parish Minister Introducing the Revised Code of Canon Law* (Washington, D.C.: Canon Law Society of America, 1992), pp. 32-37, at p. 37.

17. Pope John Paul II, "Christifideles Laici" (no. 25), see p. 573. This part of *Christifideles* treats diocesan pastoral councils; parish pastoral councils are treated at no. 27, p. 574.

Chapter Twenty: The Motive for Consultation

1. About pastors' serious disagreements with councils, see Thomas P. Sweetser, "Parish Accountability: Where the People Are At," *Chicago Studies* 12 (Summer 1973): 115-128, esp. p. 119. Fitzgerald, "Overhauling," p. 684-691; and Shea, "A Bishop Suspends," offer examples of the frustrations of pastors. For dispirited councillors, see Morrow, "A Parish Council of Ministries"; about boredom, see Griffin, "Diocesan Church Structures," esp. p. 62; and about shaking the dust, see Cunningham, "The Laity," esp. p. 37.

2. Hersey and Blanchard define leadership as "the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation" (p. 95).

3. Daniel M. Buechlein, the Benedictine and Bishop of Memphis, described the priest's essential role as drawing together "all those who, by their baptism, exercise another form of priesthood which is membership in the whole body." Buechlein's "The Sacramental Identity of the Ministerial Priesthood," is in Robert Wister, editor, *Priests: Identity and Ministry* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1990), 139-148, at p. 144. Robert M. Schwartz said that, although priestly identity is essentially different from that of the baptized in general, yet "it is oriented toward the upbuilding of all and has no meaning apart from this task" (p. 132). See Schwartz's *Servant Leaders of the People of God* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1989), p. 132.

4. Mark F. Fischer, "Jesus Never Sought Consensus," *Today's Parish* (March 1993): 23-26.

5. David F. Wall reports that, even when council members do not get their way, they can still experience the council as satisfying, especially when they share the pastor's overall goals and experience his support. See Wall, "Parish Councils," pp. 211-213.

6. Mark F. Fischer, "When Should a Pastor Not Consult the Council?" *Today's Parish* (March 1992): 18-20.

Chapter Twenty-one: A Foundation Document

1. For examples of guidelines that describe the council as a policy-maker and policy-implementer, see Chapter Four's discussion of the council's "Consultative and Executive Functions." Chapter Seventeen presents the proper understanding of the coordination exercised by councils.

2. Howes, *Creating an Effective Parish Pastoral Council*, offers a model constitution and bylaws with this phrase at p. 68. For an example of diocesan guidelines that give councils a superior function, see Chapter Thirteen above, footnote 2.

3. Rademacher with Rogers, *The New Practical Guide* (p. 99), state "The council must also learn to delegate authority and responsibility for implementing portions of the parish mission to its committees; the council can then hold them accountable."

4. Howes, *Creating*, p. 70. For a discussion of the restrictions on the scope of the pastoral council in the 1973 Circular Letter ("faith, orthodoxy, moral principles," etc.), see the section entitled "Commentaries on the Circular Letter" in Chapter Ten above. For efforts to restrict the scope of the parish pastoral council in relation to the parish finance council, see the section in Chapter Twelve above entitled "An Erroneous Interpretation?" On the role of the pastor in determining "pastoral" matters, see the discussion of "Pastoral as Spiritual" in Chapter Thirteen above.

5. Rademacher with Rogers, p. 125. For an overview of what diocesan guidelines actually say about the qualifications of councillors, see the section entitled "The Criteria for Membership" in Chapter Seven, above. For an analysis of what the qualifications ought to be, see the sections above entitled "Requirements for the Council Ministry" in Chapter Fifteen