

Chapter Nineteen

The Meaning of Consultation

William Rademacher, with six books about parish councils to his credit, was the foremost thinker of the council movement in the 1970s and 1980s. After years of writing about councils, he shifted his focus in the 1990s to lay ministry.¹ Then, at the end of a decade of relative silence about councils, he returned to them. In 2000 he published an article that criticized the phrase “consultative vote only,” the phrase from Canon 536 that circumscribes the legal authority of councils. His article was a vigorous attack on the church’s doctrine about councils. By limiting their legal authority, Rademacher suggested, the church robs the power of councils to express the Holy Spirit, distorts the proper relation between pastors and people, and reinforces an inadequate form of church governance.²

Rademacher argued that the “consultative vote” of councils, namely, the teaching that they only advise the pastor, tends to muzzle the truth. It doubts the presence of the Spirit in the people of God and gags the prophetic impulse. This was implicit in Rademacher’s description of the

Holy Spirit and ecclesiastical law as two opposing “power systems” between which “there is bound to be a conflict.” A class conflict between pastors and parishioners, he suggested, was inevitable. In Rademacher’s view, many pastors do not want advice. They want unlimited power to command the parish.

Instead of giving unlimited power to pastors, Rademacher would oblige them to listen to their people. Consultation, he said, does not suffice. He stated that the consultative-only clause reduces the laity’s participation in Christ’s prophetic office “to mere advice-giving.” Preferable to consultation, he said, is prayerful discernment. If we could only compel pastors to sit down and work out their differences with a council in a spiritual atmosphere, pastoral matters would improve. The laity’s word is less robust, spiritual, and prophetic, implied Rademacher, because the pastor is not obliged to take it.

In his article Rademacher went so far as to criticize the hierarchical model of Roman Catholic governance. The council’s consultative-only vote depends on this model, which, Rademacher wrote, “serves poorly, if at all.” He stated that he would like to phase it out and recover “the patriarchate, presbyterial, or synodal models” of governance. In other words, he would like to see a number of apostolic patriarchs (rather than Roman primacy), or boards of elders, or rule by councils. “Many good Catholics in their personal faith life have selectively phased out the hierarchy,” Rademacher wrote. For that reason, he suggested, the current system of governance has outlived its usefulness.

No one can protest that the problems identified by Rademacher are imaginary or unreal. Pastors do not always work well with councils. When a pastor’s failure to consult alienates parishioners, it is tempting to look for other forms of governance. But Rademacher’s proposed solutions to these problems are shortsighted. Difficulties with consultation do not render it useless. To be sure, the “consultative only” doctrine may appear to demean councils. But there is more to consultation than its superficial appearance.

In this chapter, we will first look at the ecclesial meaning of consultation. Our goal is to manifest the church’s intention. The church intends consultation in a proper context—the context of mutual appreciation, charity, and dialogue—and this context gives councils a clear goal. They enable us to distinguish between council functions, properly speaking, and dysfunctions.

Ecclesial Consultation

To say that councils have a “consultative” role may suggest to some readers an understanding that is legalistic, narrow, and unappreciative. The word “consultative” means that the vote of councils is not deliberative or legally binding. Councils cannot overrule the pastor. Church law limits their authority. The insistence that councils are consultative-only may appear legalistic. It may also seem narrow-minded. This book has argued that the main purpose of parish pastoral councils is the threefold task of investigating and reflecting on pastoral matters and proposing practical conclusions. Other purposes, such as fostering pastoral activity and assisting the church’s apostolic work (with the possibility of coordinating lay initiatives), are distinctly secondary. This narrows the council’s role. Indeed, it may seem to disparage councils, minimizing their share in responsibility for the parish.³ Readers may conclude that this book pays insufficient attention to the “pastoral” attributes of the council, popularly understood as visionary, consensus-oriented, and spiritual. Is this true? Are we being legalistic, narrow-minded, and unappreciative when we emphasize the consultative role of councils?⁴

I do not think so. Ecclesial consultation implies shared responsibility. This is the idea that every faithful Christian shares responsibility for the church’s well-being, each according to his or her own gifts.⁵ Shared responsibility is anything but legalistic, narrow-minded, and unappreciative. It suggests a more adequate understanding of ecclesial consultation. In this more adequate understanding, the pastor takes a leading role. He consults with particularly Christian motives, wanting to know his people more deeply and love them more fully. We will examine his motives in the next chapter. For the present, it is important to see how he employs a broad repertoire of consultative styles. He adapts them to his council, depending on the members’ readiness to undertake its work. Shared responsibility also implies the council’s commitment to a mode of inquiry that is profoundly Christian and appreciative. It grasps the proper method of councils, the method of dialogue. This chapter will look at the pastor’s repertoire, at situational and appreciative leadership, and at the meaning of dialogue.

The Pastor’s Repertoire

Bishop John Cummins of Oakland, as we saw in Chapter Five, had a wide repertoire of consultative styles. He knew, first of all, that he was not bound by the recommendations of his pastoral council. He could invite the coun-

cil to express its opinions without legally committing himself to them. At the same time, however, he recognized that the council possessed a certain authority. This recognition was a second style in his consultative repertoire. He knew that the council exercised a persuasive power in its work of investigating, reflecting, and proposing conclusions. He had invited it to undertake its work. He felt bound intellectually and morally to honor it.

Throughout his work with the pastoral council, Bishop Cummins sought consensus, that is, a common understanding. This was a third consultative style. He presupposed rightly that he and his councillors were engaged in a search for practical wisdom. Together they sought the truth about pastoral situations, using the method of dialogue to discern the reality and to enrich one another's grasp of it. In the formation of this consensus, Bishop Cummins asked questions, sought clarifications, and posed challenges, all with the goal of deepening the common understanding.

When the council reached consensus with the bishop and proposed it in the form of a recommendation, the bishop usually accepted it. He ratified (a fourth style of consultation) what the council proposed. Often the viewpoint of the bishop and the council were so close that the formalities—namely, a separate recommendation and acceptance—were not observed. The two actions became one. To be sure, the bishop was not surrendering authority to the council. He was in fact accepting its recommendations. But a casual observer might think that it was the council who was making policy, rather than proposing it to the bishop. This fifth style was also part of Bishop Cummins' consultative repertoire.

When we speak of the council as "consultative only," we are tempted to imagine an impersonal relationship between pastor and councillors. He consults. They advise. Regarding their advice, he can take it or leave it. We may even suppose that councillors are akin to hired consultants. They sell their knowledge, and the buyer's relation to them may be purely financial. In ecclesial consultation, however, nothing could be farther from the truth. This was the lesson of Bishop Cummins. A pastor's councillors are not hired hands. In the church's view they are brothers and sisters. The good pastor treats them with honor and love. The bad pastor—the one who treats them impersonally, casually, or without serious attention—betrays the idea of ecclesial consultation.

Situational Leadership

New councils are often unable to offer a pastor the wisdom he most

needs. The members may be novices at consultation. They may not be aware of the problems the pastor faces. They may lack confidence in their capacity to study pastoral matters and reach a sound conclusion about them. This may frustrate a pastor who expected his council to immediately plunge into pastoral planning. Councillors may sense his frustration, feel inadequate to the task, and resent the pastor's overblown expectations.

The management concept of situational leadership can remedy this problem.⁶ At the heart of situational leadership is the principle that good leaders adapt themselves to the readiness of their followers. Pastors recognize that, whenever people are new to a job, they usually lack knowledge and confidence. With an inexperienced council, the good pastor should take charge and offer clear directions. Inexperienced councillors will not resent strong leadership, according to this theory, but appreciate the pastor's willingness to direct them. They want to know what to do, and he can tell them.

Later, as pastoral councillors become veterans, the pastor should change his style. He should become less directive and invite the council to take the initiative. Eventually, when he is confident of their abilities, he can pay more attention to interpersonal relations. He can confide in them and invite their confidence, trusting in their loyalty. Finally, when he feels completely secure about their abilities, he can simply delegate many tasks to them, knowing that they will perform them in a competent manner. An experienced council challenges the pastor to refine his delegating skills.

It is important for pastors to remember, however, that councillors are not unpaid parish staff members. The council's role is not to carry out the administration of the parish, but to advise the pastor. He may delegate certain tasks to them, but his ultimate goal is to tap their wisdom. To do this, he needs to be with them, to attend their meetings, to engage them in dialogue. If he fails to make the distinction between staff and council, delegating to them as he would to his staff, he does councillors a disservice. To be sure, there are many things that council members must do on their own. They must study, attend meetings, talk to parishioners, and write reports outside of the pastor's presence. But they undertake these tasks so that they can reflect with the pastor on a deeper level and draw sound conclusions. Although he may delegate tasks to this council member or that, the heart of consultation is the dialogue of the council. A pas-

tor who absents himself from council meetings may give councillors the impression that he does not want to work with them.

A pastor is a mediator. In the vision of the Letter to the Hebrews, the priest stands between the faithful and God, offering prayers and sacrifices on their behalf. His effectiveness depends on their willingness to grant him that privilege. When we translate this into the terms of the pastoral council, we see that the pastor enjoys a profound relationship of trust. Councillors trust him to speak his mind and share with them his concerns. He trusts the council to speak the truth. Although a pastor is the bishop's delegate, and his legal authority does not stem from his people, nevertheless his success depends on them. He should adapt his consultative style to their knowledge and level of confidence. Situational leadership enables him to understand this necessary adaptation.

Appreciative Inquiry

Ecclesial consultation is an encounter with faith. Some of the most satisfying moments I ever spent with Oakland's diocesan pastoral council were in prayer. I remember one meeting when the work of the Oakland council was nothing more exciting than to review a draft report on youth ministry. Bishop Cummins had asked the DPC to study youth ministry and recommend ways to strengthen it. The subcommittee had done its work, the report had been mailed out, and the DPC's task was to assess it.

Instead of rushing into a point-by-point critique, the council prayed for more than an hour. It began with Joel's prophecy of the time of the Spirit: "The old shall dream dreams, and the young shall see visions." Then Bishop Cummins invited the council members to recall their own memories of the church when they were young, and to express how they felt that God's Spirit was "speaking" through the youth ministry report.

What followed was an extraordinary outpouring of memory, self-revelation, anecdote, appreciation of the sub-committee, critique, and discernment. By the end of the prayer the council had not only "prayed," but also accomplished the most important part of its "work" regarding the report. The members had expressed, in their prayer, what the report meant to them and connected it with their own experience. The subcommittee members who sat on the council were gratified to see the report's effect. Having also heard the few reservations that had been expressed, they were ready to start work on a second draft. And Bishop Cummins had begun to reflect on what the report's recommendations

could mean for the diocese. He had led us in a prayer that was much more than prayer—or better said, was truly prayer.

“Appreciative” is the word that describes the good pastor’s leadership and the council’s mode of inquiry. He appreciates his people. He encourages councillors to recall their experiences of faith. He invites them to connect their faith with the fabric of parish life.

The concept of appreciative inquiry has a venerable ancestry. It is connected to the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith. When pastors and councillors show their appreciation for the parish, they acknowledge the faith that is its reason for being. Before any council reflects on a problem, evaluates a ministry, or discusses a policy, it is, at the most fundamental level, an assembly of faithful people. The appreciative pastor begins with that acknowledgment. No matter what work has brought the group together, it is first a communion in the Body of Christ. That communion is more important than (and is the basis for) any mission the group undertakes.

Appreciative inquiry⁷ measures success not by the number of problems one can name and attempt to solve, but with a question. It asks about what gives life to those who are gathered. The application to church councils is obvious. If a pastor believes in his council, its meetings will cease to be a depressing litany of problems to be solved. Instead the meetings can become what they should be, namely, moments of encounter with the mystery that formed the group in the first place. Every council meeting is potentially a rekindling of faith. Appreciation ought to be the heart of council prayer. When pastors consult their councils, they never merely seek answers to problems. They are also putting those problems into their proper context. That context is the faith that has formed the parish community and sustains it. Consultation presupposes faith.

The Method of Dialogue

It is worth noting that the Second Vatican Council, in its texts about apostolic and pastoral councils, did not speak of a method. Vatican II did not say how pastoral councils were to accomplish their threefold task, or how apostolic councils were to assist the church’s apostolic work. But the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, apart from its recommendation about councils, spoke about how priests and people were to work together.⁸ It said:

The laity should develop the habit of working in the parish in close union with their priests, of bringing before the ecclesial community their own problems, world problems, and questions regarding man's salvation, to examine them together and solve them by general discussion.

The phrase "by general discussion" is a translation of the Latin word "consiliis," that is, council. The text suggests that laity and priests should "take counsel" together. In this way they can examine questions and solve them. Although this passage does not recommend the formation of councils per se, it intimates a conciliar method. In recent years, this passage has been cited as a source for parish councils.⁹ Their "method," we can say, is the common examination of questions in order to solve them. It is the method of dialogue.

Pope Paul VI affirmed this method in his first encyclical letter, *Ecclesiam Suam*. The encyclical, published in the summer before the Laity Decree, was undoubtedly one of its sources. The third section of the encyclical is entitled "Dialogue." Dialogue is the means, according to the encyclical, by which the church becomes more aware of itself and reforms itself. When priests and people discuss their common concerns, they better understand the church and their own role in the drama of salvation. A dialogue among the faithful can lead to deeper faith. "By introducing the notion of dialogue (human dialogue leading men into divine dialogue)," wrote Gregory Baum, "the Pope seeks . . . a more unified understanding of the church's mission."¹⁰ A seemingly "human" dialogue has "divine" consequences. Dialogue encompasses all activities in the church. When we deepen our relationship with one another in a dialogue about pastoral matters, we deepen our relationship with God.

Dialogue is the method of ecclesial consultation. It examines questions and solves them, but not by some impersonal, "scientific," and narrowly empirical process. Rather in dialogue we express opinions and subject them to an examination that is both critical and appreciative. The council assembles in a spirit of inquiry. It acknowledges its standing before God and the parish community. It affirms the insights of its members and puts them into play, holding them up to the light of reason informed by faith, committing themselves to the truth, anticipating that members will gain a deeper insight from one another. This, said Paul VI, is the kind of human dialogue that leads to dialogue with God. It is the method of ecclesial consultation.

A properly “ecclesial” consultation refutes the critique of William Rademacher, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. He said that the consultative-only doctrine deprived councils of courage in the face of pastors who do not want to listen. He argued that pastors ought to be compelled to reach consensus with their councillors. He suggested that the church’s mode of governance, in which pastors consult their people but are not legally bound by the advice, has outlived its usefulness. The idea of ecclesial consultation suggests that Rademacher has misrepresented the church’s view. The church wants consultations that are sensitive to a contingent situation, respectful and appreciative of council members, and committed to the method of dialogue. Rademacher does not give this its due weight. But he does speak from experience. His critique has an element of truth. Like any family, councils occasionally have problems. What can a council do when it encounters dysfunction?

Council Dysfunction

There are two kinds of dysfunctions in a pastoral council. The first is psychological dysfunction. This term implies an understanding of the normal function of pastors and councils, a function that has become abnormal. In a normal relationship, for example, pastors have questions about how best to plan and carry out the parish’s mission. They consult their councils to ensure a well-planned pastoral program, a program appropriate to the parish. These are the proper tasks of the pastor-leader, as we saw in Chapter Six. But when a pastor does not consult his council, consults it poorly, or misleads the council about the consequences of its deliberations, the normal relationship breaks down. The pastor is said to be “dysfunctional.” Councillors, to give another example, normally put their gifts at the service of the pastor and the parish. They seek practical wisdom about what is best to do in a concrete situation. But occasionally they fail to contribute properly, instead using the council to express anger, nurse a grudge, or pursue a private goal. They are acting “dysfunctionally.”¹¹

Dysfunctional councillors are not interested in or capable of studying pastoral matters and making sound recommendations. Like Theresa, the ineffective councillor in Chapter Fourteen, they are preoccupied with private matters. They do not function properly. Dysfunctional pastors are equally troubled. They do not obey the norms that govern the parish council family. Instead of consulting the council and encouraging it to

discuss a matter, the dysfunctional pastor cuts off discussion and prevents the council from airing an issue. Instead of posing a question with the hope of an answer, he has no clear expectations, and the council drifts aimlessly. Instead of praising the council when it completes its work and recommends a solution, he never allows it to exercise its competency and reach closure. The normal functions of consulting, probing, and praising become dysfunctional.

Besides psychological dysfunction, there is another, a sociological, aspect of the word. The council can be sociologically dysfunctional when it meets regularly but no longer serves a meaningful purpose. Pastors contribute to this dysfunction by not giving the council meaningful work. A functional council investigates, reflects, and proposes conclusions. A dysfunctional council does not have a clear task. To be sure, the pastor may convoke it regularly. But if his purpose is merely to show that he is "open-minded" and "consultative," he makes the council sociologically dysfunctional.¹² We saw this in Chapter Fourteen with Father Padraig Twomey and the Church of Santa María.

Deliberate Dysfunction

Up to this point we have presumed that dysfunctions are not deliberate. Pastors and councillors often display a kind of invincible ignorance. They create dysfunction because they do not know how to correct it or are incapable of doing so. They do not understand the council's proper function.

Deliberate dysfunctions, on the other hand, arise when people know how to improve the council, but choose not to because of hostility or laziness. Council members, for example, may resent the pastor for some injury, real or imagined. In order to retaliate, they may consciously refuse to allow the council to accomplish its proper functions. The pastor, to give another example, may have developed a dislike for the council or may be unwilling to correct its problems. He intentionally prevents the council from doing its job or he maintains it in a function that no longer has meaning. Councillors and pastors are both to blame. Dysfunctional councillors may use council meetings to achieve their private ends. A dysfunctional pastor may write off a council because, without his instruction, it does not do things the way he would do them. Such people create problems for the council family.

Due Process

What can be done when pastors and councillors function badly? There are three kinds of remedies. The first is an appeal, that is, a kind of due process. Many dioceses at one time described such processes in their published parish council guidelines.¹³ These guidelines allowed councils to appeal a pastor's decision when two-thirds of council members disagree with it. Councils may appeal to the chancellor, regional vicar, conciliator, or even the bishop. This official then meets with pastor and council in order to resolve the dispute.

Two persuasive arguments, however, weigh in against the process of appeal. The first is canonical. Canon 536 describes parish pastoral councils as consultative to the pastor. Pastors are not obliged to take their advice. When some diocesan guidelines grant councils the right to appeal a decision "over the head" of the pastor, they seem to imply that councils are more than consultative. The guidelines appear to wrongly give councils a juridical status that they do not possess.

Another reason why guidelines do not universally grant the right to appeal stems from the church's wariness of litigation. St. Paul sounded this note in First Corinthians. There he speaks of the impropriety of Christians settling disputes in a pagan court of law. "To have lawsuits at all with one another is defeat for you," he wrote. "Why not rather suffer wrong?" (1 Cor. 6:7). Paul concludes that Christians should settle their grievances among themselves, rather than going to an external authority. An appeal can pit one official in the church against another.

Conflict Management

A second remedy to dysfunction falls under the heading of conflict management. When there are conflicts in a council, the pastor may exercise his role as presider and try to defuse the conflict. A pastor can manage conflict by identifying the issues, examining the assumptions of disputants, and exploring alternatives to their conflict. He can be the conflict manager *par excellence*.¹⁴ But what if the pastor is unable or unwilling to guide this process? What if he himself is the source of conflict?

In this case, council members themselves can exercise the principles of conflict management. Its goal is to help disputants see the conflict in an objective light and approach it with the tools of rational problem solving. Conflict management frees disputants—councillors and pastors alike—to face the issues that divide them. Wider knowledge leads to reduced ten-

sion and better decisions. Conflict management is a skill that can be learned.¹⁵ But to describe it in this way seems to make it an impersonal exercise of skill, like piloting a sailboat or oil painting. The reality is quite different. Conflict management is intensely personal. It includes every color in the palette of diplomacy, from private conversation and dinner invitations to personal notes and the doing of favors. I once cajoled an unwilling pastor to attend a meeting by reminiscing about my boyhood when I was his altar server. Conflict management is a personal art.

So far we have spoken of remedies for indeliberate dysfunctions, dysfunctions caused by a lack of freedom to function normally or by ignorance of the norms of the pastor-council relationship. There are also remedies for intentional dysfunctional behavior. Frustrated pastors and council members should first make efforts to clarify the issues among themselves and express their consensus in good faith. They should strive to understand the disputants' point of view. If disputants reject the opinion of the majority, different measures are justified. Frustrated participants in the council should test the rightness of their opinion with other parish leaders. The leaders may shed light on a seemingly intractable problem. The fundamental principle is to maintain communion among the people of God. Rarely will a pastor or a council member reject an opinion that is the considered opinion of all.

The Boston canonist Richard C. Cunningham has described the extreme remedy in the case of deliberate dysfunction by the pastor. He describes the moral power of the laity in this way: "Ultimately they still possess the power of numbers, of finances, of public opinion, of *sensus fidelium*, of conscience and the radical power of shaking the dust from their feet as they exit."¹⁶ Laypeople are not powerless. They can express their opposition by finding another parish or by withholding contributions. This is no substitute, however, for rational problem solving. The tools of conflict management are extensive and effective. One should appeal to diocesan officials only when these tools fail. Rupture with the parish is a means of last resort in pastor-council conflict.

The Norm of Ecclesial Consultation

Dysfunction, however, is not the norm in parish pastoral councils. The norm is expressed in the threefold task of study, reflection, and recommendation. That is what councils are supposed to do. The steady growth of U.S. councils suggests that they are doing it. If councils were general-

ly a waste of time, pastors would not establish them and people would refuse to participate in them.

Pastoral councils have problems at times. These problems can be serious and debilitating. They led a veteran like William Rademacher to his rejection of the consultative-only approach. In its place he proposed a mandatory search for consensus and novel forms of governance. This chapter has argued that his view of consultation differs from that of the church. A truly ecclesial consultation is not compulsory. It preserves the freedom of pastors to consult, and councillors to advise. Novel forms of governance, attractive from afar, are no less problematic than the present forms. Just because parish problems are real does not mean that ecclesial solutions are inadequate.

Pastoral councils ought to be what the church says they can be, namely, "the principal form of collaboration, dialogue and discernment," helping to "broaden resources in consultation and the principle of collaboration and in certain instances also in decision making."¹⁷

The consultative-only approach is legal but not legalistic. If we suggest that the pastoral council is something other than what the church's documents say, we run the risk of not thinking with the church and of raising false expectations. By trying to say exactly what the church expects councils to be, we are not proposing anything narrow-minded. We are being precise. All Christians are to build community, pray, collaborate with the pastor, lead by example, and be spiritual. But only pastoral councils investigate, ponder, and propose. They do so, not in an impersonal process, but in a relationship. It is a relationship with a pastor who knows their readiness and wants their help, with fellow parishioners whose wisdom they seek, and ultimately with the God whom they glimpse in dialogue.

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."

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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