



Creating Consensus on Vision and Strategy

EMERGING MODELS OF PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
PACIFIC NORTHWEST
REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM REPORT

NOVEMBER 8-10, 2004

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I. OVERVIEW:

Six national ministerial organizations within the Catholic community have made an unprecedented commitment to collaborate on a Lilly Foundation Grant for Pastoral Excellence. The grant entitled "Developing and Sustaining the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership in the Catholic Church and the United States" is intended to be a four-year study completed in three phases between January 2004 and April 2008.

Sponsoring organizations of the Emerging Models Project include:

- **National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM)**
- **Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development (CPPCD)**
- **National Association for Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA)**
- **National Association of Deaconate Directors (NADD)**
- **National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association (NCYAMA)**
- **National Federation of Priests Councils (NFPC)**

These organizations have committed to a comprehensive plan, including several mini-projects intended to identify the trends, resources, and priorities needed for pastoral leadership in the 21st century. The following mini-projects will be included as part of the overall Emerging Models effort:

- **Parish Vitality Study**
- **Study of Parish Life Coordinators by CARA**
- **Regional Symposia**
- **Next Generation of Leaders Study**
- **Young Adult Focus Groups**
- **Symposia**
- **Study of Mega-parishes**
- **Diocesan Consultations**
- **Publication of Findings**
- **Concluding Ministry Summit**

Marti Jewell, formerly of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky, has been named Project Coordinator to lead the entire effort. Strategic Leadership Associates (hereinafter known as SLA) has provided its expertise in symposium development by assisting with the development of a format for the first round of eight regional symposia to be held in total, including:

- **Pacific Northwest**
- **Upper Midwest**
- **Northeast**
- **Southeast**
- **West**
- **Lower Midwest**
- **North Central**
- **Southwest**

David Ramey of SLA assisted Marti Jewell in facilitating the regional symposiums and developing a report on the findings of each symposium. The Pacific Northwest Symposium was held on November 8-10, 2004 with 60 participants from the region, including the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Hawaii.

Symposium participant comments appearing in this report can be identified by the following codes:

P = Pastor
PLC = Parish Life Coordinator
D = Deacon
PA = Pastoral Associate
PC = Parish Council Representative
DR = Diocesan Representative
O = Other

The following tables represent a profile of those participants who completed reflection guides during the Pacific Northwest Leadership Symposium:

Table 1
Pacific Northwest Leadership Symposium
(Total Respondents = 50)

Respondents	No.	%
a. Pastors	13	26%
b. Parish Life Coordinators	8	16%
c. Deacons	1	2%
d. Pastoral Associates	14	28%
e. Parish Pastoral Council Representatives	0	0%
f. Diocesan Representatives	5	10%
g. Others	9	18%

Table 3
Age Range of Participants
(Total Respondents = 50)

Respondent Age Range	No.	%
a. Under 29 years of age	1	2%
b. 30 to 39 years of age	4	8%
c. 40 to 49 years of age	6	12%
d. 50 to 59 years of age	22	44%
e. 60 to 69 years of age	16	32%
f. 70 or above	1	2%

Table 5
Highest Level of Education
(Total Respondents = 50)

Level of Education	No.	%
a. High School	1	2%
b. Associates Degree	2	4%
c. Bachelor's Degree	1	2%
d. Master's Degree	39	72%
e. Doctoral Degree	6	12%
(Left Blank)	1	2%

Table 2
Gender
(Total Respondents = 50)

Gender	No.	%
a. Male	23	46%
b. Female	27	54%

Table 4
Size of Parish Households
(Total Respondents = 50)

Size of Parish Households	No.	%
a. Under 500 households	16	32%
b. 501 to 1200 households	12	24%
c. 1201 to 2000 households	15	30%
d. Over 2001 households	7	14%

Table 6
Diocese in which you Serve
(Total Respondents = 50)

Diocese	No.	%
a. Seattle	17	34%
b. Boise	14	28%
c. Portland	5	10%
d. Spokane	4	8%
e. Great Falls – Billings	3	6%
f. New York	2	4%
g. Honolulu	1	2%
h. Cheyene	1	2%
(Left Blank)	3	6%

The following summary report captures top level issues and observations of Pacific Northwest symposium participants. It is important to note that the findings may not be normative across all eight regional symposiums convened by the Emerging Models Project. In 2007, a concluding report will be published summarizing the themes of all symposiums.

II. PARISH 2025 – FUTURING EXERCISE:

Symposium attendees participated in a futuring exercise for ministry in the Year 2025. The purpose of the activity was to consider a number of factors to identify what may evolve as the future of church ministry. During the exercise, participants were individually given the opportunity to think in a variety of categories which could define elements for the future of parish ministry in the Year 2025. Categories for their idea generation included:

- **Best Case**
- **What If?**
- **New Possibilities**
- **Hopes**
- **Worst Case**
- **Fears**

During the exercise, nearly 700 comments were generated from participants. These comments were further refined into themes of the expected future of the parish in the Year 2025. For the purpose of condensing these nearly 700 comments, the following themes have been captured under two major categories:

- **Hopes and New Possibilities**
- **Threats and Vulnerabilities**

A. Hopes and New Possibilities

The majority of comments submitted by participants relate to hopes and new possibilities illustrating a number of specific aspirations.

Empowerment, Formation, and Realization of the Baptismal Call

Participants clearly believe that the future of parishes and the church as a whole will be strengthened by their commitment and ability to empower and enable people to realize their baptismal call to ministry. This deeper, fuller sense of realizing a ministry of the faithful was pervasive not only in the futuring exercise, but throughout the Pacific Northwest Symposium.

Clearly, people seek the emergence of new forms of ministry, not just as a pragmatic response to a shortage of clergy, but as a new opportunity for the church to realize the full participation of its members in the mission of the gospel within the church and for the world.

Ordination Open to Women and Married Persons

Without a doubt, one of the strongest aspirations expressed during the Pacific Northwest Symposium is the desire among many participants to see the boundaries of ordination expanded to include women and married persons in living out their call to ministry. Clearly, this institutional form of empowerment and acceptance of a wider definition of priesthood is a central theme in the hopes and new possibilities of these Pacific Northwest pastoral leaders.

Commitment to Justice

Paramount among their understanding of the future of parishes and the church is a demonstrated commitment toward justice in the church, local communities, and in the world. Participants repeatedly indicate this greater realization and link of justice with the work of parish life as a fundamental hope and possibility for the future.

Eucharistic Communities of Liturgy, Worship, and Sacraments

Participants vigorously identify the need for the local parish and the church to remain focused and centered as a Eucharistic community gathered around liturgy, worship, and sacraments. This also surfaces as a concern and vulnerability, since participants perceive “priestless parishes” as a significant threat to the future of Eucharistic communities. Maintaining this unique and distinct Catholic identity is a critical priority for participants in the Pacific Northwest.

Inclusiveness and Multi-culturalism

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the church of the future is defined with a strong commitment to including diverse people and celebrating many cultures. Participants enumerated comment after comment indicating this integral identity of the church with a spirit of openness and embrace for people of diverse backgrounds and cultural experiences.

Outreach toward Youth

Despite the limited participation of youth and young adults in the Pacific Northwest Symposium, many participants express a strong hope and desire for the church of the future to have more established and committed outreach programs and processes for use with young adults. Many recognize this will require a commitment of the church to work across parish boundaries and to create new structures and forms of ministry that are less parochial in reaching this important population. Clearly, an emphasis on youth and young adults is a hope and possibility for these symposium participants from the Pacific Northwest.

Intentional Communities

Participants in the Pacific Northwest are often driven by factors in their environments which call for small faith communities and the need for intentional communities as critical to the vitality of the church. This engagement in formation of small faith communities who gather for intentional celebration of the sacraments, Eucharist, and mutual support is perceived as an important pastoral strategy for realizing the future.

Whole Community Catechesis

In the Pacific Northwest through the Symposium, many participants spoke of whole community catechesis as a vital means to engage gifts of the entire community in realizing their baptismal call to ministry. Several congregations are working with processes and programs that seek to educate, reform, and inspire entire communities in realizing their baptismal call.

Formal Leadership which Empowers

A final hope for these Pacific Northwest pastoral leaders is that the formal leadership of the church, including priests, bishops, and the Vatican become transformed as leaders who empower others to realize their gifts. This aspiration and desire for an empowering form of formal leadership was prevalent in the comments of symposium participants.

B. Threats and Vulnerabilities

It is interesting to note that the comments characterized as fears or worst case expectations are far less prevalent than those characterized as hopes or new possibilities. However, participants offered a sobering and realistic assessment of the suffering and struggle of the church at hand. Symposium participants seem on par to identifying their threats and vulnerabilities as real, but not as pervasive as their hopes and new possibilities. The following threats and vulnerabilities are most prevalent in participant comments:

Nothing Happens

Interestingly, participants believe that one of the worst case options for the church is that nothing happens. In this scenario, participants are concerned that church participation in the Eucharist and the sacraments will continue to decline and that authorities will not recognize the need for new pastoral practices to embrace emerging pastoral realities in diverse settings, such as rural and mission areas. Imbedded within this fear that nothing happens, it is also a concern that the “clerical authority structure” of the church will seek to embrace regressive theology and irrelevant pastoral practices.

Retrenchment of Leadership

Similar to their concerns that nothing may happen, participants also appear concerned that the formal leadership of the church will further retrench in theology and pastoral practices that make the church less relevant to its members and the world at large. Many participants note concern that the church could become similar to the church of Europe as a museum-like ritualistic and institutional presence disconnected from people’s daily lives and deep spiritual needs.

This concern for church leadership retrenching and the relevance of institutional structures has a very practical element for these symposium participants. They further see this erosion of confidence in formal church leadership as contributing to financial instability and fewer resources for day-to-day ministry at hand in the parish of today and tomorrow.

Loss of Eucharistic Community

While many pastoral leaders have developed “work-around approaches” for dealing with diminished participation in the Eucharist, it is clear that they are concerned this weakens the fabric of the church. Maintaining an identity as a Eucharistic-centered faith community seems essential to these participants. Their fears and concerns are that sacraments will be dependent on a few “powerful people” and that the Eucharist could be lost as the core and center of the life of the faith community. Many see this potential erosion of the Body of Christ as one of the worst threats to the future vitality of the parish of the future.

III. FUTURE OF PARISH LEADERSHIP ROLES:

Participants in the Pacific Northwest Symposium listened to brief case study presentations by their colleagues describing their current experiences of parish life leadership roles. In small group discussions and in written comments in the symposium reflection guide, participants were asked to describe their current parish communities based on a number of factors, including:

- **A spiritually alive and healthy community**
- **A visible commitment to building the life of the faith community through word, worship, and service**
- **A total ministering community, including the leadership of pastors, staff, and councils working together**

A. Spiritually Alive and Healthy Community

Many participants indicate they consider their current parishes to be spiritually alive and healthy. Priests may be more optimistic than their lay counterparts on the level of spiritual vitality that exists in local communities. Overall, participants tend to view their parishes as:

- **Spiritually alive and healthy**
- **Spiritually alive and hurting or struggling**

The following comments reflect the views of participants who consider their parishes to be spiritually alive and healthy:

“There have been years of development on these areas. Our mission says it best: Place God first in all things, proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ; grow in holiness through prayer, sacraments, and service. We have many involved in leadership and ministry. We are a stewardship parish where everyone’s time, talent and treasure is essential.” (P)

“In ‘my’ parishes, liturgy is well celebrated, not great, but well done. It brings parishioners together for prayer and gives them an opportunity to socialize. We do need to continue to work on music and improving our bilingual liturgies that happen on special occasions (Holy Week, Holy Days, etc.).” (P)

“Our parish has a strong spirituality that nourishes a broad spectrum of needs.” (P)

“Our six parish community is very alive and healthy with the dedication of our parishioners. Who feel very strongly to be a good steward of their faith, we have the old community who supports the younger community by sharing their faith and what they have. The community can gather to pray at all times. The lay leadership can lead the community with the ordained minister. We do not depend much on the priest.” (P)

“Our community is, by most anyone’s standards, very much alive. Each year, more than 225 ministers volunteer and sign up for about 20 ministries in a parish of about 400 families. The pastoral council is the principal visioning, guiding, and energizing body. As pastor, I try to be a

very light hands-on person – visioning, energizing, arbitrating, and facilitating.” (P)

“It is a community that has been very involved in the Evangelization Retreat movement which has a heavy emphasis on fall and redemption – strong emphasis on fall. We do have small Christian communities. We do reflect on the Gospel at parish meetings.” (PLC)

“The spiritual aspect is the most important part of this parish. This is why they come. This is why they gather – to feed their spirits – this is what is most important. Our goal is for them to take this spirit out with them when they leave and carry it to others.” (PLC)

“People participate in Sunday Mass and celebrations on occasion ceremonies, community meetings, CCD classes of the children by the support of the parents and are involved with the annual retreat.” (D)

“We are both spiritually alive and healthy as a community. I also see a spiritual awakening that can survive destructive leadership at the pastoral (local) and diocesan level.” (PA)

“Worship is alive; ministries are vibrant. There are areas that require conversion and healing; bringing ‘justice’ into the core of our outreach; expanding prayer and worship beyond the ‘Sunday’ experience” (PA)

“People feel good about belonging to my parish. We have good liturgies, great music, full participation, great parties, fairly good homilies, and good religious education for children, and on and on. I have also heard from people who have come to my parish because they heard how good it was and left feeling it was the coldest place they’d ever been. So, I’m not sure how spiritually alive and healthy we are because I’m not sure how the Sunday vibrancy spills over into people’s lives the rest of the week. We do not do outreach as a community, but I know lots of individuals who are very active in service and social justice activities either as full-time work or as volunteers, but we don’t do any communal reflection on the connection between the Sunday experience and the rest of the week.” (DR)

“I see in our community a living faith that is centered in Eucharist and in common values. We genuinely care about one another and about our parish.” (O)

“Exceptionally alive and full of pastoral leadership talent, but also children of the Diaspora. I belong to a faith community that is an intentional parish. Perhaps 20% are geographic members. The other 80 come from around the city to be part of the community.” (O)

“I find my parish nourishes me and others spiritually in a very rich fashion. The community exhibits healthy life in its hospitality and inclusivity in its robust worship, its ministries of faith formation, and its outreach ministries. Large numbers of parishioners commit to all these ministries. Over 300 have pursued the Catherine of Sienna ‘Called and Gifted’ training. Just recently, the parish hosted ‘Tent City 4’ (a group of 60

homeless persons) in its laud for 3 months. It was a time of profound conversation for us all. There's a healthy unity of the parish school with all our other ministries. People in the parish seem highly intentional about their faith, are hungry for the Gospel, and appear to live their faith as adults in the marketplace and home." (O)

Other participants are more cautious in assessing parish life as spiritually alive and healthy. The overarching theme is that many parishes, while demonstrating elements of being spiritually alive and healthy, are still hurting or struggling with transition issues due to changing leadership roles and the changing configuration of parish life. The following comments reflect this alive, but struggling view of parish life:

"I would describe our community as an awakening community. They have a lot of strangulated communication, some areas of mistrust or distrust that we are working through, but we also have created in the last 2-1/2 years some very positive changes to encourage and motivate that change." (P)

"We are a brand new parish and come from several neighboring communities. They come with their own agendas and in an unhealthy way wish to form the parish in their own image and likeness. Unity and reconciliation will be the most important spiritual challenge for the near future." (P)

"Partly accurate. We are certainly alive in that we have good liturgy, pray regularly, people who are involved and committed and new emerging leaders. We have small, but well-trained staff (2.5) and 350 active family – no school. But healthy, I'm not sure. We have had 4 pastors/priests in 12 years. The Diocese appointed me (lay woman), but offered no real support or preparation. Since I've been at the parish 15 years, I was accepted, but often my experience is one of isolation. We've spent the last 18 months in trying to rebuild trust and in healing, trying to become solvent and actually look to the future. There is a growing fear that we may be closed – or they would have set a priest." (PLC)

"Spiritually alive and hurting! Finances are the pits, attendance is down, and people are mad at the institutional church. Lots of conversations about 'who is the church?' Challenging and exciting times" (PLC)

"There's an old half and younger half. The holder people are 'fat, happy, and safe'. Anything you do is okay. 'Don't rock my boat.' The younger (30's and 40's) – a lot more education – want stuff done – stuff to do. The people don't know the faith." (D)

"Sections of our parish are spiritually alive – the mother's group, the seniors group, for example. But, there are some people very conservative politically, who are not open to new ideas or social justice values. There is a few who acknowledge and confront differences. The wealthy of the parish generate entitlement issues in our children. Some adversity would be helpful to spiritual growth!" (PA)

“One of the parishes I serve is spiritually dynamic, healthy and growing both in numbers and depth of spiritual formation. The other parish is at the other end of the continuum – lacking in energy, ‘dis-eased’ and numerically deteriorating.” (PA)

“There are strong, spiritual roots and a ‘surviving’ health manifest in my parish. We endure, like the great church, through challenges, crises and the winds of change. However, in a body, health and ‘aliveness’ are holistic, e.g., our worldwide church is divided and spiritually thwarted by an unrealized (as yet) liberating vision and practice. We are institutionally still top-down, male centered and in need of transformation.” (PA)

“We are in transition with a new ‘probationary’ pastor after one year without a resident pastor. So, spiritually, we are teetering, distracted by external changes, fear of change, criticism, etc.” (PA)

“In the last four years, our pastoral staff has brought together three separate parishes into one 1,200 family larger parish, but we still retain the three separate worship sites. We are trying now to begin a building process. We are in a city of 50,000 both urban and rural. By what criteria do you measure this? Many of the 1,200 households know about our ongoing building process. Not all agree, but they are talking. There are many ministries. The community prays in various ways outside of weekend liturgy.” (PA)

“Because we are a merged parish (after four years; three parishes from one community coming together), many of the parishioners are going through a grieving process. At this point, we are becoming a spiritually alive and healthy parish, but there is still some healing that needs to be done.” (PA)

“The most successful Chinese emperors maintained their capital city in the north of China, up against their enemy’s border. The least successful moved their capitals to the more insulated center or south of the empire. My sense is that, overall, the Diocese of Boise is quite spiritually alive and healthy in no small part because it faces so many challenges – isolation of parishes, shortage of priests, minority religious status, and so on. We are quite critical of each other, of our present status, and very aware of our limitations – we know we are in an uncomfortable place – and the same can be said of every genius and perfectionist.” (DR)

“In my parish there are some pockets of people who are spiritually alive, but they have found that not through the parish, but through lay ministry groups – evangelization, social justice, or bible study. Overall, the parish is financially healthy, but the people are for the most part not plugged into spirituality. They give their money and attend Mass and that is the extent of their obligation.” (DR)

“At this point, I see a glimmer of hope that our parishes can become spiritually alive and be a healthy community. Our Hispanic community is providing good role models emerging from the bottom. At this time, the Anglo community is beginning to arise from the cloud of being freed into a six parish cluster and also to becoming a faith community.” (O)

“Parishioners attend Mass, but when a program is offered, whether it’s Bible Study or training or more knowledge about their own faith, there’s no interest. Going to reconciliation has a low percentage, whether it’s individual or communal. The community is generous in giving to the poor rather than their own parish. Parish consists of middle age to elderly. No young people. Don’t want to change – much apathy although when priest is not available, lay ministers do Communion service quite well.” (O)

B. Visible Commitment to Building the Life of the Faith Community (word, worship, and service)

Participants were asked to indicate the visible commitment in their parishes to building the life of the faith community through word, worship, and service. A variety of issues and themes surfaced in their verbal and written responses. Participants tend to define their visible commitment to build community life through:

- **Prayer, worship and Eucharist**
- **Outreach and service**
- **Whole community catechesis**

Some participants indicate that their parishes are focusing more on the Eucharist, Liturgy, and the Sacraments. The following comments indicate this effort to build an intentional community around worship and prayer:

“We have our mission written in large letters in our Gathering Space, as well as the values that we hold. We base our strategic plans and finances on the mission. We focus energies on Sunday Liturgy then sent forth from the table to service.” (P)

“We use our liturgies to empower, to support all of our ministering. Show appreciation” (P)

“Positive response to intergenerational formation program with the liturgical seasons” (P)

“We do liturgy and ritual pretty well. Our weakness (my weakness) is making the connections to the lived reality of all. I can do better explaining sights, sounds and symbols of the rites.” (P)

“In word, we have scripture study each week and we use the reading on Sunday to pray at each meeting through the week. Worship – we celebrate the Eucharist at each parish on Sunday and Liturgy of the words and communion. Service – We have a great food bank to give food to the poor. We have a Catholic school, Catholic community service, hospital, outreach ministry, pastoral councilor, and many services within 6 parishes and two communities Spanish and Vietnamese.” (P)

“Liturgy is our strong point.” (PLC)

“We have excellent participation for liturgical ministries, but our liturgy is formulaic. We have a worship commission that deals with environmental issues (what color poinsettias for the Christmas season this year). But the pastor does not have a liturgy planning process. The choir director picks music based on the readings. We lack true collaboration.” (PA)

“We have a strong focus on well done liturgy and challenging people to active participation. Also, our faith formation always points toward the need to participate in the communal worship on Sunday.” (PA)

“We see the Sunday celebration as central to the spiritual life of the parish and commit money, staff and vision to this dimension. Recently, (last 4 years) we have added a Lifeteen Mass attended by over 150 teens and new families, as well as many non-teen families. Our outreach ministry is well developed and we participate in a sister parish partnership with a parish in Africa.” (PA)

“I feel we are beginning to do this piece well. Started lifelong faith formation; more forms of prayer. Liturgy is more intentional and vibrant. We don’t have many opportunities for service, especially to the larger community. We look inward more than outward.” (PA)

“We have wonderful liturgies. We are the cathedral parish, so a lot of effort is put into liturgy/high masses/liturgical space – a beautiful setting.” (DR)

“A definite commitment to worship evidenced in excellent music. Good lectors, welcoming greeters, a fairly good commitment to word for the children, but not so good in the area of adult faith formation/ongoing education. Very poor commitment to service – a food collection once a month for a neighboring parish’s food pantry” (DR)

Additional comments indicate that other parishes are working toward more visible signs of service that are not fully mature in their faith communities. Many participants indicate this outreach and service is largely dependent on the lay leadership developed in their local communities. The following comments reflect a commitment to the ongoing development of a strong outreach and service dimension to parish life:

“Strong school and religious education program supported financially and by volunteers” (P)

“We are already committed to an outward expression of our faith by meeting the needs of those within and without our parish boundaries.” (P)

“We put a lot of energy and effort into liturgy. We stress outreach to the poor and needy and provide opportunities to serve in various ways.” (P)

“Yes, among the staff and some members of the councils. We are really in transition, so this is partially true. We’ve had one ‘leadership’ retreat and one ‘stewardship’ retreat for leaders – have changed language from ‘religious education’ to ‘faith formation’, formed a Faith Formation Committee and a Stewardship Committee. Our sacramental minister is a good preacher, thankfully, and we have started adult faith formation

classes. We do service to one another pretty well, if in an unorganized way. We have begun to have social events for fun and to build community rather than just for fundraising.” (PLC)

“The liturgy team and pastoral council are actively re-visioning. There is a renewed commitment to the gay/lesbian community in light of measure 36 (same sex marriage). The Day Laborer Project is growing. People who are staying are working to rebuild – without just clinging to the past.” (PLC)

“We have several languages in our parish. We are strongly committed to ministering in those languages and cultures – as well as bringing the culture together in understanding and respectful acceptance of each other.” (PLC)

“St. Vincent’s, Food Bank, Soup Kitchen – are all in our parish community.” (D)

“There are visible elements, but a sort of rudderless sense of activity and motion without direction.” (PA)

“A smaller group – do more than show up and participate, maybe one-third to one-half of our households have one or more members who are our builders and creators. Many are involved in several areas of leadership ministry and service. These individuals and families are self-starters and self-finishers, very much how I have found other small, rural communities to be.” (PA)

“Evident in emerging care groups; growing awareness that Father can’t do more than – realization of individual responsibility and response, giftedness.” (PA)

“Lay leadership has been strong in the parish, and the community is trying to hold onto this commitment, in spite of a new pastor who wants more control of every aspect of parish life.” (PA)

“Generally, the parishes are really quote remarkable – they are adapting remarkably well to huge transitions. Just the same, individual parishes face enormous challenges – precarious schools, high debt, need to build new buildings, unusual situations of pastoral leadership. There are also outright obstacles – angry priests, incompetent and untrained staff members and volunteer catechists, failure to reach out to Hispanics in some areas. But, we are aware of these and in many ways working to overcome them. The fruit of many communities in service to each other and the world is sometimes truly remarkable, especially in consideration of the odds against us.” (DR)

“There is a ‘core group’ of parishioners who do build up the community by activity in liturgy, religious education, K of C or Guild, etc. These tend to be the same people who continually volunteers – others prioritize differently. In our town, kids’ sports and school activities are very important.” (O)

“We are a visible sign of outreach in the larger community. We are a community with a growing understanding of the call to service.” (O)

“Commitment lacking – older community not accepting change or letting go, so young can take over, but on the other hand, young not interested with structural need to establish young to participate in the Mass (read, serve, etc.). Promote programs of interest to the community. We have outreach with the local food bank, a clothing bank for women and children, many small services, but ran by same small group of people.” (O)

Other participants indicate a commitment to whole community catechesis as a means for visibly building a commitment to the life of the faith community. The following comments reflect this approach to education and formation in parish life:

“We are in the process of moving toward whole community catechesis. We have a sacramental minister who is not healthy and so worship tends to suffer. At times, we have four different presiders on a weekend. We do a wonderful job in the area of service – many work in soup kitchens, food banks, etc.” (PLC)

“We are starting the process of implementing whole community catechesis in the parish where all ages and generations are invited to participate in an ongoing faith formation. This also includes reflection on the Gospel each week with a faith-sharing question at every parish meeting or gathering and also as part of every homily.” (PA)

C. Total Ministering Community (including the leadership or pastors, staff, and councils together)

Participants reflected on the extent to which leadership in their parish echoes a commitment to a total ministering community, including a sense of shared leadership among pastors, staff, and pastoral council members. Participants frequently characterize their efforts toward a total ministering community as:

- **Making steady progress**
- **Struggling or hurting to realize their reality**

A number of participants indicate their parishes are growing toward a total ministering community in building parish life. These participants are more optimistic, indicating they feel they are “getting there” with this approach to shared ministry. The following comments reflect this viewpoint:

“We keep working at this. We have a Stewardship Handbook for parish leadership and liaison of all councils and commissions from the pastoral council and staff. We seek to integrate our efforts and not work at individual efforts.” (P)

“A larger staff; three councils: Pastoral, Administrative, School and Religious Education Committee; 700 identified volunteers” (P)
“There are lots of people involved in the life of the parish. Social justice issues are being addressed now more than in the past.” (P)

“Lay involvement – discerning gifts and talents and putting them at the disposal of the community will be the cornerstone of our new parish community.” (P)

“We have recently hired a person to help develop ministries and recruit volunteers for ministries in our parishes. This will help parishioners live their baptismal commitment and enable them to respond to the needs in our parish and communities.” (P)

“We have one pastor, five priests who are helping 35 staff who are full and part-time. 86 people are on pastoral council. 48 people are on finance council. There are a total of 175 people who work together in this level of leadership, but there are more members on commissions and organizations and committees.” (P)

“Strong. We have a well-established network of consultative/collaborative structures. Councils initiate a conversation about what we are to be and do, pastor chooses/authorizes, staff implements, entire parish evaluates.” (P)

“We are certainly not here yet and may never be. Staff works very collaboratively since there are so few of us and we rely a great deal on parishioners to do many things that staff cannot do. Relationship between me and the councils is great now because that’s where I came from and we haven’t had to work at it, but that’s also changing as we have change in the council personnel.” (PLC)

“We are getting there. Right now we are not there. Little by little, with formation and community building, we will become more so.” (PLC)

“Our community, staff and parish council reflects our multicultural community. It is always a challenge to step back and see where the other communities are coming from and why. It is important to understand each other’s cultures.” (PLC)

“Yes. Everyone has a say. Sometimes it would be easier if I could decide – though I know it wouldn’t last or be as effective.” (PLC)

“This is definitely getting better. Our staff is strong, well-educated, and professional. The council reflects various constituencies and ages. They are becoming more empowered to create a vision for the parish of the future.” (PA)

“This is a growing reality that I find very desirable. Natural, organic leadership living and being formed in the pews (for the most part) and emerging as an ongoing, daily presence in our parish and valley. Directing, deciding, participating, learning, taking responsibility and at the same time, having great fun.” (PA)

“Our leadership bodies are strong and listened to. We operate out of a collaborative model as best we can and consult with total parish as necessary for decision-making affecting the life of the parish.” (PA)

“We are starting to do this well, also. Our pastoral staff interfaces/consults with the parish, pastoral council, and finance council. The pastoral staff, pastoral council, and finance council have begun the process of building a new, larger church to accommodate the communities of three separate chapels. We are doing it together.” (PA)

“Cultural experiences/communities – inviting into sharing and forming community together is a struggle, but can happen. Parish council now represents all four ethnic groups.” (DR)

“There are many layers of leadership, the involvement of uncounted volunteers and many courageous or enduring staff ministers. Some priests grumble about lay roles and work against them, but the dynamic of our situation makes some form of lay leadership inevitable. It is harder to be a bump in the pew in Idaho than other sunnier places.” (DR)

“We are more and more understanding and naming our baptismal call to service through the sharing of our gifts. We have considerable work to do, however, in shifting from a response to the call to volunteer – to a response to serve using our God given gifts, grounded in our baptism.” (O)

While all pastoral leaders indicate their parishes are struggling to implement more inclusive and participative planning and leadership structures, some pastoral leaders indicate a greater level of struggle in their individual situations. In some instances, resistance is experienced among clergy, while in other instances resistance is experienced among parishioners at large.

Some pastoral leaders indicate that even though they struggle, they look at this process as a work in progress. The following comments from pastoral leaders reflect various degrees of struggle with creating a total ministering community in their local settings:

“Still in process – we’ve changed our council structures to involve new members – prior to this, our parish council members included many of the founding members of the parish and our parish is 52 years old. We also have very little staff – one parish secretary, one janitor, and the pastor.” (P)

“The healthy ministering of the church falls on the priest (pastor) attitude, behavior. The priest needs to understand the church and the community tradition, and to collaborate and organize with the staff and the parish council for the performing of ministry.” (D)

“Top down – pastor is in control of everything. Sister is pastoral associate for elderly, home confined.” (D)

“Same as above. The staff mostly see themselves as program leaders or directors of offices autonomous from the other; the community largely thinks of themselves as consumers or customers, a few as volunteers, but no sense of identity as ministers.” (PA)

“The pastor and staff could be considered a total ministering group; the various councils struggle with their identity.” (PA)

“I think we have a long way to go in creating an understanding of teamwork in these parishes. UP to 1-1/2 years ago (when I was assigned as pastoral associate), their thinking was still pretty much pre-Vatican II – the priest is everything and does everything.” (PA)

“Our parish is still very much a hierarchical model – the pastor makes all the decisions. In the diocese, there are many different models, ranging from the parish with the autocratic leader with an anger issue, where the community is in an uproar, to the parishes where the priest is a defacto leader, but the staff minds the parish. We have vibrant leadership teams, PLDs, on-site leaders, etc.” (DR)

“The leadership of the pastor and staff is primarily focused on campus ministry. We have a pastoral council, but they are fairly invisible. People are invited to offer their services and the pastor selects those he wants. The community, in general, doesn’t know who they are or what they do... It is an important re-focusing, but in the process, the existing leadership has been neglected rather than invited to be part of the refocusing. In part, I think because the current pastor seems to feel the need (mandate) to figure out what to do and then inform rather than struggle with everyone to come up with solutions.” (DR)

“Very few in our community seem to understand their baptismal call in terms of ministering to one another. I think this has not been emphasized enough in our Christian formation.” (O)

“The pastor and staff believe in a total ministering community. Some of the councils are moving in that direction willingly, while others are moving along kicking and screaming all the way.” (O)

“The model of leadership is more one of the pastor (working closely with staff, council, and leadership groups) setting the vision and direction and everyone pulling together to accomplish that. Versus a model of mutuality with more fully collaborative decision-making and pastoral planning” (O)

D. Current Parish Leadership Models

Participants were asked to describe the current leadership models present in their parish communities. Their current parish leadership models are often referred to as:

- **Collaborative with shared ministry**
- **Centered on a core team of professional staff**
- **Traditional and priest-centered**

A number of participants indicate their parish leadership models are collaborative, including the participation of parish staff and lay leadership in guiding the future direction of the community. This is similar to their responses to previous questions concerning a total ministering community. The following comments reflect commitment to shared ministry:

“Pastoral Council; Finance Commission; Stewardship Commission (time and talent; stewardship development); Spiritual Life and Worship Commission; Social Ministry and Human Concerns Commission; School Commission; Faith Formation Commission” (P)

“Developing some collaborative models – use of councils for more than just consultation” (P)

“A shared ministry is what we are working toward. Staff and commission heads have considerable input as to what and how parish does.” (P)

“We are one working as a team – working together with the pastor. We collaborate as a long-range plan committee to work with the pastoral council to get vision and priority. We use the Archdiocese model of you are a branded document. We use a number of models for a number of communities. We elect the lay leader from the community by election. We use the models that the pastor can appoint the leaders.” (P)

“We have a balance of women and men ministering with the people. I think we have an open and inviting community. New things are being implemented. The pastoral council tries to keep abreast of community needs and sets their goals accordingly.” (PLC)

“We have standard councils – pastoral, finance, stewardship, faith formation and a new liturgy committee. I am appointed by lay pastoral administrator. I meet with the pastoral moderator weekly with staff weekly. There is a growing sense of ownership in the councils – all of us lived through a 4-year difficult situation and committed to each other that we would stay and keep the parish alive. Now that that particular crisis is over, some folks have risen to the top and become recognized leaders, but the expectations on them are great – maybe too great.” (PLC)

“There is a finance team, pastoral council, liturgy team, dining hall advisory board and many other such lay-led groups of leaders in the parish. Consensus is the method for decision-making. Lay men and women are at the helm.” (PLC)

“Half-time pastor, full time pastoral associate (on-site leader using a parish life director job description). This is a paid pastoral staff. Council Structures: pastoral, finance, long-range planning dealing with buildings and facilities; liturgy committee, organic structures for justice and social concerns, parish town hall meetings one time a year.” (PA)

“Communal, organic, responsive to life care groups as catalyst for larger participation, declining hierarchical model, ‘life/grace dictated, mandated, handed down by pastor’ to chaos and new forms of life emerging.” (PA)

“Commissions, which are advisory to the pastor, a strong financial committee, parish staff that meets monthly, and lots of lay involvement in liturgy” (PA)

“Team; servant; baptismal; collaborative; pastoral staff and pastor = team; pastoral council = visionary and planning; sacramental prep teams, also DRE/Catechist, but teams provide leadership which is distinct from DRE/Catechist.” (PA)

“There have always been many lay leaders for the last several decades – of parish organizations, of inter-parish organizations, even in voluntary small faith communities. The hierarchy is very present in our consciousness and there are those who work against lay leadership (the liturgy police, etc.), but the soil is still very fertile for lay ministry in all places. The success of parish life directors and pastoral associates is probably directly related to the long-term involvement of the laity and their necessity in a mission diocese.” (DR)

“A structure of consultative bodies whose role it is to pray forward the vision of the parish. The structures are in place. Each body has a staff person whose role it is to carry out the goals and direction of the particular commission. The challenge is for both staff and commission to understand the respective roles.” (O)

Other participants describe a leadership model that is more characteristic of a core team of paid parish staff who work collaboratively to enable the gifts of the community. This approach appears to place leadership primarily at the pastoral staff level. The following comments illustrate this present model of parish leadership:

“We are instituting a new model of leadership. A key staff member of 30 years just retired, opening the door for a new model. I now have a pastoral associate for ministries and a pastoral associate for administration. Together with myself as pastor and our parochial vicar, we form a pastoral team. The goal is to relieve the priests of many administrative and supervisory responsibilities to free us up to focus more on sacraments and worship.” (P)

“Collaborative service model with pastor/deacon and staff - pastor is relatively hands off except 1) maintaining some sense of orthodox; 2) enable and empower; 3) abundant delegation, then hands off” (P)

“Also, note that the parish administrator (lay employee) functions much like a ‘co-pastor’.” (P)

“Pastoral teams of leadership: a) P.L.D. and priest minister – working with staff and pastoral finance council for English speaking courses; b) P.L.D. and priest minister and pastoral associate for Hispanic ministry and emerging parish worship group for Spanish speaking community; c) P.L.D., School Principal for School with School Commissions.” (PLC)

“Parish Life Director and staff that has been there for many years. I have been the Parish Life Director.” (PLC)

“Ours is a fairly standard model: priest and pastoral team enabling the calling forth of communal gifts, the administering of goods, personnel and programs. The authority is shared, yet the only canonical voice (where the buck stops is the pastor).” (PA)

“Pastoral associate coordinates with the priest who has oversight of the community. We have a pastoral council and administrative council which presently are composed jointly of members of each parish. The councils are resistant to this: They want to maintain independence. A liturgy committee (recently formed) also contributes leadership.” (PA)

“Pastoral core team – pastor, parochial vicar, deacon, and two pastoral associates. This core team coordinates with the ministry leaders on a regular basis. The pastoral council aids the pastoral care team in setting the parish vision and goals.” (PA)

“Diocese: Pastor/Pastoral Associates where pastor is leader, but PA supervises staff; Pastor/PA where PA role is to lead ministries; Sacramental Ministers/PLD where PLD is parish leader; pastor on-site leader where OSL leads parish community; twinned communities with one pastor (clustering parishes for purposes of regular Eucharist); merging parishes with one pastor” (DR)

Still other pastoral leaders describe their parish leadership models as traditional and centered around the authority, guidance, and direction of the pastor. The following comments indicate this reality:

“For now, I think the leadership models are present in our parish because of the moral principles and attitude of the priest and the staff and council members must be able to organize and participate.” (D)

“Pastor down; willing hands, willing helpers” (D)

“It all revolves around the pastor, though this is enabled as much, if not more, by people in the parish and staff than by the pastor himself. There is no articulated sense of vision or mission, no pastoral plan process, and a great deal of ‘squeaky wheel’ or ‘treading water’ activity.” (PA)

“The pastor is CEO and consults with the core team. He retains final say on all policies. He uses the words ‘partnership’ and ‘collaboration’ and their application is not necessarily authentic or congruent. His capacity for dealing with conflict is limited. Negative feelings go underground and fester. But, we look good on the outside!” (PA)

“There is a very top-down model in the guise of collegiality. All projects have to have the pastor’s okay. Some gatekeeping on the part of the lay pastoral administrator, but also some very good efforts on her part to invite people to participate in the various parish functions (not to design them, however).” (DR)

E. Leadership of the Pastor

Participants were asked to discuss the various roles pastors play in parish life. It is interesting to note that parish life coordinators often reflected on their role as defacto on-site pastors of the local community. The most frequently mentioned roles of pastors are:

- **Convener, facilitator, and guide, calling forth the gifts of others**
- **Managing changing roles and structures**

The most commonly mentioned pastoral role is that of convener, facilitator, and guide, enabling the individual gifts of parishioners to emerge in diverse forms of parish leadership. This empowerment role of pastors is strongly reflected in the following participant comments:

“Tons! He helps articulate the vision through prayer and consultation. He works closely with parish staff and leadership. He sees himself as a servant leader and yet leader to move things ahead. Important to listen, but also vision and take beyond where we’re at.” (P)

“Connecting council planning with staff activity; accountability of staff to planning of pastoral council and administrative council” (P)

“At this point, he is responsible for calling forth the gifts of the entire parish community. We are trying to identify.” (P)

“The pastor helps to implement the vision of confederation and the coordination of pastoral and administration responds.” (P)

“The vision and priority; spiritual leader by leading versus prayers and sacraments; bring us together in unity with Christ, to the church; compassionate, caring, loving, empowering people, leading by example; work together with the community leadership.” (P)

“As the pastor, I don’t micromanage. I try to step back and allow others to lead. Sometimes I’m too ready to jump in and correct. Generally, however, I try to give a full reign.” (P)

“Heretofore, I have been somewhat of a micromanager. But now I have resolved to empower my pastoral associates. I plan to provide guidance, inspiration, encouragements, and empowerment. I will provide opportunities for training and education, and I will be patient with the people, the team (and myself) as we transition to this new model.” (P)

“We do not have an ordained pastor. I have been appointed by the bishop as “pastoral leadership” for the parish. I also am a ‘5’ so I naturally go to all groups for input before making decisions.” (PLC)

“I am freed by our staff to be minister with our community. By preaching, I try to touch the hearts of the people and to move them beyond.” (PLC)

“I meet with pastoral and finance councils regularly – make suggestions and ask questions. I am visible at most masses. I’ve convened the liturgy committee and currently chair that, but will pass that off soon. I try to be a support for other leaders and staff. I lead prayer (communion service) and bring issues of importance to the Sunday Assembly when necessary. Most regularly parishioners see me as “pastor”. I do not preach, although I have no other settings in the past.” (PLC)

“As the main pastoral leader in the parish, I provide for a set time for: a) Creation of a spirit of prayerful listening and discernment – spirituality; b) Atmosphere of formation and encouragement as criteria for staff – work with parishioners for leaders of any ministry in working with their teams; c) Encouragement of discovery and sharing of particular charism and gifts within for the community; d) Assurance of high quality of liturgical celebrations and preaching.” (PLC)

“Hopefully, the ‘lay pastor’ encourages, agitates, and speaks a vision. That is coming from within and beyond the parish. It is hard work to pastor in a post-Vatican II progressive community that is feeling increasingly alienated from the ‘institutional church’.” (PLC)

“Priest is an extreme introvert who empowers people to accept responsibility so he can live as an introvert. He is also an excellent educator and helps people to understand their roles as active Catholic Christians.” (PA)

“Calling forth gifts; listening, collaborating, implementing, evaluating; casting a vision consistent with the Gospel and acculturated within a specific community” (PA)

“He makes sure priests are scheduled for masses, presides at both pastoral and finance councils, and is the ultimate ‘buck stopper’ in decision-making, although he prefers that the councils have the primary role in decisions.” (PA)

A number of comments focus on the changing role of pastors in pastoring multiple parishes and working with parish life coordinators and pastoral administrators. This changing role often presents awkward situations for parish leaders where new models of collaboration have yet to be established. They indicate that these changing roles, however, are gradually being addressed. The following comments reflect on some of the transitional issues that emerge in the changing role of priest as pastor:

“I am trying to provide more of a collaborative style. The parish thought they were getting a priest when the pastor decided to leave in May. I was asked to accept the position and much later the parish was informed I was coming. For the past two years, I have taken more of a ‘passive role as they name their anger and grieve.’” (PLC)

“Though very supportive of staff in a hands-off way regarding their own departments, his ‘working retirement’ status and tiredness often translate to an unwillingness to change or take on anything new. But, it’s realistically more his personal energy level than a desire to block others, though it is sometimes interpreted that way.” (PA)

“We all defer to his wishes ultimately. He sees himself as being in charge, based on Canon Law. He has a strong, engaging, gregarious personality. He hires talented, competent people and lets them do their work unfettered for the most part.” (PA)

“Allowing ministers and staff to have collaborative thoughts – ownership to make changes or run programs.” (PA)

“Sacramental and liturgical leadership in the celebrations – continues to remind and reinforce that he considers me – the on-site leader to be the leader of the parish, to the parish, as well as to the bishop.” (PA)

“The current pastor welcomes the input from the other core team members.” (PA)

“Hierarchical link to institutional church; symbolic connection to tradition; mediator of grace from above (particularly pervasive and potent in predominantly immigrant population with colonized historical background); by and large community tolerance and forgiving of inadequacies and gaps in leadership – respect and need for role and symbol.” (PA)

“New pastor – minimal – sees himself as ‘behind the scene’ person. Does not engage in process or parish groups. Former pastor – called forth gifts – invited participation, listened to and followed advice of parish members.” (PA)

“He’s new to the parish and trying very hard to be part of everything going on – and wanting to approve or change each activity. This is a new model of ‘leadership’ for the parish.” (PA)

“Various models – some tend to hold all the reigns – some for lack of awareness, others out of fear and pride for their place. Many do very well with an attitude of openness. But there does seem to be a limiting factor even with the best priests. We are focused too much on consolidation. We could reach many more if we were to empower many more lay people in some para-sacramental sense to establish a Catholic presence in every town and neighborhood.” (DR)

“Pastoral team/community – some pastors make all decisions without staff with pastoral councils; some pastors have administrative staff, but still make all decisions; some pastors have a staff that is empowered to make decisions; some parishes with PLDs (two) – PLDs make all pastoral decisions” (DR)

“Pastor is there to listen, but does not always take action – not trained in financial – does not like confrontation to settle any problem arising and wants to please everyone. Creating frustration for personnel and community. No time to really know parishioners – always at meetings or running to serve Mass in six parishes.” (O)

F. Staff Leadership

When discussing and commenting on the roles of staff, participants characterize staff roles as:

- **Planning, executing, and organizing**
- **Facilitating the gifts of others to emerge**

Most participants identify their staff leadership as planning, executing, and organizing the various ministries of the parish to enable the mission of the parish to be accomplished. The following comments indicate an emphasis on the planning, executing, and organizational roles of parish staff:

“Tons! They implement the everyday development of the mission of the parish. They meet two times a month as a team and then with their own section supervisor and other folks in their area.” (P)

“Organization of resources and work; training and communication” (P)

“Administrative staff provides leadership and responds to those needs. Priests respond to sacramental needs. Pastoral staff is part-time for specific areas, volunteers. Hispanic pastoral staff respond to pastoral needs of parish community.” (P)

“There are basically two leaders in ministry – a DRE and a youth minister. The three of us work as a team. The youth minister and DRE have expertise in their fields and assume leadership for those areas, but we have frequent communication.” (P)

“The staff has a special training in each area they are in charge. They have a special role in assisting the community’s work with the pastor and the community leadership. We cannot carry on the vision or the task without the staff who work with us.” (P)

“The staff exercises a fair amount of autonomy in designing and running their programs. They are charged with the responsibility of coordinating and communicating with one another at all times. The pastoral associates have direct supervision over the staff.” (P)

“Staff includes 1 pastoral associate, stewardship head who also has charge of receptionist and bulletin maker, bookkeeper. The PA operates on her own with regard to religious formation and we meet regularly. Stewardship person formed a committee on her own. They studied the bishops pastoral and are ready to implement change.” (P)

“Implementation of programs; facilitating commissions that relate to their program areas” (P)

“I have only one additional full-time staff person and she does much of the above with all the faith formation programs. Our musician is responsible for leadership of the choir and the congregation at Mass. He

is new and only ¼ time. We try to collaborate so that we are not sending mixed messages and confusing people.” (PLC)

“Paid and unpaid – are asked to do community organization, leadership development for those they minister with (criteria of their job description).” (PLC)

“Traditionally, each is a director of a single office, i.e., youth, religious education, outreach, etc. with no collegial responsibility or collaboration. This is changing somewhat with two of us new to staff, but still predominant. There are basically three types on staff: 1) Those who have been there 15-20 years complacent with their own autonomous programs; 2) Those too afraid of the pastor to ‘rock the boat’; and 3) Two of us willing to pursue changes for more collaborative ministry.” (PA)

“A support system to the many different ministry programs. A chance to provide resource or direction. Also, provide a structured system/organization chart for directions.” (PA)

“The staff handles all day-to-day functions of the parish. Some think the pastor should be more visible. But he has a talent for hiring good people and we all do our jobs well.” (PA)

“I’m the only resident staff. I oversee day-to-day parish life: religious education, sacramental preparation, adult faith formation, etc. Our finances are managed by the financial administrator at our overseeing parish. Bulletin production and maintenance of sacramental records is done by their office administrator.” (PA)

“Tries to provide necessary day-to-day monthly meetings as to upcoming events or problems with suggestions that sometimes need to go before pastoral council; would also suggest more training in their field due to shortage of finances; need to take on more than job description, but without the staff, no vision would be carried out.” (O)

Another role that participants associate with staff is that of facilitator, allowing the gifts of parishioners to emerge through their leadership. This staff role of empowering and enabling the ministry of the parish and its members (beyond their functional and operational roles of parish administration) is emerging. The following comments reflect this larger vision of staff roles:

“Supporting, listening, empowering” (P)

“Our staff meets weekly to pray together, check in personally and with regard to programs or responsibilities. We share what we are hearing and seeing and reflect on where we find Christ in the work, and here we can be Christ to one another and each other. Staff is indispensable in terms of leadership.” (PLC)

“The staff must be one voice, understand and trust each other to create the sense of friendship to build a healthy community.” (D)

“We try to invite others from the community, help them to discern their gifts, provide the educational opportunities for them to utilize those gifts and support them in their ministry spiritually, emotionally, and financially.” (PA)

“Coordination, support and encouragement, guidance, linking to resources, education/training, modeling, calling forth, recognizing, naming gifts, accompanying” (PA)

“Program; collaborative; empowering the folks/calling forth gifts; servant; we rather than us and them; visionary; coordination” (PA)

“The staff provides very professional and carrying pastoral leadership and care. They are competent, willing and able to empower those they serve and uncommonly dedicated.” (O)

G. Leadership of the Community

Participants were asked to reflect on the leadership provided by their parish communities. Leadership roles of the community are often presented as:

- **Active, especially in outreach**
- **Engaged in the visioning of the parish**
- **Passive and not well-engaged**

Many parish leaders indicate that parishioners are active and responsible for many traditional aspects of parish life, especially parish outreach. The following comments reflect the high activity level among parishioners in their roles of parish leadership:

“Activities and programs outside of budgets and parish planning” (P)

“The community is used to providing feedback and comments through the rumor mill, or by letter (sometimes anonymous). Many of our people are deeply involved in justice organizations or outreach projects, but don’t see that as being tied to the parish in any concrete way. Their example is great and inspirational, but no formal connection to the parish.” (P)

“The entire community is called to take on the responsibility of being servant/leadership within the community.” (P)

“The community runs the outreach programs. The community has many gifted and educated people in the area of Liturgy. It couldn’t be done in an empowering and quality manner without their leadership.” (PLC)

“Leaders on the pastoral council and financial council – strong leadership in social outreach. There is a large segment of the community that comes only for Sunday Liturgy. Challenge for the next couple of years is to develop a process where parishioners begin to claim their ownership of the parish.” (PLC)

“We just finished a Parish Congress gathering. After months of conversations between pastoral council members and other parishioners,

the pastoral council came up with some proposals (i.e., getting a wheel chair lift, redecorating the back chapel to be a 'children's chapel', creating a group to bring the homeless guests of the dining hall together with parishioners, etc.). The parish gathered, discerned, and came up with 6 to 7 approved proposals and committees were formed to begin the work. We need community leadership." (PLC)

"The community needs to participate with the staff to do the job of organizing, managing the church and the church facility." (D)

"The largest amount liturgical preparation, catechesis, service to those in need, hospitality, long-range planning, leadership of our councils, reports to the parish on stewardship and finance, prayer, financial support of the parish, fundraising when needed." (PA)

"The community has done a good job seeking ways to care for the poor." (PA)

"People in our community are almost always ready to help with any projects, often without being asked. Initiating something new is harder for some of them. I think the volunteer model is very strong in our parish. We need to work on finding and acknowledging each other's particular gifts." (O)

A second leadership role of the community is their active engagement in the visioning and planning process for the future of the parish. This role is described as much deeper than simply executing programs and priorities. It is reflective of parishes where parishioners are co-creators of the vision and direction of the parish. The following comments reflect this emphasis on the leadership of the community:

"Tons! Not only by providing their time and talent, but helping to assess where the H.S. is moving, what the H.S. is up to, and where/how we need to respond." (P)

"The community provided the vision and impetus for establishing parish evangelization retreats, young adult ministry and Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. We have many small faith communities that are very active in initiating projects to assist unwed mothers, the poor and needy here and abroad, and provide volunteers for various ministries." (P)

"Councils, commissions, providing feedback, especially through all-parish town meetings" (P)

"Often, the best ideas come from the community in the form of questions or suggestions. And as a whole, our community struggle to respond to the poverty in our area. They are wonderfully hospitable and very supportive of the staff as well." (PLC)

"A great deal – earlier, in a negative way, resistance to change...and later an openness to do it. The community's prayer for each other really is the beginning of their leadership. The leaders chosen from the community, formed to listen to the community who begins to believe that their openness, insights, etc., are valued. When they see/experience their

insights enfolded into parish practice, ministry – the participation/buy-in is strong.” (PLC)

“In Parish #1, lay persons have stepped up to take many liturgical roles. A few strong leaders understand these ministries and encourage involvement from others. Council members actively cast vision and propose possible ways to see the vision fulfilled.” (PA)

“Often accepted efforts. Recently finished a long-range planning project which was council led and council continues to require updating. Again, whenever a need is expressed, someone seems to respond.” (O)

“The parish has created a vision of social justice. Issues are identified by the members who surface them in homilies and council meetings. These are brought into the liturgical/faith life of the community.” (O)

“The community provides shared values for decision-making in the pastoral council and its several commissions, as well as a high level of involvement in all parish ‘doer’ ministries. Liturgical ministers, for example, evidence a healthy spirit of ownership for what they do (versus simply fulfilling functions). The laity are urged and empowered to live their faith through their personal charisms in their families and work. The community’s leadership is evident in parish hospitality (welcoming newcomers, genuinely welcome Sunday worshippers, contributing to parish outreach ministries (meals weekly to downtown service center) and community building in the parish (picnic, etc.).” (O)

Still other participants reflect with some regret that overall there is still little engagement among the community as a whole in the ministerial life of the parish. The following comments reflect this reality:

“Little. Every parish should be readied for the day when they don’t have a resident priest/pastor.” (D)

“We have a pastoral council elected by the community. Finance council, some commissions, but little communication of plan, priorities, and budget between them all. Staff and council meetings are basically a survey of the pastor’s personal calendar followed by a look at parish calendar and never issues. Staff and council never mix. Plan, pray, anything!” (PA)

“We need to do more to empower leadership of the laity as a whole. Powerful parishioners with money seem to hold greater influence, especially with the pastor. He is a gifted money-raiser who is clearly in control of parish operations. Most people tend to defer to ‘Father’. We have trained Catholics for centuries to be obedient and authority. Most of them are. A few are independent thinkers and outspoken.” (PA)

“The community has some leadership, but often waits for permission from the pastor. There is a need for a pastoral visioning project, but many are apathetic about this. Young adult leadership goes untapped often. Not much in terms of leadership replacement. Busy person’s parish with little commitment to it.” (O)

“Very little – laid back – come to services and then go home. Do not participate, even when asked. Community does not accept change. Want certain items like a new heat system, but not willing to support the project – they just complain.”

H. Intentionality of Parish Leadership Model

Participants were asked to reflect on the intentionality of their parish leadership model. In other words, they were asked to identify why their parish leadership models function the way they do. The following three reasons are apparent from their comments:

- **The model functions out of necessity, based on new needs and trends.**
- **The model is nurtured by a vision as an intentional model for parish life.**
- **The model is derived from the style of the current pastors.**

Many parish leaders indicate that the emerging models in their parishes have been created out of necessity. The history of the parish, changing demographics, available financial resources, and the absence of full-time priests/pastors has forced the parish to look at adaptive and responsive ways to minister to their communities. Those participants who indicate necessity as the reason for their change have expressed their views in the following ways:

“By default. It seems the best model for us at this time.” (P)

“Our parish leadership model works this way because of the history of my experience with the parish and stripped of any other options that I could see, and facing extreme adaptive change, prayer was the only available path – my prayer for them, their prayer for each other. Then, I needed to form leaders, especially for the future, for the time when old guard would not be able to keep their hold as the community, so I used an incubator approach with key emerging groups and waited. They would have necessary skills when the transition occurred.” (P)

“Several factors -- The pastor is in his 20th years as pastor – longevity issue. He’s also post-retirement age pressed into serving longer than is healthy. Many parishioners have a sense of simply waiting for any change until we get a new pastor in three years – theoretically. He also has a caring inside, but most people never get beyond the exterior. Some are comfortable with the way things are, others are afraid to suggest anything that would seem to be ‘telling the pastor how to do his job’.” (PLC)

“Because we are such a diverse parish, we must work collaboratively and with respect for each other.” (PLC)

“Our church was the Italian immigrant church and was built by the Italian community in 1900 and now became the multicultural church which is used by the Italians, Low, Kmhmu, Lamet, Hmong, Chinese and Native American communities.” (D)

“We are forced to change because the 30 years of doing the same thing the same way is stagnant. It is time to allow younger people to take over so that they may pass the traditions and faith to their children.” (PA)

“Small rural community, hunger for community, high level of education and business experience. Many are Catholic educated through parochial schools and Catholic universities; good mixture of ages 30-70 years sharing leadership and developing each other. Loving pastor hiring good people and relying on their assistance and wisdom in a shared leadership model” (PA)

“Life! We learned to work with the situation as it arose and unfolded in this way. Together we wrestled, agonized and labored to respond as best we could out of our hope and love for our faith community.” (PA)

“We have been told that in three to four years we will have only one full-time priest for the community. We are trying to prepare for that by developing a positive support from the parish for lay leadership.” (PA)

“In large part due to geographic and social isolation – it helps that there has been a long tradition of empowering by leadership.” (DR)

“Possibly because this is a campus ministry parish and not a geographical parish. People have been driven to this community from all over and it takes real effort to gather people for committee and I’m guessing the staff including pastor and associate feel it’s just easier for them to do all the planning and visioning. And, most of the parishioners are content to have it be this way because when they do come on Sunday, they have a good experience.” (DR)

“Very strongly, because of community tradition. We are an old parish (est. 1881) in a small town. Through the years, the parish has had several unfortunate pastor experiences. I think the community feels strongly that it’s their parish, pastors come and go, and the people will do what needs to be done. Change in their routine is not especially welcome, however.” (O)

“We are purposely preparing for the day when there will only be one priest. We hope to provide a transition process so it can take place with the least amount of heartache. We are also planning for the building of one new, larger church.” (PA)

“This is the difficult challenge we face. Much of what we do is done in a frontier way – not perfect, but adequate or the best we can do. The challenge is to move us to the next level – the priest shortage is causing pressure for change.” (DR)

Participants also indicate that their parish leadership models are often intentional by design and are nurtured by a vision or inspiration of the parish of the present and future. The following comments reflect this perspective:

“Because they are convinced of our need to assume their baptismal responsibilities” (P)

“I’m not sure I understand this question. Most of the time, we are still in survival mode and scramble to respond to the emerging growth and dynamic of a diverse congregation. But our collaboration grows out of our belief that we are all called in Baptism to serve the Kingdom and that not one of us can do everything or be all to everyone.” (PLC)

“I guess it is because this is who we are and how we were created to interact with one another. As Catholics, our mission is to build the Kingdom of God by making disciples of all people. This can only be done by holding up the vision of the Gospels and working with the gifts of the people of the community to move our community toward and into the lived experience of the Kingdom of God present.” (PA)

“Because of church mandate; because of the history, reality, needs and gifts of the community; through the working of the Holy Spirit” (PA)

“These were core values around which staff was formed. Also, core values for those choosing to be in the community. How to help integrate new pastor into this model is a mystery still unfolding.” (PA)

“Some is intentional – as we are choosing to work collaboratively. Other is process of evolution and direction of Holy Spirit.” (PA)

“I think the parish has learned, through able pastoral leaders, to be a community of hospitality, a community of joyful worship expressed in service with others, a parish with a sensitivity for the wider world. Nothing shapes a community more than such healthy pastoral experiences.” (O)

“Trying to develop structures for long-range planning involving councils of the parish and trying to develop staff accountability to council planning” (P)

“I care for my faith community so much that I want to use any models that the parish leadership recommends and work with them on it. Many times, I find that it was hard. But, it is working well if I work with the proper leaders as a team.” (P)

“We are starting from scratch, so we can be very intentional about how we approach our new model.” (P)

“Regular recruitment and training of lay leadership. Exploring new models. Hiring staff who share the vision.” (P)

“At this point, it seems to be instinctive. Again, because are small, everyone has to pitch in and we come from a focus/belief in the dignity of the Baptized.” (PLC)

“Very intentional like a cat biding its time with a robin’s egg/nest. Waiting patiently for the signs of times and opportunities to support, cheer, quietly provide formation of new; be Hospice worker for what is dying, and midwife for what is emerging – working proactively.” (PLC)

“I am encouraging certain parishioners to consider pastoral council. I have worked with the finance council in developing its roles and responsibilities that speak of collaboration with the staff and pastoral council. I am just now beginning to articulate a direction I would like to see us work toward. Movement from isolation to collaboration and community” (PLC)

“I think the model of women and men working together are vital. The balance has been absent for so long in our leadership. The other is our outreach to those outside the parish. This has brought a vitality to our community.” (PLC)

“We are being intentional in our model of leadership because of the ethnicity of the cultures and language differences. We need to carefully organize and accept each other’s dignity and way of life to be inclusive as one family in God.” (D)

“The pastor and I (pastoral associate) are both trying to educate the pastoral council more, so that they will be empowered to lead, as well as serve as advisors to the pastor. With the current pastor, however, no one individual will become too strong.” (PA)

“My personal focus is to educate, inspire, and train (for specific ministries and release). After ‘release’, the continuing challenge is to support, hold accountable and encourage these leaders to pass on the process of recruiting, training, and sharing ministry with others.” (PA)

“Trying to implement fair labor standards in office; making time for prayer; trying to help with whole parish faith formation; forming parish activities that can be self-sustaining without me; nurturing small communities of faith; empowering everyone to lead because of baptism.” (PA)

Finally, some participants indicate that the model of leadership working in the parish is derived from the pastor’s leadership style or other significant individuals who have formed the community and its thinking to move into the future. The following comments reflect the positives and negatives of this approach to this intentional ministry:

“Pastor’s discretion, plus it is policy of Archdiocese of Seattle, as expressed in its documenting ‘the vine and the branches’. This model is rooted in the visionary leadership of Archbishop. We’re running on (and running out of) momentum.” (P)

“We have had strong women religious leading the parish who knew how to find allies who said (20 years ago) ‘we recognize this person as our leader.’” (PLC)

“A charismatic, visionary priest in the early 70’s got the community excited and moving. When he left, the new pastor encouraged the laity to take up what the ‘charismatic priest’ had done and so fostered lay ownership. As the lay pastor came, the parish has been challenged and encouraged to look outward and develop the strengths and gifts of the members. We belong to a community organizing alliance and it helps.” (PLC)

“Long time pastor held reins. New (now 12 years) pastor inherited people who didn’t want to see aging. Infirm pastor replaced. Parish is actually a parish that moved the name from urban renewal area downtown and plunked it in a neighborhood and took in people from the four contiguous parishes.” (D)

“The pastor wants it to and he calls the shots. It is clear that he values union and harmony more than any other value. He wants no controversy of any kind. This can shut down both honesty and risk-taking in the staff as we confirm and tend to tell Father what we think he wants to hear.” (PA)

“Visionary pastor 6 years ago said he could not lead by himself and hired 2 pastoral associates; he was close to retirement and hoped for smaller assignment; Diocese has shortage of priests.” (PA)

“A strong gift of administrative skills by pastor. Also a strong gift of interpreting behaviors of people. He is an excellent homilist and liturgist, so in all is highly respected by people.” (O)

“It continues to suffer from a ‘permission of pastor’ model because of the entrenchment of that idea. Lay leadership is not valued and is often frowned upon. Pastor supports lay leadership often, but is not supported by the community.” (O)

“I am taking advantage of continuing education opportunities. I am changing my style of leadership (admittedly out of exhaustion and desperation) to empower my staff to exercise more fully their gifts and skills.” (P)

I. Future Emerging Models of Parish Leadership

To conclude their reflection on parish leadership roles, participants were asked to identify future models of parish leadership they see emerging. A wide range of viewpoints is reflected in their comments. However, two critical themes and issues surface more frequently, including:

- **The formation of the laity to assume their baptismal call**
- **The use of intentional planning and visioning processes in parishes**

Many participants reflected on the fact that future models of parish leadership will be rooted in the need for increased laity formation through whole community catechesis, assisting parishioners to assume their baptismal call toward ministry. This theological and foundational orientation to the future of ministry is prevalent in the written views of

many participants. The following comments illustrate this sense of future modeling for parish leadership and its “rootedness” in empowering laity to realize their baptismal calls:

“I really like the ideas that are coming through whole community Catechesis, and I look forward to implementing it in our new parish community.” (P)

“Confederation of parishes that share resources; baptismal commitment will empower parishioners to fulfill their role as parish.” (P)

“We’re experimenting with charism discernment for the whole community, using a formal instrument developed by the Catherine of Sienna Institute. We’re also beginning to encourage some of our stronger programs and activities, if they are not part of our core mission, to become independent of our structure and self-sufficient.” (P)

“The dominant white community is dying. The multicultural communities are beginning to take more ownership and leadership roles.” (PLC)

“Models of women as leaders; involvement of each person (goal); every member is a working member; we are all the disciples of Jesus and have a responsibility” (PLC)

“The Spanish-speaking community is giving me the most hope. We are forming famed leaders in Ignatian prayer/discernment; we are educating them very basically in theology, pastoral skills, scripture, liturgy; we are working or building a Catholic school to include children of Hispanic families by day, and their parents by night (ESC, citizenship, literacy) involving both English and Spanish-speaking communities.” (PLC)

“Women are clearly taking on more of what was traditionally ‘priest only’ work. People who are affected by the programs are asked to help in the decision-making. The homeless people on the Dining Hall Board, day laborers or the ‘VOZ’ (workers rights board) and parents on the education committee. The baptized are taking over!” (PLC)

“I don’t know if this is a future model or not, but what I see happening is people from all aspects of the community beginning to accept and live their understanding of the Eucharist. People are stepping forward and freely giving themselves and their services to the greater community, not just the parish community. They are doing this because they are able to connect the Eucharist to their day-to-day life. This is where the kingdom is built.” (PA)

“We are emerging as an empowered people who wish to change the world. Collaboration is a key word. Relationships and love ground action. Hope is the fuel for change. Future parish leaders need authority to ask.” (PA)

“Parish life directors, pastoral associates, a negotiated use of deacons. Programs in the Hispanic community...everyone has a role to play and among the Anglos, the called and gifted workshops may have tremendous long-term effect.” (DR)

Other participants indicate intentional planning, visioning, and formational processes as critical in developing future models of parish leadership. While they are uncertain about the form future models will take, these participants seem committed to strategies, such as small faith-sharing groups, laity formation, parish visioning processes, and whole community catechesis as a means to give birth to new models of leadership in the future. The following comments reflect this intention with the goal of building new models through a range of pastoral practices and strategies:

“Small faith/neighborhood groups (S.C.C.); evangelization efforts – door-to-door; youth as role models for parents; family as central to faith development and leadership” (P)

“Theologically trained paid (professional) staff with depth of experience in parish ministry” (P)

“Increased interest on the part of laity in theological formation and training” (P)

“More ‘non-staff’ lead groups – more people taking planning responsibility and ownership of the life of the parish, as well as the physical plant and the well-being of other parishioners. We have a lot of elderly folks who are dependent on family and friends. We try to support that kind of ministry as well. We also have a new, really wide participation in prayer ministry called ‘one-minute-a-day’ prayer for the parish – something everyone can do.” (PLC)

“In the deanery, on-site coordinators or PLDs are probably coming. Clustering of deanery parishes; more need to form PAs and strengthen non-ordained lay leaders; Hispanic leaders” (PA)

“The pastoral council has become a real vision and planning group. The hope is to move towards a real partnership between the pastoral team and parish leaders.” (PA)

“We will, of necessity, have to use more of the merging, clustering, twinning, PLD, on-site leaders, PA core team concepts – we have 40 active diocesan priests, 52 parishes, and projections are we will be at 26 in 20 years. What do we do and how do we plan for a Eucharist centered vibrant faith with no priests?” (DR)

Participant observations also defy easy categorization, but indicate an underlying anxiety coupled with underlying hope that the future of pastoral leadership will be deeply rooted in the life and vitality of local communities that will discover the best models for collaboration. The following comments reflect these observations:

“Pastors are change agents. Parish Life Director – We’re waiting for the next generation. People are waiting. People like and enjoy the pastor. To say that this is the model or to say the new emerging model is the best way is walking on quicksand.” (D)

“I have lots of ideas, as do others – too early to see what will emerge from the community. Looking to the ideas developed by the collaborative ministry efforts of the ‘concerned Catholic ministers’ in our diocese for direction and ideas.” (PA)

“I am seeing less energy for flashy programs and a longing for something deeper. More simple – at least that is the question I think we are beginning to explore. However, I think we need more information from the community to test the observation. I don’t know what might emerge, but hope we continue to explore.” (O)

IV. PARISH BEST PRACTICES:

Participants began a discussion of parish best practices with a series of case studies presented by individual participants outlining the pastoral practices that contribute to the parish of the future. Following the case studies, participants engaged in table discussions and in written reflections evaluating a number of questions concerning the future of parish best practices.

A. Relationship of Total Ministering Community to Healthy Parishes

Participants were asked to evaluate the extent to which healthy parishes will depend upon a total ministering community of pastors, staff, and parishioners working together. The majority of participants indicate there is an essential link between a commitment to a total ministering community and healthy parishes. The following comments reflect this viewpoint:

“Completely – but our larger issue must ask questions of identity of priest, ministry, and church.” (P)

“In order to be healthy, it must be a total ministering community.” (P)

“All need to have a common vision of parish community. Openness to gifts of others – calling forth parishioners so that they know their giftedness. Use of Internet and gracious hospitality” (P)

“Very much so” (P)

“Paramount! Shared ministry exists. It has to be recognized and acknowledged to begin with, then comes building community. Ministers animate others (i.e., so much leadership is being demonstrated already. This symposium has opened my eyes to that reality.” (P)

“Completely” (P)

“It will always depend on a total ministering community, regardless of the number, quality, and sex of priests or ministers.” (P)

“Definitely the key, but how we do that may change significantly – the structure, locations of ministry will possibly change.” (PLC)

“It seems to be the essential way of ministering – us, we, our parish – sense of mission = gospel values. What model of church? What’s coming out of Rome?” (PLC)

“The extent that will be a healthy parish of the future total ministering, the priest and staff must get along and listen to the needs and appreciation of the parishioners.” (D)

“Absolutely – without a total sense of stewardship and a total acceptance of the ecclesiology of the Body of Christ we are not church, but merely an institution.” (PA)

“Parish desiring to live in the image of the Gospel and embracing Vatican II can do this only in this mode, I believe.” (PA)

“Increasingly so, variety of forms, but all lead to the same intentions; Trinitarian model – organically evolving in different places and modality” (PA)

“To a large extent, no matter the quantity/quality of community, we are all called to minister by virtue of baptism. Healthy parishes have to be relational and that means working together and using our gifts.” (PA)

“It will be a necessity. Small rural parishes will have to have lay leadership. Urban parishes will minister with fewer priests. Without more lay participation leadership, we will be paralyzed. The spirit is speaking to us.” (PA)

“It is the ideal arrangement, but each element needs to be prepared and willing to do as much as possible to compensate for the lack in the others so that the parish doesn’t become unhealthy or die.” (DR)

“They will, but this assumes a commitment to real collaboration and to calling lay people to exercise their baptismal ministries in their homes and workplaces and neighborhoods (not simply to get them more involved in church activities). The aim of the total ministering community needs to be not to get new to church, but to get them out of church.” (O)

A number of participants indicate that models for healthy parishes will be extremely diverse based on demographic factors of parishes, as well as the ethnic diversity of parish communities. These participants are more reluctant to embrace any concept, including a total ministering community, believing that future models are yet to emerge. Their views are reflected in the following comments:

“How do we have a clear vision and priority to work together? There are no models that fit every situation so we have to be more creative. We have to develop a goal and spend time to plan and make a commitment. We need to pray together and allow the spirit to lead us.” (P)

“I think we have to define ‘healthy’ – but it may be that the healthiest parishes will look totally different; not based in physical plants, not dependent on professional staff. The biggest question is how do we continue to celebrate Eucharist? That’s the real question.” (PLC)

“This question makes assumptions which can only be met by the answer given. But is parish the only context? Are pastors the only choice? The river is its own master. Our model is only a moment, a flash, a heartbeat in the life of the ever flowing, ever changing river. We are all thinking inside a parish box, an ordained hierarchy box. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the human heart the things which God has prepared.” (DR)

“There needs to be some kind of ministering leadership community in both rural and urban settings. The number and model will differ from each. Due to the needs of any community of people, a leadership diversity is essential to meet people where they are which is difficult for leaders who are not coming with community experience.” (O)

“Diversity of models; rural/urban – ethnic diversity; circuit rider models. How do we be church?” (O)

B. Best Practices of Leadership

Participants were asked to identify a number of best practices that are evident in the leadership of a vibrant faith community. Principle themes that emerged include:

- **The importance of listening and empowering others**
- **Calling forth the gifts of others**
- **Rooted in prayer and spirituality**

A number of participants indicate that empowering, encouraging, welcoming, and listening forms of leadership are those most effective when building faith communities that will be vibrant in the future. The following comments indicate this belief:

“Empowering, encouraging, welcoming – proclaiming vision, hopes, dreams – practically engaging the people – making them appreciate one another” (P)

“Flexible listeners as leaders. Slow, gentle leadership transitions. Allow councils and commissions, illumined by the Gospel, to set mission/goals/agenda for the community.” (P)

“Empower and support people, leaders, ministers; building relationships; establishing communication and information” (P)

“Formed, shared, and educated leadership; welcoming; engaging forum; challenging forums; listening forums” (P)

“Listening skills; don’t bring in a packaged program and make the parish fit into it. New pastor cannot bring in an agenda. Affirm the leaders within the community. Keep a sense of humor.” (PLC)

“Listening; empowering laity; staff as generalists; taking risks; stepping out; inviting others in.” (PLC)

“The best practices of leadership to a community is to listen and work by their tradition and needs of the parishioners; not control and do by your opinion, and keep commitments.” (D)

“Listening; planning; empowerment; prayer” (PA)

“Shared, collaborative leadership that serve as animators – that knows how to listen, recognize and celebrate individual response to call.” (PA)

“New leaders enter community without agenda – listen and learn first; new leaders (lay or ordained) must be installed by Diocese and the parish needs some kind of transition process; team leadership seems to work well, as those within the team can work in their strengths; sense of humor; being prayerful” (PA)

“Listening of prime importance; sense of humor; don’t give up; shepherd guides; enter a new community with no agenda; pastor – PA’s on site – ‘you are the leader’; team leadership/working from each person’s strengths” (DR)

“Listening attitude – able to acknowledge diverse gifts – a strong vision, but not one bound within immovable walls.” (O)

Similar to a belief in the importance of listening, empowering, and informing vibrant faith communities, a number of participants also specifically indicate the need to engage in calling forth the gifts of others. The following comments indicate this perspective:

“Allow good people to do their jobs within a common vision. The community calls forth additional volunteers – empowering the laity.” (P)

“The parish best practice is the one who wants to be alive and open for suggestion and be clear with their vision to make the commitment to carry on what they believe. Stewards of their time, talents and treasure are important in the parish that has the best practices of leadership. The vibrant faith community depends on the wisdom of their leadership.” (P)

“Develop a healthy spirituality/liturgy; shared vision; break stereotypes; allow gifts of others to emerge – see leadership in a different way – let go of control.” (PLC)

“Core team; hire good people; telling of stories of new and old; how do we choose lay leaders; use of technology; do we expect people to come to us and our model – or can we go to them; good transition practices of pastoral leadership” (PLC)

“Inclusiveness, invitation (personal), faith-sharing in small community; welcoming, outreach to newcomers, sacramental celebration at Mass; shared prayer and faith-sharing among staff members and lay leaders; small faith groups led by parishioners; educational opportunities for all parishioners; shared ministry” (PLC)

“Parochial vicar working for different pastors. Leader who calls forth the gifts of the community. Seeing your baby go off by itself and letting it happen and grow by itself. Taking time – stepping back – calling people forth.” (D)

“I believe it is important for a vibrant faith community to match its perceived needs as a community with the gifts and talents of the individuals of the community. To do this we, as a community, can prepare a list of needs ministries we respond to and ask individuals to choose from the list an area where they feel gifted. Then, it is up to the community to call and empower that person.” (PA)

“Calling forth gifts from the community; direct personal invitation; be people of prayer; see staff as a resource for parish groups; encourage gracious hospitality” (PA)

“Better transitioning of pastoral leadership; calling forth gifts of community; allowing good people to do their jobs; vision and mission as community. They need a common vision. Communities of faith and prayer; openness to new ideas; direct personal invitation; recognition of baptism; help people know their gifts; helping people realize they have gifts; internet; gracious hospitality” (PA)

“Commitment; trust; entrusting; inviting; people of prayer; collaboration; community – building; listening, then responding; shared vision; ownership by all members” (DR)

Finally, participants indicate that leadership for vibrant faith communities is always rooted in a sense of prayer and spirituality. Consequently, parish leadership believes a prayer-centered starting point is essential in building a vibrant faith community. The following comments indicate the essential connection between prayer and pastoral leadership:

“Spiritual depth moving to discernment; well-formed collegial staff with clear focus on building reign of God more than simply a church and formation of lay ministers; multi-culturally literate; active, conscious participation in liturgy; strong liturgical preaching” (PLC)

“Prayer” (PLC)

“When prayer is used with scriptural reflection to begin all parish meetings/gatherings” (PA)

“Shared leadership; educated, competent, and formed leadership; knowing the make-up – emotional, spiritual, developmental – of the people” (PA)

“Centeredness; grounded inspiration; flexible adherence to tradition; innovative depth; multiplication of loaves without discernment; opinion without self-surrender; less than best practices” (DR)

“What I have heard confirms my belief that parish leadership begins with prayer – welcoming – listening.” (O)

“Creative solutions to outmoded models or boundary limitations; take the sense of ownership to the back pew; relational faith sharing centered practices and programs” (O)

“Vibrant corporate prayer and room for personal/devotional prayer; empowerment of the laity to own their dignity and to live their baptism for the sake of the Kingdom; justice making; hospitality and inclusivity; unbounded love” (O)

C. Challenges for Leadership in Building a Vibrant Faith Community

Participants were asked to identify challenges to leadership of vibrant faith communities. The following challenges are most prevalent:

- **Overcoming resistance to change**
- **Education and formation on emerging issues**
- **Dealing with systemic issues**

Participants identified overcoming the fear of change and resistance to change as the more substantial challenges they face when creating leadership for a vibrant faith community. Resistance to change often comes from parishioners who are comfortable with current structures of parish life and church leadership.

In addition, pastoral leaders experience resistance to change from institutional sources of leadership within the church itself. The following comments reflect the intense resistance to change participants often encounter when building vibrant faith communities:

“Getting parishioners to accept changing structures – e.g., parish clusters and getting them to accept non-ordained parish leaders.” (P)

“Help the people understand that the pastor is not the only leader (some resistance to the lay ministers); resistance among pastors to new models of ministering” (P)

“Resistance to change; different places on faith journeys; different priorities and perceptions of church; different gifts and liabilities wrapped in different personalities” (P)

“Listening to opposing voices. Fear of not doing things right; complacency” (P)

“Overcoming resistance to change; patience; finding acceptable goals or visions that most can buy into despite their very diverse stages of faith journeys” (P)

“There are a lot of Catholics who want no more than nominal involvement in parish life. They fall within our responsibility and often demand lots of time, but they don’t participate in the leadership or life of the community.” (P)

“Reluctance to change by the parishioners” (PA)

“Overcoming fear of needing to listen to voice of opposition and possible dashed hopes if pastoral changes affect model of parish leadership - the delicious vagueness of bishops on key questions about lay preaching and

presiding, appointment of parish leaders, and transition resistance from the parish assembly to act on their baptism and do any more than be consumers of sacraments.” (PA)

“Fear! Power struggle, complacency, cynicism, encrusted structure – engrossed in self protection and perpetuation, passivity, apathy among parishioners” (PA)

Still others frame the challenges for leadership in building a vibrant faith community in terms of education and formation. This ranges from calling forth the gifts of others to educating people in the complexity and practicality of multi-cultural parishes for the future. This emphasis on educational and formational challenges is reflected in the comments below:

“Inertia, resources, finances, well-educated and theologically formed individuals” (P)

“The challenging of leadership in the building of a vibrant faith community is the commitment of their lives and practicing their beliefs. Inviting people to join with them in their vision and priority. The way of life in Christ and practicing our faith in what we say and do are the challenges.” (P)

“To touch the hearts and lives of the people; to empower people to claim their discipleship; to be able to deal in the messiness and make sense out of the gray; small Christian groups; involve young people” (PLC)

“Language and understanding other cultures – to see things from their perspective, especially if you are the dominant white culture. To take ownership of your parish because when they do, they give what is best of themselves. How do you reflect the diversity of your parish – in its mission, goals, vision, parish council?” (PLC)

“The challenges are to educate the people to understand and accept the new society of culture and system of life and generation of changes.” (D)

“Educating the community on their role; moving not only beyond ‘Father does it all’, but also beyond ‘the pastoral staff can do it all’. Letting go. Spend time fostering ministers rather than being the only ministers.” (PA)

“Finding common ground for people in different places on their faith journeys; overcoming resistance to change; disposable agendas/visions of the way things should be – how we view the church; fostering a capacity to listen to one another; building consensus through a focus on the Gospel; focus on development of leadership team to avoid reactive crisis management; identifying and training leaders within the parish community” (PA)

“How do we maintain personal growth in our spirituality so that we have a deep well from which to draw in ministering to the thirsts of others for spiritual vibrance.” (PA)

“How to reach out to the parishioners; are we comfortable in our role? Learning multicultural languages; calling on the community you know with special gifts – practicing our faith as baptized Catholics and providing service – using our talents, doing time and provide financial support” (O)

Still others frame the challenges of creating vibrant faith communities as the need for cultural and paradigm changes within and beyond the church. These systemic issues often appear to complicate the process of building faith communities as reflected by the following concerns:

“Patriarchal mindset; large size of our parishes; adequate resources (staff, space, time, money); better official recognition/blessing for lay ministers” (PA)

“No matter how much twinning, consolidating, merging what is: minimum Eucharist (inside of mass); sacramental ministers work with PLDs; informing our congregation, especially those who are resistant, tired, or fearful; hearing the stories of our parishioners; theology of ordination seems to be understood as competitive with theology of baptism.” (PA)

“Break out of ‘Father’s in charge’ mindset; size of parishes; inadequate resources; recognition of lay leadership (more formalized/liturgical); create opportunities for genuine dialogue; marketing – how we get the message; maintain a healthy spirituality; equip the baptized for ministry” (PA)

“The possibility we have bred in the laity by an outmoded ecclesiology and corresponding unhealthy pastoral practice; huge numbers we deal with in mega-parishes; dominant cultural values of our country and rank individualism, consumer mentality, materialism” (O)

D. Opportunities for Leadership in Building Vibrant Faith Communities

Participants identified a number of opportunities for leadership in building vibrant faith communities. First and foremost are:

- **The need to call forth the gifts of others**
- **Redefinition of ecclesial leadership**

A number of participants indicate that the greatest opportunities for building faith communities exist in calling forth the gifts of others. This common thread of helping parishioners realize their baptismal call through ministry was integral throughout the entire Pacific Northwest Symposium. It is reiterated here in the following comments:

“The community is exploding with charisma and those who are invited are often eager to share their gifts.” (P)

“There are many opportunities for leadership in building a vibrant faith community: 1) Know people and the resources from the community; 2) Develop the strong relationship with the community; 3) Promote the stewardship within the community; 4) Call people to pray and united them to work – opportunity for leadership.” (P)

“Rethinking, reprioritizing, going to bare bones, basics of mission for reign of God; tapping the baptismal call of every parishioner; re-formation of community in fundamentals of Catholic identity, spirituality, teaching in light of reign of God.” (PLC)

“Maybe it will allow the most disenfranchised member of the community an opportunity to step forward and allow them to give their gifts.” (PA)

“Gifts discernment to bring forth the gifts and talents of the people; training for lay preaching and presiding” (PA)

“Unlimited; shortage of ordained priests can be a tremendous opportunity for creativity; change expectations for ordained ministers – not all have gifts to be pastor – others do – use their gifts” (PA)

“The needs of the community that draws forth gifts; develop whole community catechesis; shared leadership and lay formation for ministry; more liturgical roles; allows the ordained to build on their strengths, while others use their gifts” (PA)

“The needs of the community draws forth leadership; our theology (of trinity, Vatican II, baptism); whole community catechesis; lay leaders train lay leaders; new models of leadership helps lay people say this is possible; freedom to recognize strengths, limitations, and do what is best; the trust of the people which is also a huge responsibility.” (PA)

“Engaging the whole parish community in a reflection on parish strengths and challenges and responding to those challenges by calling on the people with gifts to address those specific issues” (DR)

A number of participants also indicate that the opportunities for leadership in building a vibrant faith community has much to do with helping people redefine the roles and relationships in ecclesial ministries of the church. The following comments reflect this perspective:

“The shortage of ordained priests provides the vacuum for lay leadership to fill. There is the opportunity for priests to justify focusing more on sacramental responsibilities. This is an opportunity to redefine the job description of the ordained. To educate the laity on the new definition of the role of the ordained.” (P)

“The priest shortage often drags us, kicking and screaming, into more inclusive models of leadership.” (P)

“Opportunities which are open to all qualified, called, gifted persons (even if not all the same). There should be equity. Most importantly, opportunities should be gift and discernment-based, not just filling slots with pre-determined roles.” (PA)

“If new forms of leadership emerge, for example, female ordained, married ordained, lay administrators. Reform of sacramental theology (more inclusive, equalitarian, focused again on mission of presence, as

well as manner of presence, etc.); total stewardship parish: condition of membership is discernment of charism and commitment to participation” (PA)

“Redefinition of a church structure that effectively ministers to the spiritual longings of 21st century people” (PA)

“What does it mean to be identified as an ordained minister? Be equal partners with lay parishioners – establishing more lay ministers – know your community and its needs.” (O)

E. The Parish of the Future

Participants were asked to identify what they believe the parish of the future will look like. The responses are extremely diverse. The following themes emerged:

- **Inclusive of diverse people and models of leadership**
- **Celebrating, vibrant, and welcoming**
- **Intentional, small, and prayer-centered**

Many participants believe parishes of the future will have very diverse memberships due to geographic factors and ethnic diversity. Others think diversity will drive parishes to develop different models of leadership contingent upon their unique needs. The following comments reflect the inclusive and diverse models of the parishes of the future:

“Urban – parish complexes – many human needs will be provided – health care – outreach basic care – variety of smaller communities who gather to care for one another and worship. Strong, ethnic diversity” (P)

“Multiple models likely – It will be less obsessed with ‘protecting’ the power of the ordained. Priests will be more ‘keepers of the mystery’ and stimulators of ‘sacramental imagination’ than administrators. Leadership will be fostered from within the community more so than be imposed from outside. Competition between parishes and pastors must give way to collaboration and cooperation.” (P)

“Very diverse with positive collaborative leadership of lay and ordained” (PLC)

“Probably something we can’t imagine. I hope it will be a welcoming, inclusive, multi-cultural community with small faith sharing groups of all kinds who evangelize their constituencies at work as in their neighborhoods. Prayerful, inclusive liturgy (hopefully Eucharistic) with good music and preaching where we recognize and celebrate important moments in people’s lives and care for one another; a community that can sustain itself, serve the poor and weak for justice and systemic change, of whom is said ‘see how they love one another.’” (PLC)

“Population shifts; Hispanics; providence of social services; need for spirituality; need for cultivating rituals; inclusive conversations; preaching by a variety of people” (PLC)

“How many years from now? There may be multiple models. The future of the church depends on factors beyond us (who we get for Pope, for example). The church is thriving now in the U.S. and Third World Countries, not Europe. Don’t equate ordination with leadership. New understandings of God, rituals, and symbols are in the process of becoming. Spirituality is evolving. Are we midwives for new theological understanding? How do we help engage a sacramental imagination that permeates the world? Leadership may emerge from within the parish and not be imposed from without.” (PA)

Others believe parishes of the future will be characterized by their vitality which includes attention to celebration, welcoming, a commitment to hospitality, and openness to others. The following reflections are offered by participants on this dimension of the future parish:

“A place where people will feel welcome; a place that will reflect all the gifts of God’s people in a collaborative ministry; a place where different models of ministry will be accepted” (P)

“A lot like today. Will people fundamentally change? Communities are dynamic – only small groups approach being the same place on the journey. Seem to guarantee continued challenge”

“It will be a vibrant faith community. I am full of hope for the future church. There will be more unity and living of life.” (P)

“A true celebrating community. We will discover God in all the messiness of church.” (P)

“Slicing through, you will see the vibrance of God’s spirit.” (PA)

“A community that cares for one another and those in need around them – the poor, those experiencing injustice, those in need. Around them – not in the sense of immediate proximity, but on as broad a scale as possible. A church without walls. Someone in our group said a church without doors, no one is kept out or in.” (DR)

“Spirit formed! Even the writers of Vatican II couldn’t vision the future parish’s formation in 30 to 40 years from that date. The future will be determined mainly by how we define Eucharist and how often we can celebrate it.” (O)

“Hospitality – gathering areas; gathered assemblies; purpose driven life sharing; stewardship; empowered laity” (O)

“Good liturgical space for all communities that invites community (doesn’t have to be fancy, just inviting). Lay people will be celebrating their gifts in ministries we haven’t even named yet. Built in opportunities that invites sharing of stories; structures that invite partnership. Every community will have a bus or van to assist those who cannot transport themselves – the elder and those with physical or mental challenges will contribute and participate in community.” (O)

Finally, some participants indicate that the parishes of the future may be intentionally small and centered around worship in a Eucharistic faith community as reflected by the following comments:

“Even if they are large parishes, I hope they have small, Christian-based communities that support and encourage one another.” (P)

“Small, with leadership ordained from within every member, knowing and using his/her charism for the common good, enthusiastically engaged in proclaiming and constructing” (P)

“Guest versus member – Baptismal responsibilities need to be understood. We need to find ways to help people discern their gifts and how their gifts might help build up the communities.” (PLC)

“Baptism gifts of all recognized and allowed to flourish; male/female leadership – liturgical/pastoral; rooted in a spirituality of everyday life; deep rooting in social Gospel and teaching; deeply rooted in good liturgy that moves people to serve in the world; more counter-cultural within this country not just regarding abortion, but all the seamless garment; more about outreach coming from small faith communities – not just self-focused.” (PLC)

“Intentional community; living close together; not about buildings; ministers called from the community and supported in education; maintaining sacramental life” (PLC)

“Mega parishes – need assemblies/small faith communities; leader must have vision; ministering as ‘partners’; church of the future is away, far away. Lay presiders – went to people who were at daily liturgy.” (D)

“Hopefully smaller parishes or small groups that thrive, but this will require acceptance of new forms of leadership, especially lay leadership and renewed theology of ministry roles in baptism.” (PA)

“I wouldn’t be surprised to see a return to the Acts 2 community: gathered in homes, sharing in common as we recognize our call to social justice, enjoying simple, common meals as an alternate expression of ‘Eucharist’ – thanks be to God for the fellowship we share in Christ!” (PA)

“All are welcome at the table without having to be the same; intergenerational sessions/gatherings; married clergy; greater involvement for all the baptized; women clergy; inclusive, welcoming, servant, outreach, prophetic; lay preachers; enhanced sacramental/ministerial roles; an understanding and recognition of baptismal ministry; a parish that is relevant, relational, reverent, and resourceful” (PA)

“Not tied to geography or buildings – perhaps centered around a particular mission and those who are called to that mission. Community will be stronger, more inclusive, more concerned with lifestyle choices. More counter-cultural maybe?” (O)

F. How Close or How Far from the Vision

Participants were asked to reflect on how close or how far they feel their parish is from a preferred vision for the future. Overwhelmingly, participants indicate they are clearly working toward a preferred vision and this guides their daily commitment to ministry.

“Because the vision is unclear and because of changing priests, we dance with the vision sometimes close and sometimes at a distance.” (P)

“We are marching, walking in that direction.” (P)

“As pastor, I am just beginning to embrace this vision myself, but I believe that this is essential for the survival of the church and my survival as a priest.” (P)

“It is still far away, but we are working on it. We have vision/priority for our hope. It will happen in the near future.” (P)

“We’re already messy. Now it’s about engaging all to recognizing their gifts and the giftedness of others. The joy of it all.” (P)

“In some ways close, but in other ways, we have a long way to go. I know some women who have begun underground churches. I don’t want us to have to ‘go there’, but remember the catacombs?” (PLC)

“We have begun whole community catechesis. We do have a PLD, but we struggle with the old model of priest or pastor and a parish life director. They are still looking for and waiting for a priest – we have not moved to the other side yet, where we can move on. We are grieving what was and we are not ready to let go of what was.” (PLC)

“Very hard to say – In some ways, we approach this as others, we don’t even see it on the horizon. We have good music and preaching most of the time, but that’s totally staff dependent (our priest moderator is the only preacher). We work hard on welcoming and are trying to be inclusive, but fall far short of the goal. We have a deficit budget and so a really small staff who are stretched to the breaking point and lots of great volunteers. (I hate that work, but haven’t found an adequate substitute.) We also have financial constraints and so have limitations on hiring staff. This can be a blessing, but also a struggle in keeping boundaries in tact. I would be most helpful if there were more support from the Diocese – we seem to be a ‘stop gap’ solution to the priest shortage as pastoral administrators which causes the parish to see itself as potentially on the short list for closure.” (PLC)

“A ways away – for sure. There are some seeds present already, but they need lots of nurturing.” (PLC)

“At least we are talking about intentional communities and simple living and welcoming all who come. We still support buildings larger than we need, but we’re talking and dreaming.” (PLC)

“My parish is close to this vision, but still gaps that need to be filled to achieve our goals.” (D)

“In process, but we have a long way to go. There are too many Vatican roadblocks right now to create a realistic, vibrant parish. They are more concerned with who does it and where the cups are filled during the Mass than the reality that is looking them in the face.” (PA)

“We are on the way. However, there are factors that keep this from being fully realized (i.e., Bishops/Rome).” (PA)

“We’re about midway – in particular, newly awakening to our outreach to the poor of our rural community. The more deeply we engage in scripture studies, the more the mandate to justice and compassion is becoming clear.” (PA)

“It’s a sleeping giant in a positive sense – meaning if or when woken, they have the gifts, skills, commitment or willingness to commit to achieve this vision. Under previous leadership, they were moving in this direction.” (DR)

“There is a glimmer on the horizon.” (O)

“I have great hope for some of the above. We are growing in partnership and in the sharing of gifts. We are growing as a parish of service beyond our community. We have some people with physical and emotional challenges who are in key roles. There are many areas that need great growth.” (O)

V. MARKS OF PASTORAL LEADERSHIP:

The organizational partners of the Emerging Models for Pastoral Ministry Project identified a number of marks of pastoral leadership to be explored during the various phases and elements of the Emerging Models effort. At the Pacific Northwest Symposium, participants were asked to identify how they believe these marks of pastoral leadership are evident in parish life. The following section offers participant reflections on each of these marks for pastoral leadership:

A. Ethical Behaviors of Leadership

Participants described ethical behaviors of leadership in their faith communities as focusing on the following elements:

- **Professionalism and accountability in leadership roles**
- **Personal integrity, ethics, and respect for boundaries among people**

When examining the ethical behaviors of leadership, participants frequently mention the importance of increased professionalism, accountability, professional behavior, and transparency in their formal leadership roles. The following observations illustrate the importance of this dimension of ethical behaviors of leadership to symposium participants:

“Importance of professional behavior and ethics with staff and with parishioners” (P)

“Personnel policies and compensation programs” (P)

“Respect everyone and all cultures; monetary transparency; hiring policies and just wages” (P)

“Accountability; confidentiality; wages; prudence” (P)

“Just salaries; proper supervision of staff and volunteers (evaluations); appropriate boundaries – personal and professional relationships; friendship with parishioners – balanced” (P)

“Pay just wages and benefits; relational and sexual integrity; transparency in financial matters; confidentiality; accountability” (P)

“Detailed and complete financial reporting to all members; just wages; professional; objective personnel policies and practices” (P)

“Transparency of the way money is handled; just wages; open hiring practices; sharing of responsibility” (P)

“Attention to the sacredness of each person, offering just wages to all staff and benefits for those who work full time.” (PLC)

“Pay scale that is equitable; lay pastoral leaders need just treatments from bishops, recognition, public support, installation commissioning, respect; boundaries; self-reflection and honesty regarding whether we are

supporting a system that is unjust and should let die, or are we being prophetic in this role?” (PLC)

“Ethical treatment of Bishops toward lay ministers, especially women, would contribute toward overall ethical behavior. Ethical actions of priests and bishops also. The ethical question has been opened up not due to overwhelmingly poor behavior on the part of the laity who lead. The question upsets me.” (PLC)

“Fair pay; fair treatment and acknowledgement of the gifts of lay leadership; clear boundaries” (PLC)

“Equitable compensation; what is the relationship between bishop and diocesan personnel with PLD? Is it supportive? Is it affirmed/acknowledged? Is it cultivated? Confidentiality” (PLC)

“This is at first glance undifferentiated from the pastoral, collaborative, and inclusive components. However, Ethical Leadership, Inc. – Dispensing with abuse of confidentiality, false secrecy and opaque practices, clericalism, arbitrary and autocratic authority.” (PA)

Participants also express an understanding of the ethical behaviors of leadership as focusing on their personal sense of ethics, integrity, respect for boundaries among individuals, and a self-awareness and transparency of one's own needs in ministry in relationship to the needs of others. The following comments illustrate this very personal dimension of ethical behaviors in leadership:

“Clear boundaries – professional respect of those who share in ministry – attention to all age ranges and groups” (P)

“It has a high ethical behavior in our faith community. Justice; issues and concerns to follow the gospel; worship – community programs, Eucharist, liturgy of the word; service – poor, food bank, Catholic school, Latino community; pastoral care – hospital, nursing, rest homes” (P)

“Establishing clear boundaries is essential. We have to know what is appropriate and inappropriate as priests, as parish staff, and as parishioners.” (P)

“The Diocese needs to recognize the work of the leaders, needs to understand multicultural standards and must accept and respect the dignity, cultures, and languages of the people who want to be part of the church community.” (D)

“Personal honesty and integrity; prudence in discussion with parish members; accountability; sense of allegiance to authority of church, even in the face of ‘prophetic disagreement’” (PA)

“It is difficult for me to discern the differences between ethical and pastoral behaviors. Both are necessary for the formation and maintenance of a vibrant faith community; honesty; accountability; allow process to take place.” (PA)

“Know and keep confidentiality, agency, and boundary issues. Be in the mind and heart of the church; know protocol for speaking to the media, etc.” (PA)

“Clear understanding of cultural norms and values; sufficient self-awareness and integration – ability to recognize and maintain appropriate boundaries to commit to responsibilities assumed with training, education, skill required.” (PA)

“Respectful, despite differing viewpoints; trust fostered in the community; administratively non-violent; collaborative, shared power; accountability for our actions, roles; healthy ministers – emotionally and spiritually; honesty, confidentiality observed appropriately; clear ministerial boundaries” (PA)

“First rule: Do not harm! Confidentiality; appropriate use of power; clear understanding of agency (whose agent are we)? Accountability; appropriate use of resources; need to be clear about your skills/responsibilities/boundaries; honesty” (PA)

“Confidentiality and trust versus secrecy and hidden agenda; balance of personal and professional time, relationships, etc.; justice and equality of all parish members, staff leadership; model values; continue formation; accountability” (DR)

“Appropriate boundaries – no misuse of power for personal gain; financial accountability; honesty; integrity; accountability; respecting confidentiality; appropriate behaviors that are inclusive/sensitive (gender culture)” (DR)

“Recognition and honoring boundaries; recognition of personal need for support and help and getting it from appropriate sources; professional behaviors toward employment issues – seems the employees are justly paid and treated” (DR)

“Boundaries, confidentiality, faith-filled, prayerful, honesty, accountability, respect, culturally sensitive integration, knowledge of self” (O)

“Respect of boundaries; confidentiality; accountability; employment of best practices; affirmation; willingness to experience our ‘blindness’” (O)

“Sense of community; community of trust; accountability to ourselves, to other staff members, to parishioners, to diocese; respect; clear leadership boundaries” (O)

“Knowing and respecting boundaries and being sensitive to the demands of professional ethics; working for justice in salaries, budgets, management of parish finances; ministering with accountability (at all levels of the parish).” (O)

B. Pastoral Behaviors of Leadership

Participants were asked to identify pastoral behaviors of leadership in a vibrant faith community. Some participants had difficulty distinguishing pastoral behaviors of leadership from other marks of leadership discussed during the course of the symposium. However, three dimensions of pastoral leadership seem more prevalent in written comments of participants. These include:

- **Collaboration and a shared sense of responsibility**
- **Strong relational presence toward people**
- **Clear ministerial boundaries**

Many participants define pastoral behaviors of leadership as being evident in collaboration and a sense of shared responsibility as pastoral teams and with members of their communities. This notion of an inclusive approach to ministry is a clear indication to many of strong pastoral leadership as indicated by the following comments:

“Inclusivity; empowerment; compassion and empathy; patience; listening skills; visioning; motivation; boundary maintenance” (P)

“Delegating; team work; listening; conflict management” (P)

“Sharing of responsibility; listening skills; compassion; genuine friendship” (P)

“Delegating; empowering; collaborating; ministry of ‘presence’; conflict resolution skills; inclusive; confidentiality” (P)

“Delegation of authority along with responsibility; calling forth and forming pastoral care providers from among the membership” (P)

“An open and welcoming leader who invites input and quality discussion from other parish leaders and the parish at large; a recognition that the gifts of others should and are utilized in every avenue of parish life.” (PA)

“Collaboration; process orientation – successor infrastructure; finding peer support; modeling outcomes among staff; passion and compassion” (O)

Others spoke of pastoral behaviors of leadership as being evident in a strong relational presence toward people devoted to conflict resolution, active listening, and interest and attention to the stories of others. The following comments reflect this nuance of pastoral behaviors of leadership:

“I spend more time pastoring staff who pastor the parish. I spend more time structuring the pastoral activity that nurtures and helps members of the parish.” (P)

“In all dealing with people, always try to be pastoral. Availability and accessibility to minister and serve people; demands of administration about the pastor’s time so he has less time for hands-on pastoral ministry.” (P)

“Encouraging each person’s development of their gifts; listening well to the stories and engaging them in the life of the Kingdom. Not overworking so that other staff can keep humane hours even though that’s my own tendency. Praying together and being vulnerable – providing time for personal development and spiritual development of the staff and opportunities for that in the parish.” (PLC)

“PLD – more relational because we have not been trained in hierarchical structure; personal investment; because we have had” (PLC)

“Walking with the people; relationships; don’t mess up; make connections; be available; remember what’s going on in their lives; personally involved – worlds are bigger.” (PLC)

“More natural – more relational – remembering people’s names, stories, personal invitations to serve; be wise and educated, use thorough study to screen programs offered to our parishes. Do they connect us to the building of the Reign of God?” (PLC)

“Listening to people’s stories; remembering who people are/what’s going on in their lives; being present in good times and bad; listening, listening, listening; and honoring what is heard.” (PLC)

“Walking with the people; being available; being approachable; being relational; being prayerful” (PLC)

“I try my best to help the needs of the people and to teach and preach the good news to see if I can save someone to get to heaven and also save myself. I try to be the role model and have a good attitude to sustain ministry.” (D)

“Understanding the unique situation of each person, and able to relate to them where they are; compassion; developing quality relationships; conflict resolution; master of reconciliation” (DR)

“Ability and willingness to deal with conflict and reconciliation; listening skills; recognizing the lives parishioners live outside the parish and honoring those lives and helping them connect those lives with their faith lives and experiences; Linking people to ministries according to their gifts and not parish needs – requires helping people know their gifts; leadership is the quality of relationship, then being willing to be in relationship with all elements of the parish, including those we don’t agree with (e.g., the pre-Vatican Catholics).” (DR)

“Staff and others are not so caught up in tasks that they forget to take time to listen, to be with others when needed. The Body of Christ is made up of people – the structures and behaviors support relationships.” (O)

Still others speak of pastoral behaviors of leadership as reflecting strong ministerial boundaries and the ability to speak with conviction being comfortable within one's own sense of truth and integrity. This is reflected in the following comments:

"Clear ministerial boundaries. Listen to all the voices of the community, but do not listen just to fix the problem. Work to model/teach from the church in our professional roles. Mutual accountability and open/honest sharing in the staff group; plan/prepare a consistent pastoral response to certain issues/questions." (PA)

"Know the boundaries of your professional skills; objectivity in parish member relationship; grounded in one's ability to articulate church teaching and interpretation" (PA)

"Respectful of reality of community being served – able to be with person where they are – no 'Messiah complex'. See oneself as animators of gifts. Generosity – self donation that is able to maintain appropriate healthy boundaries." (PA)

"Clear ministerial boundaries" (PA)

"Confident to speak the truth as to where we are; show love whether you agree or disagree; ability to deal with conflict; accountability; honesty; confidentiality; trust with community and staff. This goes hand in hand with ethical behaviors" (O)

C. Prophetic Behaviors of Leadership

When writing and speaking about the prophetic behaviors of leadership, participants focus on two major directions. These include:

- **Faithful and prophetic stance toward issues of justice**
- **Commitment to being rooted in biblical tradition.**

Many participants allude to the importance of being faith witnesses to a sense of justice inside the church and in the world. Parish life directors and coordinators often see their roles in and of itself as a witness for justice in ministry within the church. This notion of being a pervasive witness and commitment to justice is prevalent in participant comments below:

"A call to name who we are and where we are called to go; social justice issues – honest and challenging call to return to Christ-centered vision; honest confrontation with people and not false assurances that sugar-coats the message." (P)

"Visioning; prayerful; courage; discernment; prejudice" (P)

"Awareness of the political/social reality; vision of faith; down to earth; sensitive to the needs of the community" (P)

"Visionary; communicative; courage/faith; strong sense of justice; inclusiveness; discernment; insightful; prudent" (P)

“Calling the church to faithfulness, justice, by simply being a woman and pastoral administrator; proclaiming the real Gospel and not the Gospel of convenience or consumerism; agitating for change both within the church and within the community; naming the oppression of the majority, resisting fear; begin with myself and my own living of the Gospel.” (PLC)

“Changing the way women and children see their role as part of a church. Tension between – are we contributing to the oppression of women – or are we helping women to claim their place in church? Being present; mentor other women.” (PLC)

“Am I contributing to a sick system or are we stepping out and supporting women and a new movement? Presence – courage – dignity (a symbol of what is not yet). Changing ideas of little girls and boys – mentor others.” (PLC)

“We as lay leaders and women are changing the imagination of people, we work to build the reign of God, and we are a discerning people by way of spiritual direction.” (PLC)

“PLDs and PCs very presence is a big sign of the prophet...especially in public and liturgical roles; changing imaginations of the young about what is possible in terms of ministry; transforming our anger into an anger and energy for justice” (PLC)

“Standing up/being present – living justice; stating the truth; proclaiming the Gospel in who we are and how we live. It is not prophetic to take youth and young adults down the road to right wing theology by taking advantage of their need for social life and seeking of life partners. Teen life and evangelizing retreats are right wing cultish efforts that come from Mexico and other black/white superstitious cultures. Beware!” (PLC)

“Being a voice of the voiceless challenges the leadership not to be in a position where they cannot seek out those in need because they are too busy running programs in place.” (PA)

“Informed, educated, passionate, lived, proclaimed actions that open door, call us back to faith fullness. Some behaviors will be prophetic to the point of standing/acting in opposition to the discipline of the church. Use of spiritual direction to understand and develop our prophetic behaviors. My presence is often a contradiction for me internally and externally to the church.” (PA)

“Willingness to deal with the chaos that may ensue with multiple new ministries; a clear call to involvement/engagement in the issues/problems of the larger community – issues of social justice and outreach” (DR)

“Focus on social justice issues; focus on globalization; visioning; acting out and baptismal call versus direction and permission from local authority; creative solutions to established boundaries” (O)

“Respect for all is modeled; poor and vulnerable is always at top of the list – ask the question, how do our policies impact these people? The values of the Gospel are articulated and lived in the community and members carry those values outside the community. Outreach is lived and systemic change is advocated. All of the above form out of a relationship of trust within community. It’s a willingness to speak out of love even when very uncomfortable. A larger vision can be seen not just in the moment as the issue, in this community, but sees larger picture.” (O)

“Willingness to take a Gospel stand on contemporary social issues, especially issues of justice and peace; being honest and transparent with people; the ability to challenge people with respect for their individuality and different preferences.” (O)

Other participants place the prophetic behaviors of leadership in the context of a strong spirituality rooted in scripture and tradition as illustrated by the following comments:

“Connecting faith, liturgy, and scripture to everyday life of families and parishioners” (P)

“Honest assessment – proclaim truth; compassionate call to return to a context which is Christ or Kingdom-centered” (P)

“Prophets are leaders who are able to step back from the fray and name the present with an eye to the future.” (P)

“Knowledge of church teachings and scripture (keep your voice based on these principles); sometimes necessary to ‘buck the system’ as you see where principles are not meaningfully applied to contemporary Christian faith; a spiritual director can help discern the authenticity of your prophetic voice.” (PA)

“Just do it! (prophetic presence/ministry); trail blazing; scripture and tradition-based; educate folks in Catholic social justice teaching; sign of the cross in public; proclaim foundational principles of equality, peace, justice” (PA)

“Scripture-based/tradition-based; prophetic witness is just as a woman. I stand in a leadership role. Education for justice to challenge others – to make others uncomfortable for the Gospel” (PA)

“Scripture-based and tradition-based; may be in opposition to church discipline; education around social justice issues; actions come through and from process of prayer and discernment” (PA)

“They are firmly based in scripture and tradition. Happens more through our actions than our words” (PA)

“Scripture based; knowledge of church’s tradition regarding justice and peace; informed; action-based, what we do matches what we believe; actions out of prayer and discernment; focused on the Kingdom” (PA)

D. Collaborative Behaviors of Leadership

Participants often define collaborative behaviors of leadership in their faith communities as:

- **A commitment to shared decision-making, planning, mutual accountability, and subsidiarity**
- **Facilitating opportunities for others to share their gifts**
- **Creating opportunities for shared prayer and discernment**

Clearly, pastoral practices for shared planning, decision-making, mutual accountability, and subsidiarity are strong dimensions of collaborative behaviors identified by symposium participants:

“Parish planning = long range and program development; all aspects of ministering to parishioners” (P)

“Planning together to develop a common vision. Mutual respect of differences – we share our common vision; be supportive without being patronalistic.” (P)

“Make full use of councils, commissions and staff. Be willing, and eager, to have ones mind changed by the voice(s) of the people. Let go of the need to control, or even by fully aware of all that goes on in the parish.” (P)

“Allowing each person the opportunity to use their gifts in service of the Kingdom. Listening to the staff’s ideas and encouraging them to implement them. Sharing decision-making with councils and commissions. Respecting other culture’s spirituality and trying to include it in our Eucharistic gatherings.” (PLC)

“Subsidiarity; having a process to develop/evaluate pastoral vision, plan, priorities that include all appropriate persons” (PA)

“We need to allow the collaborative process to continue and not to rush to resolution. Collaborative behavior requires respect and loving Christian relationship between all involved.” (PA)

“Open communication; willingness to do ‘process’ with decisions; discussion; communication; feedback and announcement” (PA)

“Allowing the consultative process to reach fruition before acting; not assuming an early consensus when voices are loud” (PA)

“Engaging the appropriate people in decision-making; opening doors to more people to be part of decision-making groups; becoming aware of who is not at the table and making efforts to get them there, especially ethnic representatives, youth, young adults, and the poor; entails recognition and understanding of how various cultures express leadership; decision-making etc.” (DR)

“Allowing the process of a problem to take time before it can be resolved. Collaborate with all.” (O)

Participants also indicate that collaborative behaviors in building a vibrant faith community have much to do with calling forth the gifts of others, allowing them to find their own voice and contribute to the whole life of the parish by sharing their baptismal call. The following observations reflect this perspective:

“Giving people permission to think and move beyond status quo. Encouragement and respect” (P)

“Collaborators see their own gifts and talents (as well as their shortcomings), and are able to call for the gifts and talents of others.” (P)

“Call the baptized to be the baptized and not be sacramental consciences. Listen, remember, and believe. Be open to both the lament and the hope of life’s situations to be with each other in accountable relationships. Collaboration requires equal access to education, formation, ritual, and worship.” (PA)

“Respect for differing gifts and being willing to use them and share leadership; good communication and ability to listen, discern, and deal with conflict; allowing natural organic process to solve problems” (PA)

“Able to create and maintain safe, open, inviting space for conversation. Eliciting all voices, able to engage in conflict, respecting and understanding and working with different styles of communications, cultural values, willing to take the time and energy to work with others.” (PA)

“Call forth the gifts of all the baptized – calling each other to accountability” (PA)

“Calling each other to accountability; call forth gifts of the baptized; resource person; help the baptized understand and claim their baptisms; parish staff and programs work together, rather than parallel; prayer and discernment; based on theology of triune and process; personal invitation” (PA)

“Limiting other voices; being able to trust the gifts of those around you; knowing how to invite others to share in the leadership; being able to empower others where the leader cannot do it.” (DR)

“Communicating, sharing, caring, concerned, listening, inviting, discerning of gifts, reciprocal agreements, professionalism” (O)

“Respect is lived – leadership is built on strong relationships and modeled in community and accountability. Though we have different roles, all roles and the people in them are understood as equally valuable and essential. All ministries are equal in value. Structures are in place so many voices can be heard and those voices are valued. Respect all gifts – empower the gifts.” (O)

Still others speak of collaborative behaviors as involving a strong commitment to shared prayer and discernment for decision-making processes involving the faith community. This rootedness in prayer and spirituality is also a strong dimension of collaborative leadership in the minds of many symposium participants:

“Working together in decision-making prayer and helping people experience the Holy.” (PLC)

“Prayer and discernment as opposed to voting (consensus); call forth gifts of all baptized – honor and believe in these; personally invite; call each other to accountability” (PA)

“Prayer and discernment; call on gifts of all; invite people to ministry by a personal invitation; calling each other into accountability” (PA)

“Prayer and discernment; call forth baptismal response; attempt to hear the stories of all disciples; invite participation; mutual responsibility” (PA)

“Shared prayer and discernment; draw out gifts of all the baptized; be attentive to the ability of others; education is paramount” (PA)

E. Inclusive Behaviors of Leadership

When defining the inclusive behaviors of leadership for a vibrant faith community, participants tend to focus primarily on:

- **Multi-cultural awareness and literacy**
- **Recognition and calling forth the gifts of others**

Clearly, participants in the Pacific Northwest Symposium believe inclusiveness has much to do with dealing with cultural diversity in their congregations. Accepting and embracing multi-culturalism is an important priority for these pastoral leaders which is reflected in the following observations:

“Knowledge and awareness of your community; willingness to learn about other cultures and languages; courage; examine own prejudices; ecumenism; diverse worship experience” (P)

“Who needs to be included – I need an awareness of the community; identify and be willing to learn about other cultures; ecumenism; willing to identify our own prejudices” (P)

“An eagle’s eye to see the needs of others; cultural awareness; ecumenism” (P)

“Extra time and energy devoted to making membership, participation and ministry accessible to people with all kinds of disabilities (e.g., purchasing a Braille lectionary). Creating supportive small groups within the parish for people who are ‘different’ or have special needs (e.g., mentally ill, GLBT, etc.). Providing diversity in languages, music and liturgical styles for parish worship. Assuring programs and activities for all ages and for every type of family.” (P)

“Awareness of cultures; sexual aspects; willingness; ecumenism” (P)

“Inclusive language, not exclusive – not just male/female, but ‘theologize’ that tends to exclude or limit conversation. Learn about the non-dominant cultures in the parish and invite participation. Treat each person equally whether big donor or non-giver, young or old. Offer lots of opportunities for involvement, but acknowledge people who also do ‘Kingdom’ work that is not parish-related and celebrate them as well.” (PLC)

“It is the church of the future – multicultural community women and lay leaders – gay and straight – we all have our gifts to be shared and acknowledged. Our cultures need to be understood and respected.” (PLC)

“Multicultural literacy and cultural fluency; asking who is not here, at table, at decision: Where are they? Why not?; building a tapestry of conversation/dialogue among a diverse people” (PLC)

“Reaching out to natural leaders of cultural, generational, and other special communities and empowering them to be truly Catholic.” (PA)

“Allowing diversity and even valuing difference; inviting collaboration between parishes and programs; allowing responsible people to take the ball and run with their creative ideas/programs. How does this new program/plan affect the most vulnerable in the community?” (PA)

“Clear, accessible language. Everyone’s unique presence is absolutely important. Listen to all the voices, bring the voices/persons together and get underneath what is being said. Limited access to Eucharist (as a verb, not a noun), decision-making, and leadership work against inclusion.” (PA)

“Clear, accessible language – not jargon; start from stance that everyone comes with gifts, knowledge, goodness; honor all ‘poles’ of the ‘polarized and divided’ RC assembly” (PA)

“Clear and accessible language; work with all sides of Catholic theology; continually invite and be prepared and open to embrace those who respond” (PA)

“Intentional invitations to those not present. Asking them what they need to be comfortable; parish communications in all the languages (not just English); acknowledging and reflecting on the culture that forms my world view so that I am not being an unintentional ‘nativist’, imposing my own culture or world view as the only or dominant world view.” (PA)

“Integration rather than assimilation; invitation to the table; cultural sensitivity – age, race, outlook” (DR)

“Not we/them; inclusive language, attitudes” (DR)

“Use clear and accessible language – affirm the Holy Spirit’s wisdom in everyone. The key to our unity is Eucharist in the full meaning of the word.” (O)

“The leadership has identified the many different needs of folks and gender, ages, cultures, race, physical and mental challenges, family structures, etc. The leadership teams represent the variety of needs, cultures, experience of the community. Liturgies recognize and celebrate the diversity of the community. If different languages are spoken, those languages are represented in staffing and leadership. Staff must let go of control and recognize baptismal call of all.” (O)

“The ability to say to anyone and everyone we have space for you and we welcome you in; Eucharistic celebration with radical egalitarianism for all to be at the table; willingness to speak the language of significant ethnic/minority groups in the parish.” (O)

Throughout the Pacific Northwest Symposium, participants continued to stress that the future of ministry is rooted in the recognition of gifts of others and calling forth those gifts in service to the community and beyond. This central element of the baptismal call to ministry surfaces once again in participants definitions of inclusive behaviors:

“Being aware if people’s gifts and talents and calling all of them to exercise their baptismal vocation.” (P)

“Calling forth the gifts of the baptized – deliberative in Sunday preaching” (P)

“Recognize that everyone is a child of God. The Holy Spirit is at work in all our lives. Everyone has a place at the table. Understand Eucharist as a process, sacramental, transformative rather than a community. How do we ask who are not here?” (PA)

“Present, attentive, grounded on conviction that all are gifted, diversity of gifts that flow from baptismal call; mutuality, ability to relate from a ‘good enough’ integrated self in terms of intimacy, sexuality, and conflict, etc.” (PA)

“Everyone has something to offer; work with all levels of theological thought.” (PA)

“Affirm what each person comes with – their faith, knowledge, experience” (PA)

F. Welcoming Behaviors of Leadership

Participants often have similar descriptions of welcoming behaviors of leadership as they do for inclusive behaviors of leadership. Participants stress the importance of welcoming behaviors in parishes which create a sense of accessibility and to the sacraments. Their comments also indicate a need to extend an intentional invitation to others to participate. This is often phrased in the language of hospitality and inclusiveness. Some of the comments which illustrate participant definitions of welcoming behaviors include the following:

“Ushers and greeters; new parishioner welcome dinners; regular contact through parish and school; mentor families in the school system” (P)

“An openness on the part of all to accept everyone – not just those who might fall in my ‘camp’” (P)

“Openness/transparency; hospitality and follow through; assistance with placement in stewardship circle; provide necessary ministry to enrich spiritual life; provide initial period of exaggerated attention until they find a comfort zone” (P)

“Letting people know their presence is appreciated and needed; personal contact; sensitivity to people in crisis; return phone calls; homilies that are not moralistic or judgmental” (P)

“Welcoming teams that visit the homes of newly-registered parishioners to invite them into full participation; extending personal invitations into leadership or other parish activities; every new parish member is invited to a discernment retreat to discover his/her spiritual gift(s) and how best to deploy them in church and the world; advertising in area newspapers” (P)

“Welcoming is not greeting; visit the newly registered; personal contact; willing to walk the extra mile with hesitant people” (P)

“More than greetings and greeters at door – hospital; welcome wagon; personal contact; give information of parish structures and activities before requesting participation; learn parishioners in parish life – names” (P)

“Offering everybody a ‘way in’ so that there are no mysteries about the parish; reach out to the non-Catholic partners of Catholic parishioners and acknowledge their contribution; be welcoming to the physically and mentally handicapped and make space for them; welcome all children, even those whose parents are non-participants; connect people with one another, especially newcomers.” (PLC)

“To create a community of welcome where everyone by virtue of baptism is called to hospitality; to mentor new members; to visit, go out, not stay in to be where people are – Should we set up meetings or satellite offices at malls or shopping centers?” (PLC)

“All people in leadership work as partners and the distinction become ordained. Non-ordained is blurred. Affirmation and acceptance of the gifts of the baptized. We work together for a bigger reality – kingdom.” (PLC)

“An understanding that leaders will adapt the presence and ideas and dreams of ‘newcomers’ into the life of the community, meaning newcomers need not assimilate. They can effect change as well.” (PLC)

“Hospitality ministry, door ministers represent all those within the community. All aspects of community activities, programs, actions are surrounded by welcome and inclusion. Partnered pastoral ministry

between lay leaders/priests/pastor is visible in ritual, celebration, sacrament, and education.” (PA)

“Openness; gracious hospitality; orientation to multiple generations, both genders, different cultures; including awareness of these differences in liturgies and community social events” (PA)

“Ritual is powerful – use it and prepare it well; good signs on grounds and buildings; accessibility; intentional introduction to community (welcome program) for new parishioners; liked the idea of new parishioners telling their stories” (PA)

“An invitational attitude at every level: come join us, come work with us, come worship with us, come, be one with us.” (PA)

“Personal affirmation and invitation; challenge not only self, but others to invite and welcome and create hospitable atmosphere” (DR)

“Direct personal invitation to next generation of leaders. Inviting people with different gifts and perspectives” (O)

“We intentional about welcoming at liturgies, contacting new members and providing social gatherings and informational gatherings, create a process for identifying gifts of members of community, and process for getting gift information to appropriate leaders with follow-up.” (O)

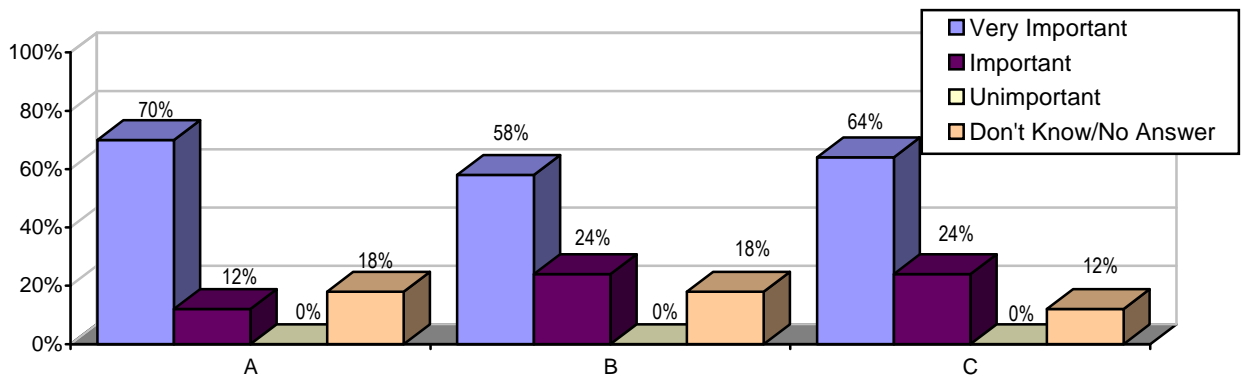
VI. CONCLUDING ASSESSMENT:

To conclude the symposium, participants were asked to privately evaluate their parish ministry on a number of factors. At the conclusion of the eight regional symposiums across the United States, data from the following questions will be aggregated across all regional gatherings for a more detailed analysis by region, by cohort groups, and by demographic factors. For this particular symposium, however, the following top level data summary captures an initial assessment of participant responses.

In Figure 1 below, participants were asked to indicate the current importance of three major elements of pastoral leadership. It is interesting to note that the majority of participants clearly define all the following elements as very important or important to their pastoral leadership:

- **Spiritually alive and healthy community**
- **Visible commitment to building the life of the faith community**
- **Total ministering community**

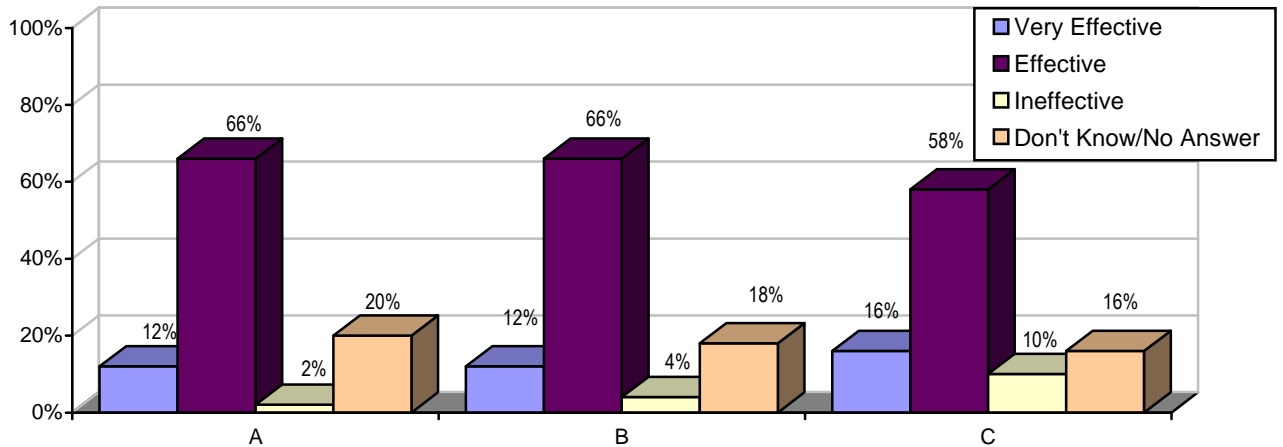
Figure 1
Importance of Pastoral Leadership Elements
(All Respondents)



- A. A spiritually alive, healthy community
B. A visible commitment to building the life of the faith community
C. A total ministering community (including the leadership or pastors, staff, and council together)

In Figure 2 below, participants were asked to indicate their current effectiveness in realizing these three critical dimensions of pastoral leadership. It is interesting to note that the majority of participants believe their parishes are currently effective in all three elements of pastoral leadership. This is consistent with their written comments which describe their pastoral ministries as struggling with the issues at hand, but still vital day-to-day in meeting the needs of their parishes and other faith communities.

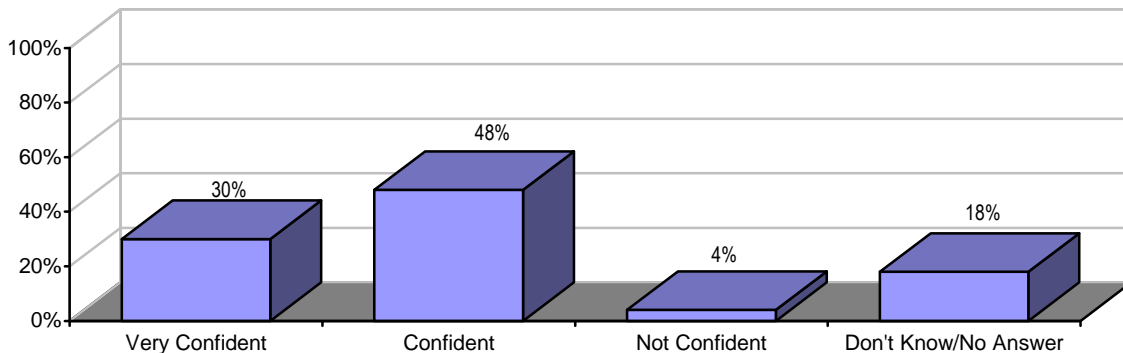
Figure 2
Effectiveness of Parish in Pastoral Leadership
(All Respondents)



- A. A spiritually alive, healthy community
- B. A visible commitment to building the life of the faith community
- C. A total ministering community (including the leadership or pastors, staff, and council together)

To conclude the regional symposium, participants were asked to identify their level of confidence in their parish becoming a vibrant faith community. The majority of participants are confident or very confident that their parishes are on the way to becoming a vibrant faith community. Only 4% of participants indicate they are not confident their parishes are moving along this path.

Figure 3
Confidence in Parish becoming a Vibrant Faith Community
(All Respondents)



Participants reflected on the vibrancy of their faith communities. It is interesting to note that clearly parish life coordinators and pastoral associates have a somewhat less optimistic view than pastors. It may be that these leaders work in situations that are more difficult, geographically separate, and have fewer resources. This is illustrated by the following comments:

“We are committed to build community, allowing for diversity of gifts and visions. Our philosophy is that everyone can find a home or build one acceptable to them. Center is on prayer, service and liturgy and outreach.” (P)

“As pastor, I am committed to instilling this vision through education, formation, and example. We offer at least three in-house retreat opportunities each year. We have just begun phasing in ‘Generations of Faith’ whole parish catechesis. We provide strong outreach and programs for the youth and young adults. We are revitalizing our 30 small faith communities. I am personally committed to changing my leadership style to be more empowering and inclusive and prophetic.” (P)

“We are moving strongly in that direction. We have competent leaders and have four people studying for advanced degrees and awaiting more parish responsibility.” (P)

“Collaboration and involvement are the organizing principles behind our mission, goals, and five-year pastoral plan. Inadequate church architecture is currently hampering our spiritual vitality.” (P)

“We are a small parish with a deficit budget. We are close to two other parishes, one of which has a school and a much newer plant. We are an older, minority parish in a transitional community (lots of low income participants) with a lay pastoral administrator.” (PLC)

“We just finished our Parish Congress. The parishioners have a voice. The staff is collaborative and the pastoral leader (me) gets out of the way (like coming here). With the hope that my influence is not dominating, but encouraging. We speak to the tough issues in our community. We listen.” (PLC)

“I am more hopeful than confident. I believe the ‘words’ and concepts are in place, but same – perhaps unconscious behaviors – may stand in the way of our ultimate success.” (PA)

“The parishes I serve are two small rural parishes. Their very existence is somewhat dependent on how far the diocesan leadership is willing to go in supporting them by providing priests and honoring lay pastoral ministry. The desire to survive is strong and commitment is deep, so I hope...” (PA)

“We hear and are open to the Gospel. This is the example of how we are to live. I also believe we are empowered by the Eucharist to become a vibrant faith community and all of the members of our staff listen to the Gospel and are open to the change the Holy Spirit empowers in the Eucharist.” (PA)

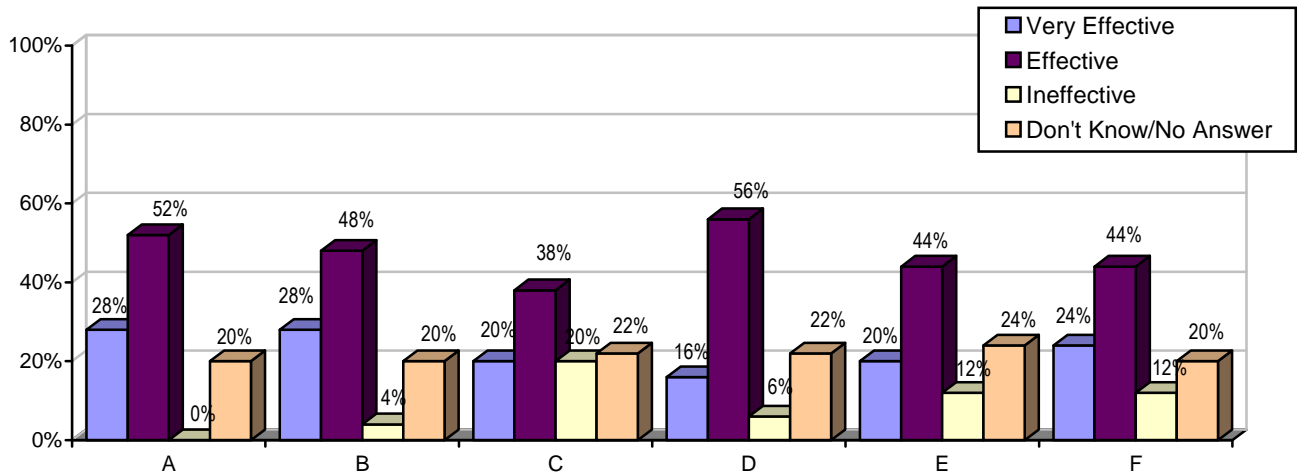
“It depends on what kind of clerical leadership is assigned to the parish in the future. I have hope for the future of the church, but there are still many obstacles, such as priests who can only see one vision/model of leadership and an unwillingness to stop just plugging holes with whatever breathing, ordained body is available. When the power of the church recognizes the authentic leadership of others, we can be a vibrant faith community.” (PA)

“When I look at the emerging and growing participation, leadership from among the ranks, I am very confident and excited. I am disheartened by the process of selection and appointment of pastors which regards the docile immigrant population as the perfect place for pastors who for one reason or another are unable to be fully engaged – yet use up and drain the financial resources and authority – so with low income of parish, very little left for staffing who double up doing his work besides.” (PA)

“If we surrender/consent to God, if we take a prayerful approach, God will lead us to heal and justice. We just need to be a little brave. I feel that we can’t fail to be spiritually alive if we include in our prayer for change regular moments of interior listening – consenting – surrendering. There, I ended on an idealistic note!” (PA)

To conclude the symposium, participants were asked to indicate the effectiveness of their parishes in demonstrating the concrete behaviors of pastoral excellence defined by the project. In Figure 4 below, participants appear to believe their parishes are generally effective or very effective in demonstrating the concrete behaviors of pastoral excellence which are the underpinnings of the emerging models of pastoral leadership effort.

Figure 4
Effectiveness of Parish Leadership in
Demonstrating Concrete Behaviors of Excellence
(All Respondents)



- A. Ethical behaviors
- B. Pastoral behaviors
- C. Prophetic behaviors
- D. Collaborative behaviors
- E. Inclusive behaviors
- F. Welcoming behaviors

This concluding comment from a parish life coordinator describes a sense of hope, but also struggle for those parishes and leaders seeking to define and live out new models of pastoral life:

“Pastoral behaviors are trying. It is difficult to help parishioners and staff to move to a new model. They are still waiting for the priest to arrive. We are a parish that is divided between those who have been involved in the evangelization retreat and those who choose not to live from this spirituality.” (PLC)

VII. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On November 8-10, 2004, 60 pastoral leaders from the Pacific Northwest participated in a regional symposium on the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership. The regional symposiums are one part of a multi-year effort sponsored by six leading national organizations of the Roman Catholic Church and funded by a Lily Foundation Grant for Pastoral Excellence.

The following topics were explored at this symposium:

- **Future of Parish Leadership Roles**
- **Emerging Parish Best Practices**
- **Marks of Pastoral Leadership**
- **Future Model for Pastoral Ministry**

In the Pacific Northwest Symposium, participants worked individually and together to create a future scenario for the parish in 2025. Their primary hopes and new possibilities for the future of the parish in 2025 include the following aspirations:

- **Commitment to empowerment, formation, and realization of the baptismal call of members**
- **Open ordination to women and married persons**
- **Commitment to justice**
- **Eucharistic communities centered on liturgy, worship, and sacraments**
- **Inclusive and multi-cultural communities**
- **Outreach toward youth**
- **Intentional small communities**
- **Whole community catechesis**
- **Formal leadership committed to empowering others**

In a futuring exercise, participants defined the following threats and vulnerabilities to the future of the parish by 2025:

- **Nothing happens**
- **Further retrenchment of leadership**
- **Loss of identity as a Eucharistic community**

When discussing the current vitality of their parishes, participants primarily defined their parishes as:

- **Spiritually Alive and Healthy**
- **Spiritually Alive and Hurting or Struggling**

Participants were asked to define how their parishes express a visible commitment to building the life of the faith community. These visible commitments include:

- **Emphasis on Prayer, Worship, and Eucharist**
- **Outreach and Service to the Larger Community**
- **Whole Community Catechesis**

Participants evaluated the extent to which their parishes reflect a total ministering community, including the roles of pastors, staff, and pastoral councils working together. Participants characterize these efforts as:

- **Making steady progress**
- **Struggling or hurting to realize this reality**

When asked to describe their current parish leadership models, participants often referred to them as:

- **A collaborative approach to shared ministry**
- **Centered around a core team of professional staff**
- **Traditional and priest-centered**

In written comments and group discussions, participants most frequently described the role of pastors as focusing on:

- **Convening, facilitating, and guiding the parish, calling forth the gifts of others**
- **Managing changes roles and structures**

Participants were asked to discuss the emerging roles of staff in leading their parish communities. Participants primarily defined staff leadership roles as:

- **Planning, executing, and organizing parish priorities and programs**
- **Facilitating the gifts of others to emerge**

Participants further reflected on the leadership provided by lay parishioners. They often characterized the leadership of laity as:

- **Active, especially in outreach**
- **Engaged in the visioning of the parish**
- **Passive and not well-engaged**

When asked to define the emerging models of pastoral leadership, participants most frequently defined emerging models as:

- **Formation of the laity to assume their baptismal call**
- **Use of intentional planning and visioning processes to build a local model for parish leadership**

Participants clearly see a direct relationship between healthy parishes and the shared participation of pastors, staff, and council members together as a total ministering community. They see this as an essential element in building an intentional model for a vibrant faith community.

Participants were asked to identify the challenges to building an intentional model for a vibrant faith community. They indicate the most prevalent challenges are:

- **Overcoming resistance to change**
- **Education and formation of the laity on emerging issues**
- **Dealing with systemic change and changing church structures**

Participants identified a number of opportunities in building vibrant faith communities. First and foremost is the:

- **Need to call forth the gifts of others**
- **Need for redefining ecclesial leadership**

When asked to describe how they believe the parish of the future will look, participants see their parishes as becoming:

- **Inclusive of diverse people and models of leadership**
- **Celebrating, vibrant, and welcoming**
- **Intentional, small, and prayer-centered**

Most participants believe they are on the road to becoming more intentional faith communities, but still have a significant distance to go to achieve their vision and goals.

When asked to identify ethical behaviors of leadership, participants focused primarily on:

- **Professionalism and accountability in their leadership roles**
- **Personal integrity, ethics, and respect for boundaries among people**

When asked to further define pastoral behaviors of leadership, participant reflections included:

- **Collaboration and a shared sense of responsibility**
- **Strong relational presence toward people**
- **Clear ministerial boundaries**

When defining prophetic behaviors of leadership, participants tend to focus on:

- **Presenting a faithful and prophetic stance on issues of justice**
- **Maintaining a spiritual commitment rooted in the biblical tradition**

When defining and describing collaborative behaviors of leadership in the faith community, participants most frequently mentioned:

- **Commitment to shared decision-making, planning, mutual accountability, and subsidiarity**
- **Facilitating opportunities for others to share their gifts**
- **Creating opportunities for shared prayer and discernment**

When observing the most prevalent forms of inclusive behaviors of leadership, participants frequently indicate:

- **Multi-cultural awareness and literacy**
- **Recognition and calling forth gifts of others**

When observing welcoming behaviors of leadership, participants tend to focus on accessibility, hospitality, and openness to the gifts and talents of others.

The following regional symposium report presents a thorough and detailed analysis of these findings and themes. Its findings should be understood in the concept of eight different regional symposiums scheduled throughout the United States between 2004 and 2006.