



InFormation

News for Pastoral Planners and Those Making the Plan a Reality!

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Parish Councils Need Energy!



Whether you are a new or seasoned Parish Pastoral Council, there is always opportunity for re-energizing. Young councils may need direction. Experienced Councils may need refreshment. Councils in mid-stream may need a reminder of why the parish pastoral council is essential to parish life.

The 2008 Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catholic Life Congress (CLC) scheduled for Saturday, November 8, 2008, is hosting a special track for members of Parish Pastoral Councils!

Celebrating the year of Paul, the Conference theme of "Disciples on the Journey" frames dozens of topical presentations and workshops for the 1200+ expected attendees, who will include teachers, catechists, parish staff, pastoral council members, and others committed to parish ministry.

Celebrant at the morning Eucharistic Liturgy will be The Most Reverend Robert P. Maginnis. The keynote speaker for the 2008 CLC is renowned artist Brother Michael (Mickey) McGrath, OSFS.

Dr. Mary Ann Gubish, author (with Susan Jenny) of [Revisioning the Parish Pastoral Council, A Workbook](#), will be presenting two sessions. Dr. Gubish is a nationally recognized authority on the formation, development, implementation and renewal of Parish Pastoral Councils.



Dr. Mary Ann Gubish

ALL pastoral council members are invited to attend what will be affirming and exciting sessions. The sessions are scheduled for **12:00 noon- 1:15 PM and 1:15-2:15 PM at Archbishop John Carroll High School.**

Each session has a particular focus and attending both sessions will provide attendees with a broad perspective on the importance of pastoral councils in parish life as well as the key components of a parish planning cycle.

Attend the 2008 Catholic Life Congress!

Come away a re-energized Council!

HOLD THIS DATE OPEN:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2008

8:30 AM- 3:30 PM

AT ARCHBISHOP CARROLL HIGH SCHOOL

TO PRE-REGISTER YOUR COUNCIL MEMBERS

CONTACT-MARTI HARRINGTON **-NOW-**

PHONE 215-587-3694 OR

E-MAIL MAHARRIN@ADPHILA.ORG



Marti Harrington
Coordinator
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Laity

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those who implement those plans.

Suggestions for future articles should be directed to Ron Lill *editor*

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These suggestions are encouraged and welcomed

How Responding to People's Needs Hurts the Church

by Elizabeth I. Steele



Defining the church's ministry by responding to people's needs is a common notion; but, because of the blurred line between want and need, no matter how much we speak of needs or perceived needs, it puts the church in the position of being defined not by its faith or history but by people's wants. This trivializes the church, its mission, and its outreach. It slices into the heart of the church's message and cuts the church off from its identity as the people of God. But the attitudes created in people who come to parishes expecting the parish to make meeting their needs (or, more likely, their wants) a priority also harms the church. Simply put, when we say the church is to meet people's needs, many people personalize that message. They hear, "If I go to church, those folks will take care of me." In selling the parish as a place where people's needs are met, we draw people for whom there is, at least in their perception, an implied promise that if they come to the church it will provide them with what they *think* they need.

A Sense of Entitlement

Jesus said, "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). He also said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 14:24). Christian faith has always been about giving, not receiving. Those who expect the church to respond to their needs—no matter what—frequently have little interest in doing for others. They came to be cared for, so they see being asked to help others as changing the rules. The signs of declining commitment noted by many pastors—lower rates of worship attendance, and other forms of participation—indicate this emphasis on receiving.

Changing Our Language

The problem with the idea of ministry as responding to people's needs is not in what parishes do but in how people come to think about the Church. It reduces the Church to a service provider whose clients/recipients are free to complain whenever they are dissatisfied. Lost is the idea of people being and becoming the Church. Lost is the understanding of the church as a community of faith whose members struggle together to draw closer to God and to express that closeness in how they live and interact with the world.

To counter this, a shift in thinking is called for, and this shift must be reflected in our language. There are other, richer ways of speaking about ministry and mission than just talking about needs. Parishes that move beyond that language find that their self-understanding expands. Looking at spiritual gifts is one way to move beyond the "needs" mentality because it reminds people that they have much to give. One parish I worked with had a twelve-week new members' class. From the very first session, new members were asked how they would share their gifts. The whole twelve-week program was designed to remind them that they were becoming participants in the Parish, not just recipients of it.

Reclaiming the language of call is another way to inspire a new awareness of purpose. In my work, I often introduce parishes to Fredrick Buechner's comment, "The place where God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." The wonder is how much this quote changes parishioners' understanding of mission. They stop trying to duplicate what another parish does well and begin to consider what they can do. They stop looking for someone to tell them what to do and start generating ideas themselves. Best of all, ministry moves from being something they are supposed to do to being a celebration of their own call.

This article was adapted for Catholic parishes by Dr. Robert Miller from an adaptation from "How Responding to People's Needs Hurts the Church" from the Spring 2008 issue of Congregation magazine. Copyright © 2008, the Alban Institute. All rights reserved. We encourage you to share Alban Weekly articles with your parish. We gladly allow permission to reprint articles from the Alban Weekly for one-time use by parishes and their leaders when the material is offered free of charge. All we ask is that you write to us at weekly@alban.or and let us know how Alban Weekly is making an impact in your parish. If you would like to use any other Alban material, or if your intended use of Alban Weekly does not fall within this scope, please submit our reprint permission request form.



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**How many people in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
were born in another country**

(Answer on page 4 in the answer box)

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**Has your parish or Cluster entered into a
Planning Process?**

**Do you need a professional Facilitator?
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trained and experienced Resource people.**

Contact us at: *The Archdiocese of Philadelphia*

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About 17% of World Is Catholic



New Church Statistical Yearbook Gives '00-'06 Statistics

VATICAN City - Catholics make up almost a fifth of the world's population, a ratio that has stayed steady in the new millennium.

This is one of the many statistics found in the Vatican Publishing House's new edition of the Statistical Yearbook of the Church, comprising information on the main aspects of Catholic Church in various countries for the period 2000-2006.

The Catholic presence in the world has remained stable at around 17.3% of the total world population.

In Europe, despite the fact that 25% of all Catholics live there, the growth in the number of faithful was less than 1%. In America (North and South) and in Oceania (Australia & New Zealand), numbers grew, respectively, by 8.4% and 7.6%. In Asia the number remained stable with respect to population growth, whereas in Africa the number of Catholics increased from 130 million in 2000 to 158.3 million in 2006.

The number of bishops in the world increased from 4,541 in 2000 to 4,898 in 2006.

The number of priests also increased slightly over this seven-year period, passing from 405,178 in 2000 to 407,262 in 2006, an overall rise of around 0.51%. In Africa and Asia their numbers increased by 23.24% and 17.71%, respectively. In the Americas the number remained stable, while it fell by 5.75% in Europe and 4.37% in Australia & New Zealand.

The number of diocesan priests increased by 2%, going from 265,781 in 2000 to 271,091 in 2006. By contrast, the number of religious priests showed a constant decline, down by 2.31% to 136,000 in 2006.

The number of female religious are almost double the number of priests, and 14 times that of non-ordained male religious, but their numbers are falling, from 800,000 in 2000 to 750,000 in 2006. As for their geographical distribution, 42% reside in Europe, 28.03% in America and 20% in Asia. The number of female religious has increased in Africa (up by 15.45%) and Asia (up by 12.78%).

Source-Vatican Publishing House's new edition of the Statistical Yearbook of the Church

50 years of Changing Leadership At the Parish Level in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Phila. Data	1950	2006
Dioc. & Rel. Priests	1,915	1,028
Catholics	1,058,058	1,462,388,
Priest to Catholic Ratio	553	1,423
Parishes	398	270
Professional Staff (Lay Ministers and permanent Deacons)	Not Available	564
Priest & Staff to Catholic Ratio	Not Available	919



Dr. Miller receives the Lumen Gentium award

2 in a row for Philadelphia!

In volume 7 Issue 2 we reported that the office for Research and Planning, Archdiocese of Philadelphia was awarded the 2007 Lumen Gentium Award.

This year (2008)

The L.G. went to our Director, Dr. Robert Miller for his work in coauthoring **A National Study of Recent Diocesan Efforts at Parish Reorganization in the United States: Pathways for the 21st Century.**

Congratulations Bob!

Note: 1961 Allentown became a Diocese born out of Philadelphia

The Top 20 Diocese in the U.S. by Population

SOURCE: 2007 KENEDY DIRECTORY

2005 Rank	2006 Rank	2007 Rank	2007 Catholic Population (A=Arch) DIOESE
1	1	1	4,212,887 (A) LOS ANGELES
2	3	2	3,974,846 (A) NEW YORK
3	4	3	2,342,000 (A) CHICAGO
4	2	4	1,871,667 (A) BOSTON
5	5	5	1,561,638 BROOKLYN
8	10	6	1,478,231 (A)DETROIT
7	7	7	1,458,642 (A) PHILADELPHIA
6	8	8	1,396,723 ROCKVILLE CENTRE
10	9	9	1,318,557 (A) NEWARK
13	6	10	1,300,000 GAVESTON-HOUSTON
6	11	11	1,183,548 SAN BERNADINO
11	12	12	1,165,826 ORANGE, CALIFORNIA
12	13	13	1,082,827 SAN JUAN, PR
14	15	14	980,777 SAN DIEGO
15	16	15	959,238 BROWNSVILLE
16	14	16	947,440 DALLAS
	20	17	824,162 MIAMI
	17	18	804,970 TRENTON

Sunday Offering



As a young Catholic kid in the 1950's we had our own envelopes. They had 2 pockets. It was suggested that a dime would go in one and a quarter would go in the other. Mom would fill it up and send me off to the 9:00 Mass. Once a month a pamphlet would arrive at the house with my name in it and the amount given; not just my monthly total but the amount given by every one in the parish who submitted an envelope. Over the years many of these practices have been eliminated and contributions are no longer published for all to see.

Today as a relatively active member of my parish for the last 35 years I can count on one hand the times our pastor has mentioned finances This can be good or not so good. When talking to fellow parishioners about the financial health of the parish they say if Father would just let me know, I would help out. When the pastor does say something at Mass, collection does increase significantly.

Lets take a look at contributions- (2006 report)

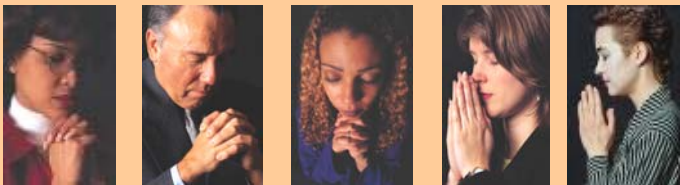
<http://www.archphila.org/pastplan/PDF/ArchPlan/ai.pdf>

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 2006 the average annual Sunday collection per contributing household is \$805 about \$280 per parishioner this is approximately 1.60% of household income is contributed to the parish . Nationally in 1994 - Catholics gave \$160. per parishioner annually Compared to Assemblies of God \$628, Baptists \$550, Lutherans \$415, Presbyterians \$611, per member Ref. American Congregational study (1994)

According to CHARLES E. ZECH in his book ; Why Catholics Don't give and What Can Be Done About it (a must read for parish's trying to get a handle on finances), the small contributions by Catholics has a major effect on the Church as it tries to carry the Gospel into the 21st. Century. Joseph Harris (1994) has estimated that low Catholic giving in the U.S. has a tremendous cost to the Church. If Catholics gave at the average rate given to churches by all Americans an additional \$1.9 billion a year could be budgeted. Think about how much spreading the Gospel you could accomplish with an extra 2 billion a year in the budget!

Article by Ron Lill

Prayer for a Meeting



Gracious God, you create us and love us; you make us one community.

We thank you for our parish. Fill us with your vision for our parish. Please help us to make that vision a reality.

Guide us in working to build a loving community where everyone is valued, and the Gospel is real to all who enter your Church.

Please make this meeting productive and meaningful.

Fill us with your spirit and open us to the giftedness of one another.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior

Amen

Answer Box

285,193

"Disciples on the Journey"

The 2008 Catholic Life Congress!
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
WILL HOLD THE CATHOLIC LIFE CONGRESS
ON-SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH, 2008
AT- ARCHBISHOP CARROLL HIGH SCHOOL
TIME- 8:30 AM TO 3:30 PM



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**Dr. Mary
Ann Gubish**

**FEATURING WORKSHOPS AIMED SPECIFICALLY TOWARD
PARISH PASTORAL PLANNING & TRAINING
PRESENTED BY DR. MARY ANN GUBISH NOTED TEACHER AND COAUTHUR OF
"REVISIONING PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS" (A WORKBOOK)**

PRE-REGISTER YOUR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL NOW!

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