

Pastoral Ministry

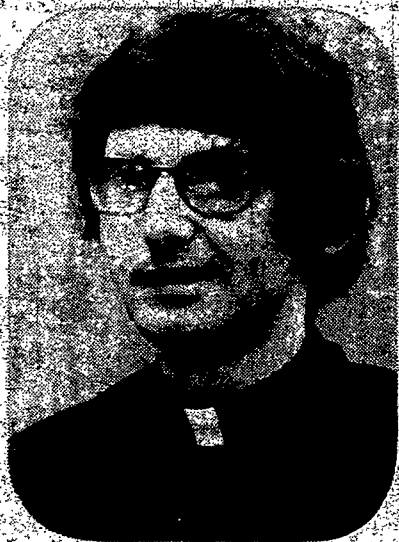
Vatican II brought many new concepts. One of the most significant was the increased responsibility of the laity. Parishioners are no longer limited to serving on a parish board of trustees or trying to balance the parish budget. Today the laity has a real opportunity to contribute to the spiritual life of a parish and it is the responsibility of the Office of Pastoral Ministry to see that the laity has every opportunity to do so.

Father Douglas Hoffman, director, explained that the main function of his office is to counsel parishioners and clergy on the laity's new role.

It has the responsibility of directing three important organizations of the diocese: parish councils, regional coordinators and the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC).

The Office Of Pastoral Ministry (OPM) is one of management. Four specific responsibilities listed in OPM's scope of accountabilities are:

"(1) Establish, maintain, and evaluate standards and guidelines



FATHER HOFFMAN

for the pastoral ministry of parish councils, regional coordinators and regional conferences. (2) Maintain good communications networks and information sharing among staff and its constituencies. (3) Establish and maintain an internal planning and evaluation system for office staff and regional coordinators" and, (4) Maintain and develop a pastoral ministry resource bureau, an up-to-date record of parish and regional

leadership, most recent parishes' constitutions and profiles, and records of most recent direction-setting results of the parish or region.

The Office of Pastoral Ministry is an apparent success. There have been more than 300 parish council workshops throughout the diocese, and the Office is evaluating parish constitutions so that each parish may have a clearer understanding of the purpose, mode of operation and the processes they identify as essential to fulfilling their mission."

Regionalism has surpassed its organizational stage and each region has begun programs which deal with the spiritual and practical side of Christian living. The Diocesan Pastoral Council has been established and its presence is now being felt in the diocese. Many similar organizations in other dioceses, have failed.

OPM is now planning a Parish Council Congress on Sept. 10-11. Father Hoffman said that it will be the largest gathering of diocesan leadership ever. Seven hundred persons have already notified OPM that they will attend.

The office employs two full-time

and two part-time workers and operates on a budget of \$51,930 of which \$10,000 goes towards the work of regionalism and \$12,000 to the DPC.

Father Hoffman explained that the current budget is adequate except that it does not allow for any research projects. Pastoral Ministry is a new concept and there are very few guidelines to follow, Father

Hoffman said. A well planned research program could help OPM plan future programs and improve existing ones.

The Offices of Liturgy, Human Development, Education, Finance, the Spanish Apostolate and Black Ministry deal closely with OPM and Father Hoffman reports that cooperation is "growing" all the time.

Planning

"Planning in the Church is very new," Father Peter Bayer remarked recently. "The concept of 'accountability' is new."

The Disciples reported back to Christ on their first trial, evangelical missions," he added in qualification.

"We are introducing a management-by-objectives program such as corporations use, but in the light of Vatican II, and in a spirit of prayer and collegiality.

"Our program has a very church flavor."

Father Bayer is director of Pastoral Planning. He and the other department heads have been learning business techniques for setting goals and defining objectives. He now has six trainers drawn from other diocesan departments and in December instruction will be finished in all 26.

"Simplified Lopez," Father Bayer explained, referring to Felix Lopez, who started the management course here but no longer is connected with it.

"The bishop will look at the scopes and goals of plans for

present and future." Father Bayer continued, "to see how they fit into the mission of the Church and the purposes of the Church of Rochester, how the work of one department integrates with that of another."

The Ministerial Review Committee that helps Bishop Joseph L. Hogan with this scrutiny comprises the regional coordinators and representatives of the three consultative bodies -- the priests' and sisters' councils and the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

Next year, a start will be made toward acquainting parish councils with the planning system. Father Douglas Hoffman, director of Pastoral Ministry, will introduce it in 10 "prototype" parishes.

Meanwhile, the information to work with is piling up in Father Bayer's map room. Large roll-up maps give easy access to statistical data for cities, rural areas and whole counties in the diocese. Birth and death rates, population shifts, various socio-economic factors have been noted.

"We have to find out what is happening and how to respond," Father Bayer said. "We don't have to make our own studies; there is enough information around."

He mentioned, for example, a study on alcoholism made by the now defunct Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Planning Board. On a map

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