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## Survey Reveals ...8,9



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## Survey Reveals

# Women Active, But Not in Visible Roles

By MARTIN TOOMBS

Women are actively involved in parish work, but the positions of visible prestige and power are held overwhelmingly by men, was a conclusion of a committee which compiled the results from a diocesan survey on the participation of women in local churches.

The survey, authorized by the Diocesan Pastoral Council in November 1976, was distributed to each parish in November 1977. Of the diocese's 160 parishes, 86 responded, considered by the committee to be a high return rate. The report also comments that the 86 reporting parishes represent a good cross-section of the diocese.

The survey asked parish council presidents to indicate the male-female breakdown in the full range of parish activities, both volunteer and salaried.

While 75 percent of the presidents, 68 percent of the vice presidents and 67

percent of the treasurers are men, the survey revealed that 91 percent of the council secretaries, and 93 percent of the recording secretaries are women.

Council membership, as a whole in the parishes responding was 55 percent male.

The report also notes that while 92 percent of the parochial school teachers are women, and 96 percent of the principals are women, 58 percent of the school board presidents are men.

The survey revealed that most parish committees are dominated by a single sex. While buildings and grounds committees are 97 percent male, family life chairpersons are 97 percent female. Generally, the survey indicates that finance and buildings and grounds committees are primarily male, and human development, liturgy and family life committees are primarily female.

In the surveyed parishes, a

majority of lay Eucharistic ministers who distribute communion in Church are men, but a majority of those distributing to the homebound are women. This caused the committee to ask "Are women permitted in some parishes to serve the homebound, but not to distribute communion in public at Mass?"

The survey also revealed that while 47 percent of the parish ministerial staffs are priests, the total of sisters and other laywomen on parish staffs also is 47 percent. Principals and religious education coordinators were not included in the statistics. Laymen comprise four percent, and deacon interns two percent, making the male-female ratio 53 to 47, showing the growing importance of women in ministerial roles in parishes.

The committee noted that this result indicates that women are presently performing many ministerial tasks such as counseling

which were previously reserved for priests. As more functions are shared, support groups need to be implemented which will develop skills for all involved in parish ministry."

In its conclusions, the survey committee noted that over half the women in this country hold jobs outside their homes. Surely among them are many skilled women whose talents could enhance parish planning. However, women may not be willing to do this unless

they feel they will be taken seriously and can function on an equal basis with the men with whom they will be working."

The report also asks "Why are some parishes so willing to benefit from the women in their midst, and others very restrictive of opportunities which now exist? How can this situation be altered?"

The committee also offered some suggestions, including a diocesan effort to find women successful in parish work who would be willing

to share their experience; and "that pastors be requested by the Diocesan Pastoral Council to make a sincere effort to recruit women in their parishes to become lecturers, lay ministers of the Eucharist, committee chairwomen, and all other positions which are currently open to women."

The committee also suggests establishment of a "diocesan organization for women," which "can speak

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## Education Conference To Open on June 2

The Office of Religious Education will present its annual conference at St. John Fisher College in Rochester on Friday and Saturday, June 2 and 3. General sessions and workshops at this year's conference will focus upon the Church's educational ministry to and with families. Speakers and exhibitors from across the country and from several diocesan offices and agencies will be addressing participants in some 40 individual sessions.

The Friday evening

program features two events. First, clergy and parish religious education staff personnel will be attending a panel discussion on the state of the Church's ministry to parents. Teachers and the general public are invited to a major address on the ministry of the teacher in religious education presented by the renowned catechist Rita Walsh Foley of Our Sunday Visitor. Best known for her many national workshops and publications in the field of teaching, Mrs. Foley has long been a favorite among religious

educators in the Diocese of Rochester. Both evening programs will begin at 8. A reception will follow the evening's program for all participants.

The Saturday program will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a major address on The Experience of Living in a Family and our approach to religious education. The speaker, Ms. Maureen Callagher, is the author of the famous Family Religious Education Program

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Pastoral Ministry staff members get a look at detailed plans for reorganization. From left are Sister Jean Rodman, SSJ, Judith Slivick, Father Hoffman, Linda Decillis and Sister Mary Ann Binsack, RSM.

## Pastoral Ministry Completes Reorganization Plans

By MICHAEL GRODEN

The Office of Pastoral Ministry this week completed reorganization plans to "redeploy" staff members into specific areas of regional and parish council work "to serve all levels of leadership more effectively," according

to Father Douglas Hoffman, director.

The office has been divided into four sectors: Parish Council Development, coordinated by Sister Jean Rodman, SSJ; DPC Staff Services, headed by Sister Mary Ann Binsack, RSM;

Regional Development and Communication and Resources, led by Ms. Linda Decillis.

Judith Slivick, Pastoral Ministry secretary, will also

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