

Fr. Louis J. Hohman



The Open Window

### Pastors Get Opportunity To Change

Dear Father Hohman,

You said that one of the reasons parish councils don't work is the unwillingness of pastors to share their leadership role and move away from the traditional idea of pastor as autocrat or the place where "the buck stops." If indeed the pastor is the "alter ego" of the bishop in a parish, isn't it all right for him to reflect the role and style of the bishop which is certainly not democratic even in this country. Nobody doubts that the bishop is the one at whom "the buck stops." J.N.

Dear J.N.

There are in fact instances when a pastor must invoke the final authority of the bishop and overrule a decision of the parish council. But it would have to be a matter of faith or morals or universal Church law of a definitive position of the Holy Father. Otherwise parish policy and programs could be determined by a parish council of which the pastor is a member and participant. This would not be a ceding of his authority but rather a sharing voluntarily of that authority.

It is where there is no will to share that parish councils become impotent and therefore unworkable.

For what reasons might a pastor refuse to share his role? One of the most common reasons is a refusal to accept the idea that a "bunch of amateurs" could know more about administration and guidance of the parish than he could with all of his training and experience. Some consider it a waste of time to explain everything and train council members in the mission of a parish.

Others simply feel threatened by having to let go the role of "boss" which they have worked so many years to achieve. Besides, there is the historical image of the pastor as overlord and factotum, especially in the era of the great immigrations from Europe.

The whole concept of what a pastor is must be adjusted to fit in with the idea of shared leadership and parish council.

Instead of being "boss," the pastor becomes inspirer, gatherer, guide, facilitator, coordinator and spiritual director. Personally, I find this role to be much more exciting and productive.

## AT YOUR PARISH

### Ss. Peter and Paul

Reconciliation service, 7:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 23 at Ss. Peter and Paul Church, 720 West Main St; voluntary individual confessions to follow. Christmas celebration starts with carols 11:30 p.m., Dec. 24, followed by midnight Christmas liturgy. A folk Mass at 10 a.m. Christmas Day replaces the usual Sunday liturgies.

### St. Francis of Assisi

People's Eucharistic League monthly Holy Hour, 7-8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 17 at St. Francis of Assisi Church, corner of Orange and Whitney streets. The public is invited.



### St. Stanislaus

Erica Dowdell, Elizabeth Capozzi, Charlene Hackett, and Latanya Willoughby, all second graders at St. Stanislaus School, put the final touches on their baker's clay tree ornaments, made as gifts for parish shut-ins. According to Sister Sheila, principal, "No one is sure who will have enjoyed the project more — the parishioners who will receive the gifts or the children who made them."

### Guardian Angels

Father Charles Mulligan, diocesan director of Social Ministry will lead a prayer service and speak on the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response," 7:30-9 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15 at Guardian Angels Church, 2061 E. Henrietta Road. The observance is part of the diocesan Day of Prayer for Peace.

### Christ the King


Annual Christmas concert and ice cream social, 7:30 p.m., Dec. 15, Christ the King School; sponsored by the school and Home-School Association.

### St. Augustine/St. Monica

An evening of prayer, praise and song will highlight the St. Augustine/St. Monica observance of the diocesan Day of Prayer for Peace, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15 at St. Monica's Church, 34 Monica St.

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### THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER




**EDWIN SULEWSKI**  
 FUNERAL DIRECTOR

#### Can children benefit from funerals?

Children are sensitive and emotional when a death in the family occurs. Children can benefit from a chance to attend the funeral and say their good byes. Like adults, children need some time to adjust and understand what has taken place. Seeing the deceased and understanding what has taken place. Seeing the deceased and understanding that death is different than life helps children avoid myths that suggest the deceased has only gone away or gone to sleep. Children who loved the deceased has only gone away or gone to sleep. Children who loved the deceased will gain from the chance to be a part of a meaningful ceremony. They should be told that the ceremony and viewing are special ways to remember the deceased. Naturally, children should only participate if they wish.

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Organizational Theory	(3)	Mon. 7:00-9:50 p.m.	Dr. Moore
Quant. Meth. for MGT	(3)	Wed. 4:00-6:50 p.m.	Dr. Sen
International Bus.	(3)	Mon. 4:00-6:50 p.m.	Mr. Phillips-Patrick
Data Base Mgt. Syst.	(3)	Tue. 4:00-6:50 p.m.	Mr. Alai Tafti
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