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## **Parish Pastoral Leaders: Canonical Structures and Practical Questions**

James A. Coriden  
Washington Theological Union

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### **Introduction:**

- 1) *Focus and Thesis of this Study*

This study focuses on those parishes or missions in which the *de facto* leadership and primary pastoral responsibility has been entrusted by the diocesan bishop to someone other than a priest. This article is not about the scores of other ministerial roles, e.g., director of religious education, youth minister, liturgical coordinator, or business officer,

which lay persons, both volunteers and paid professionals, exercise so ably in today's Catholic parishes.

The more common situation in which lay (or diaconal) leadership of parish communities arises in the United States is that in which one priest has been assigned to be pastor of two or more parishes or mission churches (c. 526.1). The priest is the canonical pastor of each of the parish communities, but often the real leader "on the scene" of one or more of them is a lay minister, an associate or assistant to the pastor.<sup>1</sup> The other canonical arrangement wherein the bishop has entrusted "participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish" to "a deacon, to another person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons" (c. 517.2) is also increasingly prevalent.

Other, less "canonically correct" arrangements, are also in use. For instance, a priest is named "parochial administrator" (c. 540) of several parishes or missions on a long-term or permanent basis. Or a ministerial team, headed by a priest but including lay ministers, is entrusted with the pastoral care of a cluster of parishes. Or a priest-pastor is assigned to a parish to which one or more mission churches are attached. In each situation lay persons or deacons are effectively the pastoral leaders of some of the local parishes or mission communities.

The point here is to focus on the role of the "non-priest" who is the *de facto* leader of the local parish community because a priest is not available to fill that role. "Parish Pastoral Leaders" is used in the title and throughout the article to include deacons, religious women or men (i.e., sisters or brothers), and lay women or men. Due regard must be given to the distinctive prerogatives of ordained deacons and of those in consecrated life.

The argument here is that such "parish pastoral leaders" are analogous to resident pastors and therefore should exercise all of the pastoral duties that they are empowered to (and none that they are not authorized to), under the supervision of their pastor, priest moderator, priest parochial administrator, or priest team leader, and the diocesan bishop.

The motive for this argument is not to aggrandize or maximize the position of the parish pastoral leader, but to respect the integrity of the local Christian community and to provide its members the most effective pastoral care possible in this time of fewer priests. The church of Christ is truly present in the local congregations of the faithful (LG 26). These communities of Christ's faithful people, usually known as parishes or missions, are "called by God in the Holy Spirit," and deserve the utmost respect and effective ministry. So our principal aim should be to give them the best quality of pastoral leadership

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<sup>1</sup> The priest-pastor is often in residence in one of the parishes and focuses his attention mainly there, while a lay minister (or religious or deacon) assumes the pastoral leadership at the smaller or more distant of the parishes or missions. That there exist such *de facto* lay leaders in many of the parishes assigned to a multiple-parish pastor is an established fact. One example of the evidence for it is found in the models of parish clustering developed from experience by Mark Mogilka of Green Bay, WI. He cites as one of the "top ten best practices" in pastoring multiple parishes: "Give self permission to be the primary pastor at one location, and then be a great minister to the minister of other locations." Katerina Schuth, OSF, *Priestly Ministry in Multiple Parishes* (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006) 162.

possible, with secondary regard to who provides it. In other words, the shortage of priests is a tragic crisis, but it must not lead us to abandon or distort healthy parish communities.

## 2) *Some Recent Data*

A recent book by Sister Katerina Schuth, OSF, *Priestly Ministry in Multiple Parishes*, reports that as of 2005 in the U.S. as many as 4,408 priests were serving two or more parishes. That is about 20% of all the priests engaged in parish ministry. 9,109 parishes were being served by priests with two or more parishes. That is 44% of all Latin rite parishes and missions (20,668) in the country. In several states the proportion of priests serving multiple parishes is over 50%. In ten dioceses that proportion is over 60%.<sup>2</sup>

A 2005 CARA “Special Report” states that as of 2004 the pastoral care of 566 parishes had been entrusted to deacons, sisters, brothers, or lay persons. This is about 3% of all U.S. parishes. In 1993 the number was 268 or 1.4%. The report says that over 3,100 parishes have no resident pastor, about 16% of total parishes.<sup>3</sup>

The data indicate that both phenomena are large and growing: 1) multiple parishes being served by one priest-pastor<sup>4</sup> and 2) parishes without pastors being served by leaders who are not priests.

## 3) *A Pastorally Pathological Situation?*

One prominent canonist, writing on the ministry of the laity, refers to the situation of the lack of priests that justifies the “participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish” being given to a person who is not a priest (c. 517.2) as “a pastorally pathological situation.”<sup>5</sup> It is not the insertion of lay persons into a pastoral office that is pathological; he insists that is their right. But he perceives that lay assumption of pastoral leadership, normally the prerogative of the ordained priest, is destructive of the unity of the pastoral office. It causes the sanctifying function (liturgical presiding) to be at least

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 3, 15.

<sup>3</sup> 43% of the parishes were entrusted to women religious, 26% to deacons, and another 26% to lay women or men. These parish leaders were given thirty-six different titles of which the most frequent were: pastoral administrator, administrator, parish life coordinator, and pastoral coordinator. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (Georgetown University, Washington, DC), Summer, 2005, pp. 1, 2, 7.

*The Official Catholic Directory* put the number of parishes without a resident pastor at 3,251 in 2005.

<sup>4</sup> 66% of which have employed staff, either full-time or part-time. Very often these staff employees are shared with the other parishes in the cluster. The priest-pastors of multiple parishes consider their chief operational responsibility to be delegating appropriate responsibilities to lay staff, volunteers, and deacons. They are quite satisfied with their relationships with professional staff. Schuth, *Priestly Ministry*, 23, 24, 78, 82.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick Valdrini, “Ecclesialità e ministerialità della missione del fedele laico,” *Periodica* 87 (1998) 545.

partially separated from the teaching and governing functions.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, this lay leadership calls up the specter of separation of the power of orders from the power of jurisdiction, an unfortunate dichotomy that the Vatican Council sought to transcend by stressing the unity of the pastoral office.

A key question must be asked: is the present situation correctly described as pathological or rather should it be seen as a transitional phase toward a restructuring of Catholic ministry? If it is a pathology, it could be cured by a return to the earlier and longstanding discipline of ordaining married men to the priesthood. That would probably eliminate the shortage of priests and restore the unity of the pastoral office. That is a disciplinary decision, not a doctrinal issue. If the present situation is a stage in the evolution of ministry, it should be allowed to continue and to be carefully evaluated to ascertain whether or not it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

## A) Canonical Structures of Parishes and Their Pastors

### 1) *The Traditional Arrangement: Every Parish Entrusted to a Priest-Pastor*

The normative relationship between a Catholic parish and its pastor is clearly stated in the canons of the *Code*. A parish is described as a community of the Christian faithful whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor (c. 515.1). A pastor must be an ordained priest (c. 521.1). A parish may have only one pastor (c. 526.2), and a pastor is to have the parochial care of only one parish (c. 526.1).

This standard arrangement is of very long standing. It goes back to the time of the Emperor Charlemagne, who established endowed parishes (as benefices) throughout the Holy Roman Empire in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Repeated canonical reforms of the high middle ages attempted to enforce this structure. The reform legislation reveals the abuses of that time, both that of entrusting parishes to the under-aged and not-yet-ordained, and of giving more than one parish to a priest-pastor.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A noted theologian makes the same point: Bernard Sesboüé, “Lay Ecclesial Ministers: A Theological Look into the Future,” *The Way* 42:3 (July 2003) 59-61.

<sup>7</sup> For example, the Council of Lyon under Pope Innocent IV in 1274 ordered that:

No one may henceforth presume to give a parish “*in commendam*” to anyone under the lawful age and not yet ordained a priest. Such a commendatory may have only one parish church and there must be an evident need or advantage to the church itself.

*Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Norman Tanner, ed., Vol. I (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990) 322.

Earlier, during the Gregorian Reform (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries), at a council held in Rome under Pope Nicholas II in 1059, it was decreed that “No priest may have two churches.” *Decretum Gratiani*: c. 20, C. XVI, q. 7. *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, ed. A. Friedberg, Vol. I (Graz, 1959) 806.

This canon of the Third Lateran Council, held in 1179 under Pope Alexander III, gives a sense of the problem of “pluralities” in the medieval church:

Because some, setting no limits to their avarice, strive to obtain several ecclesiastical dignities and several parish churches contrary to the decrees

This age-old pattern of one parish entrusted to one priest-pastor provided a reliable source of pastoral care to the people of the parish as well as steady ministry and sustenance to the pastor. Despite the longevity of this parish staffing structure, and the general satisfaction accorded it, there were many exceptions and alternatives to the standard arrangement. Some of these variations involved mission churches, quasi-parishes, parishes united to religious houses or monasteries, chaplaincies, perpetual vicariates, shrine churches, private chapels and oratories. The new pastoral situations of the twentieth century occasioned a new set of alternatives that were included in the 1983 *Code* alongside the traditional arrangement.

## 2) *Alternative Ways of Providing Pastoral Care in Parishes*

Several innovations or options were inserted into the revised *Code* in order to offer greater flexibility in providing pastoral care to parish communities. Four of these are explicit:

- a) One priest-pastor can be entrusted with the pastoral care of several neighboring parishes (c. 526.1).
- b) The pastoral care of a parish or of several parishes can be entrusted to several priests *in solidum* (as a team, jointly) with one as moderator (c. 517.1).
- c) Participation in the exercise of pastoral care of a parish may be entrusted to a deacon, a religious, a layperson, or to a community of such persons, with a priest provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor to moderate the pastoral care (c. 517.2). This provision may only be utilized because of a shortage of priests.
- d) A parochial vicar (who must be a priest) can be assigned to fulfill a specific ministry in different parishes at the same time, e.g., provide liturgical leadership or pastoral counseling for several neighboring parish communities (c. 545.2).

In addition to these explicit alternatives, there are some more general options in the *Code* for providing pastoral care:

- a) Other priests or deacons, those assigned to the parish or those otherwise available (e.g., those in the same deanery, c. 374.2), are to cooperate with the pastor in the exercise of pastoral care (c. 519).
- b) Lay members of the Christian faithful, called as they are to share in the church's mission (c. 204.1), are qualified to be admitted to those ecclesiastical offices and functions which they are able to exercise (c. 228.1). They can cooperate in the exercise of the power of governance (c. 129.2). They can be designated to fulfill certain liturgical functions (c. 230.2) and to supply some ministerial functions when those ministers are lacking (c. 230.3). In other

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of the holy canons, so that though they are scarcely able to fulfill one office sufficiently they claim the revenues of very many, we strictly forbid this in the future (c. 13, Lateran III; Tanner, *Decrees* 218).

words, the parishioners themselves can and should be active agents of pastoral care (c. 519).

- c) The diocesan bishop can provide for the pastoral care of communities of the faithful “in other ways” if the communities cannot be erected as parishes or quasi-parishes (516.2).<sup>8</sup>
- d) Rectors of churches (who are priests) may be assigned to one or more churches that are neither parishes nor connected to a religious house (c. 556).
- e) Chaplains (also priests, in canonical nomenclature) are entrusted with the pastoral care of communities or groups of the Christian faithful, e.g., religious houses, schools, hospitals, prisons, military units, migrants, exiles, refugees (c. 564).

These canonical provisions are not emergency measures or temporary palliatives. They are now ordinary instruments of pastoral care. They can and should be utilized to the utmost for the sake of the local communities of the faithful. Indeed, when writing about parishes that are strained to the point that they cannot do their work effectively, John Paul II urged local church authorities to foster “adaptation of parish structures according to the full flexibility granted by canon law, especially in promoting participation of the lay faithful in pastoral responsibilities.”<sup>9</sup>

### 3) *The Canonical Meaning of “Pastoral Care”*

The expression “pastoral care” (*cura pastoralis*) is not a traditional term of art in canon law. It was not used in the 1917 *Code*, does not appear in the classic *Dictionnaire de Droit Canonique*, and it is not listed in the post-1983 *Code* canonical dictionaries. It is a relatively new shorthand descriptor for the ensemble of pastoral charges: it is used seventeen times in the canons on parishes and pastors. The term merits a brief reflection here if only because the *Code* makes a distinction between the *full* (c. 150) and *partial* (c.

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<sup>8</sup> One of the “other ways” that receives considerable attention in Italy and elsewhere in Europe is the concept of “pastoral units.” It is a way of coordinating the pastoral activity among several neighboring parishes without changing their juridic structures. It is an organized and recognized pastoral collaboration for a homogenous area or region of a diocese under the pastoral leadership of a priest and a team of (mainly) lay ministers. For an extended discussion of this phenomenon see *Quaderni di diritto ecclesiale* 9 (1996), the entire issue, but especially the article by Agostino Montan, “Unità pastorali: contributo per una definizione,” 174-194.

Alphonse Borras, “Les paroisses et l’avenir,” *Studia Canonica* 35:2 (2001) 421-462, offers a valuable overview of how parishes are evolving in northern Europe under the pressures of urbanization, the people’s disaffection, and the shortage of priests. He envisions the “remodeling” of the parish system in three stages: 1) collaboration between neighboring parishes, 2) the integration of that collaboration with a single pastoral unit, pastor, pastoral team, and pastoral council, 3) a new parish, a community of communities, with the inclusion of all the Catholic/Christian resources in the area. He describes it as a missionary project (436-440).

<sup>9</sup> Apostolic exhortation on the Laity, *Christifideles laici*, December 30, 1988, n. 26 (*Origins* 18:35 (February 9, 1989) 573).

564) care of souls, and the special provision for diaconal or lay parish leadership speaks of a “participation in the exercise of the pastoral care” of a parish (c. 517.2).

What then is the meaning of “pastoral care”? The canon that speaks of the office of parish pastor seems to define pastoral care in terms of the customary threefold functions (*triplex munus*): the pastor “exercises the pastoral care of the community committed to him . . . so that for that same community he carries out the functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing . . .” (c. 519). But those three functions do not define or adequately describe pastoral care. They provide a skeletal framework for it. They offer three broad categories into which the pieces of a much more complex task can be set, like the bright bits of colored glass that make up a stained glass window.

Pastoral care includes the many elements of a pastor’s duties and prerogatives included in the “pastoral check-list” canons 528-530. These canons list a range of responsibilities, from knowing the people of the parish and visiting their families to assisting at their marriages, attending to the poor and afflicted, and burying the dead.

Pastoral care encompasses: 1) preaching, catechetical, educational, and sacramental preparation tasks,<sup>10</sup> 2) celebrating the sacraments, leading and teaching prayer, and giving spiritual guidance, 3) detailed administrative responsibilities,<sup>11</sup> and 4) the over-arching tasks of unifying, animating, and coordinating the parish community and the various ministries within it.

Pastoral care is not the task of the pastor or parish leader alone. The very description of the exercise of pastoral care in a parish includes within it the cooperation of others, especially the lay members of the Christian faithful (c. 519). This is of critical importance. In other words, the exercise of pastoral care is by definition a participative enterprise. As the canon on the pastoral care of marriage illustrates, pastoral care is the concern of the parish community, not only of the pastor (c. 1063). In fact, the parish community itself is the primary agent of pastoral care.<sup>12</sup>

An office which entails the full care of souls and for whose fulfillment the exercise of the priestly order is required can only be conferred on a priest (c. 150). The *Code* does not identify the offices that entail the *full* care of souls, but it is commonly understood to include the offices of diocesan bishop and parish pastor. Presiding at celebrations of the Eucharist, as well as at other sacramental celebrations, is integral to their pastoral leadership.

The concept of the *full* care of souls mentioned in canon 150 was not used in the corresponding canon of the 1917 *Code* (c. 154). It was introduced in the 1983 *Code* to distinguish certain offices that are reserved to priests from those that can be exercised by deacons, religious, or laypersons (e.g., c. 517.2). It is the canonical way of recognizing the participation of these persons in the exercise of pastoral care: a duly authorized and perfectly legitimate participation, but partial rather than full.

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<sup>10</sup> See canons 757, 773, 776-7, 794.2, 843.

<sup>11</sup> See canons 532, 1279-1287.

<sup>12</sup> Francesco Coccopalmerio, “Il parroco e gli altri fedeli soggetti attivi della parrocchia,” *La Parrocchia* (Studi Giuridici XLIII) (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997) 113-124, the entire article, but specifically p. 121. Coccopalmerio developed this theme more fully in his earlier work, *De Paroecia* (Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1991), chapter II: “De paroecia ut subiecto unitario agente” (23-49).

Distinguishing lay participation in the exercise of pastoral care as partial rather than full does not minimize or denigrate that exercise, it simply differentiates it as based on the sacraments of initiation rather than on the sacrament of orders. “Partial” does not imply a small or minor participation, nor does it imply that the sharing is temporary or an emergency situation. Indeed, a partial sharing can be the major share, all except the sacramental roles reserved to priests.<sup>13</sup> And it can be quite stable and permanent.

#### 4) A Closer Look at Three Ministerial Roles

The second paragraph of canon 517 provides one of the alternatives to the traditional form of parish leadership:

If, because of a lack of priests, the diocesan bishop has decided that participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon, to another person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons, he is to appoint a priest who, provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor, is to moderate the pastoral care.

This arrangement, which is widely used in some dioceses in the United States, most often relies on the close collaboration of three distinct ministries:

a) *Parish Pastoral Leader*: This person, a lay woman or man, a religious sister or brother, or a permanent deacon, “participates in the exercise of pastoral care of a parish.” She or he has direct and immediate responsibility for providing pastoral care in the parish community. He or she is the person “in charge” of the parish on a day-to-day basis. She or he is the leader of the parish community, and participates in building up the community, as well as in the three functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing; and the other elements of pastoral care (e.g., those listed in canons 528-530). He or she coordinates the ministerial team, both staff and volunteers.

The parish pastoral coordinator is appointed by the bishop, and ministers under the bishop’s authority, with the cooperation of priests and deacons, and with the assistance of lay members of the Christian faithful (c. 519). She or he is the primary contact between the parish and the diocese, a bond of hierarchical communion. The leader’s role is an ecclesiastical office (or should be constituted as such, cc. 145, 228.1),<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> As well as the homiletic role that is part of the liturgy itself (c. 767.1)

<sup>14</sup> Alphonse Borras, “Petite grammaire canonique des nouveaux ministères,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 117 (1995) 258, presents the advantages of having the bishop constitute the ministry as an ecclesiastical office. Borras discusses this issue more fully in “Les ministères laïcs. Fondements théologiques et figures canoniques,” in Alphonse Borras, ed., *De laïcs en responsabilité pastorale? Accueillir de nouveaux ministères* (Paris: Cerf, 1998) 95-120, especially 105-109, 116-120. See also Borras’ affirmation of this function as an office in *La parrocchia: Diritto canonico e prospettive pastorali* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1997) 173.

James Provost, in “Temporary Replacements or New Forms of Ministry: Lay Persons with Pastoral Care of Parishes,” *In Diversitate Unitas: Monsignor W. Onclin*

not a temporary deputation (c. 230.2). The parish pastoral leader is not the pastor of the parish,<sup>15</sup> and does not have the “full care of souls” (c. 150), but the office is analogous to that of pastor.<sup>16</sup>

The parish pastoral leader should be publicly recognized, with an appointment publicly announced in the same way that other pastoral announcements are made. He or she should have a contract that outlines authority, duties and responsibilities, remuneration, benefits, evaluation procedures, conditions for renewal or termination. She or he should be installed in office by the bishop or his delegate, and have stability in office.

b) *Priest Moderator*: This priest, diocesan or religious, is “provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor” (c. 517.2), principally for sacramental purposes, e.g., to hear confessions (c. 968.1), assist at marriages and delegate others to do so (cc. 1108.1, 1111.1), confirm in danger of death (c. 883.3), and grant some dispensations (c. 1079.2). The priest “is to moderate the pastoral care,” in the parish.<sup>17</sup> That is to say, he is to

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*Chair 1997* (Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 43-70, specifically at 60-62, affirms that this role is or should be an ecclesiastical office. He cites Marcello Morgante, *La parrocchia nel Codice di Diritto Canonico: Commento juridico-pastorale* (Torino: Edizioni Paoline, 1985) 197, and Jean-Claude Périsset, *La Paroisse: Commentaire des Canons 515-572* (Paris: Tardy, 1989) 202, as asserting that it is an ecclesiastical office.

<sup>15</sup> This fact, that the parish pastoral leader is not the pastor in the technical, canonical sense of the word, is widely affirmed, e.g., by John Renken in *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 686, Francesco Coccopalmerio in *De Paroecia*, 109, Barbara Ann Cusack in *Pastoral Care in Parishes Without a Pastor*, 7, Alphonse Borras in *La Parrocchia, 1741*, Gary Yanus in “Sacramental Life of Parishes Without a Resident Pastor,” *Canon Law Society of America Proceedings*, 66 (2004) 217, and Roch Pagé in “The Future of Parishes and the Present Canonical Legislation,” James H. Provost Memorial Lecture, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., March 10, 2005, 10.

<sup>16</sup> Francisco Coccopalmerio succinctly states what this role means: “. . . *christifideles non sacerdotes paroeciam dirigunt ad modum pastoris.*” He goes on to say, “*omnia agere possunt quae ageret pastor, idest quae necessaria sunt ad recte regendum paroeciam, iis exceptis quae ordinem prebyteralem necessario requirunt.*” *De Paroecia*, 109.

For a helpful discussion of the role that Europeans often call “pastoral animator,” confer Jean-Pierre Schoupe, “Animateurs pastoraux et laïcs engages. Leur droits et devoirs respectifs,” in Alphonse Borras, ed., *De laïcs en responsabilité pastorale?*, 121-146. Borras’ own article in the same collection offers a positive and instructive view of these new lay roles: “Les ministères laïcs. Fondements théologiques et figures canoniques,” 95-120.

<sup>17</sup> The *Code* uses the Latin word *moderetur* to describe the duty of this priest in relation to the pastoral care in the parish (c. 517.2). Some English versions of the *Code* translate this word as “to direct.” The Latin verb *moderor, moderari* means to set bounds, to regulate, to moderate, to govern, or to guide. It can mean “to direct,” but that is not its first meaning. Here it does not imply immediate direction. “Moderate” is a preferable

oversee, to exercise vigilance over the ministries and life of the parish community. He is to assist and advise the parish director when necessary.

The priest moderator has an ecclesiastical office, and his letter of appointment should detail his responsibilities. He is not the pastor of the parish, nor does he have the duties of a pastor. (In the technical, canonical sense of the word, the parish does not have a pastor.) He can be the priest moderator simultaneously for several parishes in the diocese, and this is often the case.

3) *Sacramental Minister*: This is the priest, religious or diocesan, who presides at parish celebrations of the Eucharist, celebrates sacramental reconciliation, baptizes, confirms those being received into the church, and anoints the sick. He ministers to the parish community in close coordination with the parish pastoral leader, whom he supports and assists. He establishes and maintains a pastoral familiarity with the parish community to the greatest extent possible.<sup>18</sup>

The priest moderator can serve as the sacramental minister in the parish, and in some circumstances, that may be a simpler and more convenient arrangement.

All three of these ministerial persons need to collaborate, to work in close harmony, for the benefit of the parish community.

#### 5) *Another Paradigm: One Pastor of Multiple Parishes*

Another canon of the *Code*, 526.1, expresses both the traditional rule of one priest-pastor for each parish and the new exception to that rule:

A pastor is to have the parochial care of only one parish; nevertheless, because of a lack of priests or other circumstances, the care of several neighboring parishes can be entrusted to the same pastor.

What was forbidden as an abuse based on avarice in earlier times is now permitted for pastoral reasons: the need for parish leadership in a time of fewer priests. This pattern has become widespread.<sup>19</sup>

Canonically speaking, this arrangement of one priest-pastor entrusted with the pastoral care of two or more parishes is clear and simple: the pastor has all the canonical rights and duties of a pastor in each one of the parishes under his charge.<sup>20</sup> The

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translation. It would be the preferable rendering also in canons 223.2, 528.2, 567.2, 576, 1272, and 1346.

<sup>18</sup> Gary Yanus, "Sacramental Life of Parishes without a Resident Pastor, Part I, The Parish," *Canon Law Society of America Proceedings* 66 (2004) 213, gives the reason for this pastoral closeness: knowledge of the community is essential for effective preaching and sacramental celebrations.

<sup>19</sup> See the section on "Recent Data" above.

<sup>20</sup> There are two notable exceptions: 1) with regard to the Mass that a pastor is obliged to apply for the people on each Sunday and holy day of obligation, canon 534.2 provides that the "pastor who has care of several parishes is bound to apply only one Mass for the

requirement that the parishes be *neighboring* should be understood, not in the sense that they must be physically contiguous, but as geographically close enough and of such dimensions that the pastoral offices are not incompatible.<sup>21</sup>

While canonically “cleaner,” this arrangement often has the same elements and collaborative demands as in the above paradigm of a “participation in the exercise of the pastoral care” entrusted to a deacon, religious, or lay person, with a priest moderator (c. 517.2). In the real situations “on the ground” the pastor cannot be equally present to or active in several different parish communities. Often a “pastoral assistant” or “parish administrator,” very similar to the “parish pastoral leader” described above, is appointed to lead or coordinate the pastoral activity of one or more of the parishes, because each parish community needs someone qualified to be “in charge and pastorally responsible.” Also the sacramental needs of the parish communities may call for the services of additional “sacramental ministers” besides the pastor. Obviously, no priest moderator “with the powers and faculties of a pastor” is required, and the pastor would be the one to oversee, assist, and advise the local pastoral assistant.

There are other arrangements analogous to this paradigm of “one priest-pastor for several parishes.” For example, one parish with a priest-pastor who also has one or more mission churches or chapels for additional communities. Sometimes one or more of the missions have outgrown or show greater vitality than the “mother church.” Or a priest who is pastor of one parish while at the same time the parochial administrator (c. 540) of others.

The point is that in the parishes or missions where the priest is not resident and cannot be a consistent and effective pastoral presence, it is entirely appropriate that the qualified lay or diaconal leader of the parish or mission function as much like a pastor as is canonically and liturgically possible.

## **B) Practical Questions**

A few issues arise again and again in relation to these “new arrangements.” The “alternative ways of providing pastoral care in parishes” raise practical questions that have not yet found uniform or final answers. What follows are this author’s attempts to answer some of those questions. The answers are necessarily tentative, the ministerial patterns are still developing, and the scene is as fluid as a mountain stream in springtime.

The questions and responses refer to *both* of the most common alternatives: 1) multiple parishes being served by one priest-pastor in which one or more of the parishes

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entire people entrusted to him;” 2) if it occurred that the bishop sought to remove an unwilling pastor from all of his parishes, the bishop would have to show cause relative to each particular parish, but he could do so in a single process for removal (cc. 1740-1747). This latter is an observation from the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, November 13, 1997 (*Communicationes* 30 (1998) 28-32).

<sup>21</sup> “Two or more incompatible offices, that is, offices which together cannot be fulfilled at the same time by the same person, are not to be conferred on one person” (c. 152). In practice, the parameters of this incompatibility may be a close call. May not a pastor’s responsibility for four or five parishes really amount to a situation of incompatible offices?

is served by a non-priest as its *de facto* leader of ministry and community (the c. 526.1 situation), and 2) parishes without pastors being served by leaders who are not priests (the c. 517.2 arrangement). The focus here is on the lay person, religious sister or brother, or permanent deacon in the role of local ministerial leadership.

*1) Must the Bishop Consult the Presbyteral Council before Appointing These Ministers?*

Canon 515.2 states that the diocesan bishop is not “to erect, suppress, or alter notably (*notabiliter innovet*) parishes, unless he has heard the presbyteral council.”<sup>22</sup> The “notable alterations” are usually understood to be territorial, that is, changes in the parish boundaries, e.g., splitting off a portion to create a new parish, extending the boundaries to account for demographic developments, or uniting two or more parishes into one. Certainly to change the status of a parish from a personal one (ethnic, “national,” or lingual) to a territorial one, or vice versa, would be a notable modification.

The question arises, is entrusting the pastoral care of a parish either: 1) to a priest-pastor who is already the pastor of a neighboring parish, or 2) to a deacon, religious, or lay person, the kind of “notable alteration” that requires the bishop to consult the presbyteral council beforehand in each instance? The question is a serious one, at least in theory, since failure to consult when required by law to do so renders the subsequent action invalid (c. 127.2.2).

The first situation, namely that of assigning as pastor a priest who is also the pastor of a nearby parish (c. 526.1), is not really an alteration or substantial change in the parish. The parish had a pastor before, and it has a pastor after the appointment. The new pastor simply has more responsibilities than his predecessors. Surely the diocesan bishop is not required to consult the presbyteral council in such an instance any more than he needs to in any other appointment of a pastor (c. 523).

The second situation, namely entrusting a participation in the exercise of pastoral care to a person or persons who are not priests (c. 517.2), seems a bit more problematic. At least two able canonists answer this question in the affirmative, that is they say that the diocesan bishops must hear the presbyteral council prior to making such an appointment.<sup>23</sup> I think that they are mistaken. My reasons follow.

Canon 515 refers to structural changes in the parish itself, not changes in the mode of exercise of pastoral care within the parish. The sources of the canon all speak of territorial or other juridic (e.g., from personal to territorial) alterations to the parish itself, and they make no reference to changes in the pastoral leadership or exercise of pastoral care in the parish.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The parallel canon in the CCEO, c. 280.2, simply uses the verb “to change” (*immutare*) without any qualification.

<sup>23</sup> Juan Ignacio Arrieta, *Governance Structures within the Catholic Church* (Montreal: Wilson & Lafleur, 2000) 251; Antonio Sanchez Gil, *Commentario Exegético al Código de Derecho Canónico*, Vol. II/2 (Pamplona: EUNSA, 1997) 1207. At the time and place in which these authors wrote, the application of canon 517.2 to parishes may have been so rare and exceptional that they were led to conclude it amounted to a notable alteration.

<sup>24</sup> *CD 32; ES I, 21; Congregation for Bishops, Directory of the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, February 22, 1973 (Ottawa: Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974), n. 177.

Changes in parish pastoral leadership are relatively frequent events that do not alter the nature or structure of the parish as “a community of the Christian faithful.” For example, the transfer of the pastor, the assignment or removal of a parochial vicar, the employment of new parish staff members, are all routine changes, not notable alterations. Even leadership changes that are more unusual and permanent, like entrusting the pastoral care of a parish to a clerical religious institute, would not be “notable alterations” of the parish that called for consultation of the presbyteral council.

This conclusion that entrusting a participation in the exercise of pastoral care of a parish to a person or persons who are not priests (c. 517.2) is not a notable alteration of the parish and hence does not require the diocesan bishop to hear the presbyteral council does not at all imply that the presbyteral council should not be consulted on the *pastoral policy* of doing so. Surely such a *pastoral plan* for the staffing of parishes when there is a shortage of priests is exactly the kind of “affair of greater importance” (*negotio maioris momenti*) about which the bishop should consult the council (c. 500.2).<sup>25</sup> The council represents the *presbyterium* and constitutes his senate to assist him in the governance of the diocese and the promotion of the pastoral good of the people (c. 495.1).

Finally, although I am quite confident in this opinion that the diocesan bishop is not bound to consult the presbyteral council in the individual instances of the application of canon 517.2, there are those (the two authors cited above and possibly others) who think otherwise. I conclude that at very least the law requiring consultation in this matter (namely c. 515.2) is in doubt (a *dubium iuris*), and consequently does not oblige (c. 14).

## 2) *Is There a Necessary Preference for Deacons for These Parish Leadership Roles?*

Since canon 517.2 lists those who may be entrusted with participation in the exercise of pastoral care of a parish when there is a lack of priests as “a deacon,” “another person who is not a priest,” or “a community of persons,” in that order, the question arises: are those persons to be given preference for the leadership role in the order in which they are listed? More specifically, must permanent deacons be given preference for the position of parish leader, at least when they are otherwise well qualified, over lay women or men or religious men or women?

There are some good reasons that might incline toward to an affirmative response to that question. Permanent deacons are “in holy orders,” they are ordained sacred ministers, they participate in the hierarchical structure of the church, they have made a lasting commitment to the church’s ministry, they are incardinated into dioceses or religious orders.<sup>26</sup> Deacons can witness marriages (c. 1109.1), baptize (c. 861.1), and preach homilies (c. 767.1). In these ways deacons are like priests, they are as close to having presbyteral leadership as a parish could have.

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The subsequent *Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, February 22, 2004 (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), when addressing this form of adaptation of parochial provision, makes no mention of a need to consult the presbyteral council. N. 215, pp. 243-245.

<sup>25</sup> Périsset, *La Paroisse*, 205, explicitly affirms this position.

<sup>26</sup> In fact, as one prominent archbishop put it, the main reason for giving preference to deacons is that they have promised obedience to their bishops!

In addition, some recent documents from the Roman Curia have explicitly stated a preference for permanent deacons for such positions.<sup>27</sup> It is not surprising that the

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<sup>27</sup> The 1997 instruction from the Congregation for the Clergy et al, “On certain questions regarding the cooperation of the lay faithful with the ministry of priests,” *Ecclesiae de mysterio* (August 15, 1997; AAS 89 (1997) 852-877, at 866) mentions in passing that the canon gives preference to deacons: “In any event, the preference which this canon gives to deacons cannot be overlooked” (*Origins* 27:27 (November 27, 1997) 397-409, Practical Provisions, art. 4, p. 404).

The *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*, (Washington: USCC, 1998) issued by the Congregation for the Clergy on February 22, 1998, goes further: “Where permanent deacons participate in the pastoral care of parishes which do not, because of a shortage, have the immediate benefits of a parish priest, they always have precedence over the non-ordained faithful” (n. 41, p. 105). A later instruction from the Congregation for Clergy, “The Priest: Pastor and Leader of the Parish Community” *De presbytero pastore et duce communitatis paroeciae* (August 4, 2002, not in AAS, but excerpted in *Communicationes* 34 (2002) 180-195) quotes this same admonition. (n. 25). (*Origins* 32:23 (Nov. 14, 2002) 385.)

The *Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, (Apostolorum successores)*, from the Congregation for Bishops, February 22, 2004, (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004) states more generically that “it is preferable that any office which involves *supplying for the presence of a priest* be assigned to a deacon rather than a layperson, especially when it is a question of providing some form of stable leadership for a Christian community without a priest, . . .” (n. 93, p. 105).

These statements of preference for deacons by the clerical congregations of the Roman Curia may derive from their own ideological predispositions, but they also find grounding in the “Decree on Missionary Activity,” *Ad gentes*, of the Second Vatican Council (December 7, 1965), which suggested:

It would be helpful to those men who are exercising what is in fact the ministry of a deacon . . . by taking charge of scattered Christian communities in the name of the parish priest and the bishop, . . . to be strengthened, and bound more closely to the altar, by the imposition of hands which has come down from the apostles, so that they may be able to carry out their ministry more effectively through the sacramental grace of the diaconate” (n. 16).

This suggestion to enhance the status and role of catechists in mission churches by ordaining them to the diaconate has not been widely accepted in practice.

The Council’s earlier “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” *Lumen gentium*, (November 21, 1964), which authorized the restoration of the permanent diaconate and enumerated its roles and functions, made no mention of community leadership (n. 29). However, the post-conciliar *motu proprio* that re-established the permanent diaconate, *Sacrum diaconatus ordinem* (June 18, 1967) repeated the words of AG 16 and used the stronger Latin term *regere* in place of *moderari* to express the guidance of the distant communities by deacons (n. 22).

Congregations *for the Clergy* and *for the Bishops* emphasize a preference for ordained clerics in all matters, but their documents are not determinative. They are not empowered to render authentic interpretations of the canons of the *Code*.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, there is no indication that the last-minute insertion of “deacons” in c. 517.2 in the final draft of the *Code* before it was approved by the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code in October, 1981, was for the purpose of giving a preference for deacons in this plan for the alternative staffing of parishes in the absence of priests.

Common sense and concern for the pastoral welfare of the people persuades me to think that each parish leadership appointment should be determined in the same way that a bishop appoints pastors: entrusting “a vacant parish to the one whom he considers suited to fulfill its parochial care, after weighing all the circumstances and without any favoritism” (c. 524). Candidates should be carefully evaluated on their merits. Sometimes religious or lay candidates are better trained, have greater experience, or are spiritually and temperamentally better suited than deacon candidates. Whoever they are, deacons, religious, or laity, they must have the human and spiritual qualities required for pastoral care, just as the priest-moderator must, qualities such as prudence, decision-making, listening skills, a sense of solidarity, catechetical practice, a pastoral sense of the sacraments, and spiritual discernment.<sup>29</sup>

There is a sense in which a preference for deacons in situations where there is a shortage of priest is deleterious to the identity and role of deacons themselves. The diaconate is an ancient and distinctive order with unique prerogatives and functions. It is harmful to envision and utilize deacons as “the next best thing” to having a priest, or “supplying for priests” when there aren’t enough of them around. The order of deacons has had its own reality and dignity for centuries, and it should not be envisioned as a substitutional role in the church’s panoply of ministries.

A permanent deacon should be entrusted with a “participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish” when he is the best available candidate for that ministry, all things considered.

### 3) *What Title Should These Parish Pastoral Leaders Have?*

Names matter, and the role of non-priests leading parish communities has been clouded by the lack of an appropriate title and the attempt to impose restrictions on the use of suitable descriptive labels. It is not helpful to call an important pastoral ministry by an inappropriate name (e.g., “parish life collaborator”), it can be confusing and misleading. The *Code* provided no name for this role, and there is a legitimate (but

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In view of these sources Alphonse Borras, *La parrocchia*, concludes that it is theologically fitting (*convenienza theologica*) to give preference to deacons (168-169).

<sup>28</sup> One of the co-signatories of *Ecclesiae de mysterio* was the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, which does possess the authority to authentically interpret the meaning of the canons (apostolic constitution on the Roman Curia, *Pastor bonus*, June 28, 1988, arts. 154-155), but there is no indication that the Council intended the passing remark about the canon’s preference for deacons as an authentic interpretation.

<sup>29</sup> Borras, *La Parrocchia*, 172-173.

perhaps not compelling) rationale for avoiding titles that are canonically defined in terms of priesthood, e.g., pastor (c. 521.1), parochial vicar (c. 546), parochial administrator (c. 539). We should try to avoid confusion of titles and ambiguity of roles whenever possible.

However, the Congregation for the Clergy compounded the problem by attempting to prohibit some sensible titles: “coordinator” and “moderator.”<sup>30</sup>

CARA’s 2005 Special Report relates that these parish leaders are called by thirty-six different titles, but that the four most commonly used are: pastoral administrator, administrator, parish life coordinator, and pastoral coordinator.<sup>31</sup> All of these seem reasonably accurate and acceptable in practice. I have used “parish pastoral leader” in the title and text of this article because it seems a bit more accurate, it can apply to lay persons, religious, or deacons, and it avoids confusion with the canonical titles that are defined as priestly.

This ministry, like so many others in our church, is in the process of development and refinement. An appropriate title will emerge soon enough, one that is in keeping with Catholic tradition and that is an accurate descriptor of the role.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4) *Should Parish Pastoral Leaders Preside at the Pastoral and Finance Councils?*

The person entrusted with a share in the exercise of pastoral care of a parish because of a shortage of priests (the canon 517.2 situation) is not the pastor of the parish. The parish has no pastor. But that person is the pastoral leader of the parish, a role analogous to that of a priest-pastor, and therefore that person should exercise all of the pastoral duties that he or she is empowered to, under the supervision of their priest moderator and the diocesan bishop.

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<sup>30</sup> John Huels, “Interpreting an Instruction Approved *in forma specifica*,” (*Studia Canonica* 32:1 (1998) 5-46, at 25) correctly concludes that “The specified titles are not banned outright. They are given as examples. It is up to the diocesan bishop . . . to decide what titles confuse the role . . . of presbyters with that of lay ministers.”

The Congregation’s instruction went on to suggest, in a footnote, that it is “unlawful” to use any titles that “indicate a directive role of leadership.” In other words, we should avoid any title that accurately describes what these leaders are or what they do! *Ecclesiae de mysterio*, Practical Provisions, art. 1, note 38.

The more recent instruction from the Congregation for the Clergy, *De presbyterio pastore et duce*, states: “In her desire to clarify terminology that might occasion confusion, the church exclusively reserves certain expressions connoting *potestas capitis* to priests – pastor, chaplain, director, coordinator and other equivalents (n. 23).” (*Origins* 32:23 (November 14, 2002) 384.

<sup>31</sup> See footnote 3 above.

<sup>32</sup> Matteo Visioli, “I ministeri laicali parrocchiali: una lettura di alcuni documenti del magistero ecclesiale,” *Quaderni* 17 (2004) 242-268, presents a helpful analysis of the terminology used for lay ministry. He laments the fact that the Congregation for the Clergy insists on viewing lay ministers solely through the filter of their collaboration with ordained ministers, rather than on who they are and what they do (262-266).

The other arrangement wherein a priest is pastor of more than one parish (the canon 526.1 possibility), but the *de facto* leadership of one or more of the parishes, across town or in the next county, is entrusted to an associate or assistant, who might be a deacon, religious, or lay person, calls for the same practical result: that person is the pastoral leader of the parish and should exercise all of the prerogatives that he or she is empowered to, under the supervision of the pastor and the diocesan bishop.

The question arises, what is the relationship of the parish pastoral council and parish finance council to the “person in charge” when the parish has no pastor (in the situation when someone other than a priest is in charge) or when the parish has no resident pastor (when the pastor has charge of more than one parish and is not resident in this one)?

A parish pastoral council is made up of members of the Christian faithful and parish staff, and its purpose is to assist the pastor in fostering pastoral activity in the parish. The pastor presides<sup>33</sup> over it, and the council has a consultative vote (c. 536). A parish finance council is made up of Christian faithful who are to assist the pastor in the administration of the goods of the parish (c. 537).

In both of these situations the parish pastoral leader (“person in charge”) stands in the place of a pastor, and should be the one whom the two councils assist and advise. In the first instance (c. 517.2) the parish actually has no pastor, but the non-priest pastoral leader serves in a pastor’s place. That person is the unifier, coordinator, and animator of the parish community, and the administrator of its property. She or he is the pastoral leader of the local church, responsible for maintaining its unity and its full communion with its neighboring parishes and the diocesan church.

In this central role, it is the pastoral leader who should preside over the parish pastoral council and collaborate with it as it assists in fostering pastoral activity in the parish. The presiding need not be done in person. The pastoral leader could appoint a chairperson or approve the election or discernment of someone else for that role and for any of the other offices within the council, e.g., vice chair, secretary, etc. The same holds for the parish finance council.

In short, the pastoral leader is not the pastor of the parish, but serves in a pastor’s place, acts like a pastor; plays a role analogous to that of a pastor, and the person should function as pastor insofar as possible.<sup>34</sup>

In the second situation, in which one priest is appointed pastor of two or three neighboring parishes, it is often very difficult or impossible for him to preside or even attend meetings of the parish councils of the several parishes. In this case each of the parishes has a canonical pastor, but the practical reality is that he cannot give adequate attention to each of the councils.

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<sup>33</sup> Coccopalmerio explicitly affirms that the pastoral leader should preside over both parish councils. *De Paroecia*, 110. Others disagree, for example see Bassiano Uggé, “Il munus regendi dei laici in parrocchia,” *Quaderni di diritto ecclesiale* 17 (2004) 424.

<sup>34</sup> Barbara Ann Cusack, in *Pastoral Care in Parishes Without a Pastor: Applications of Canon 517.2* (Washington: CLSA, 1995), discusses the relationship of the parish pastoral leader to the councils as well as our next issue, the representation of the parish in juridic matters, and demonstrates how both are canonically possible (pp. 19-22).

Sometimes, in the interests of efficiency and cooperation, the priest attempts to bring the councils together in some way (e.g., by meeting in the same place, at first separately, then together). However, this procedure, which is possible when the parishes are relatively close to one another, sends the message that the parishes are on their way toward merger or that one or more of them is going to be closed, a very negative and possibly misleading message.

A better procedure, when the priest-pastor cannot regularly attend the council meetings of the two or several parishes, is to encourage them to meet with the presence and close collaboration of the parish pastoral leader. The council can organize itself and its own agenda with a proper sense of its own autonomy. It can function as advisory to the local “person in charge,” and that person together with the council should keep the pastor fully informed about their plans, deliberations, and actions. The council’s sense of active participation and thorough consultation is preserved, and the pastor’s right to preside over it is not compromised.

#### *5) Should The Parish Pastoral Leader Represent the Parish in Juridic Matters?*

Canon 532 states two traditional responsibilities of a parish pastor: he represents the parish in all juridic affairs, and he is to see to it that the goods of the parish are administered in accord with the canons. To whom do these duties fall when there is no pastor, but rather a parish pastoral leader (lay, religious, or deacon) and a priest moderator?

Juridic representation refers primarily to the person empowered to act in the name of the parish as juridic person in canon law (cc. 515.3, 118), for example, the one who can receive bequests, acquire property, or sell parish assets. This canonical authorization usually carries with it the authority to represent the parish at civil law as well, depending on the corporate structures for holding church property (e.g., corporation sole, parish corporation, or charitable trust). In short, juridic representation means the authority to transact the business of the parish, e.g., purchase property, borrow money, hire employees, or contract for services.

Administration of the temporal goods of the parish implies all of the responsibilities detailed in the canons of Book V of the *Code*, “Temporal Goods of the Church” (cc. 1254-1310), especially the section on administration of goods (cc. 1273-1289), but also the sections on acquisition of property, alienation of goods, contracts, and wills. Canon 532 draws special attention to canons 1281-1288 because they itemize the duties of administrators of church property and the conditions and limits of their authority.

Some canonical commentators think that the priest moderator, who has the “powers and faculties of a pastor,” should exercise these legal-representational and administrative roles.<sup>35</sup> This certainly one possible answer to the question that arises out of

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<sup>35</sup> John Renken, “Parishes without a Resident Pastor: Comments on Canon 517.2,” *Proceedings of the Canon Law Society of America* 50 (1988) 256-257; Pierantonio Pavanello, *Codice de Diritto Canonico Commentato* (Milano: Ancora, 2001) 462; Antonio Sánchez-Gil, *Commentario Exegético al Código de Derecho Canónico* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 1997) II/2, 1219.

the canon 517.2 situation, but it is not the only one, and, in some circumstances, not the best one.

These matters of representation in legal affairs and administration of parish property are not tied to the “power of orders,” they do not require sacramental ordination. They fall into the “exercise of the power of governance” that “lay members of the Christian faithful can cooperate in” (c. 129.2). The diocesan bishop can provide that the parish pastoral leader is authorized to perform both of these duties (c. 1279.1).<sup>36</sup>

There is no canonical reason to regard the representation and administration by a deacon, lay, or religious parish pastoral leader to be impossible or even inappropriate. The decision should be made on the basis of abilities, resources, and common sense.

### **Conclusion:**

James Provost, writing in 1997, posed the question: “Temporary Replacements or New Forms of Ministry: Lay Persons with Pastoral Care of Parishes.” He inclined toward the answer that it does “constitute a new stable form of ministry,” but he pointed out that among the as-yet-unresolved issues were the nature of the local church as Eucharistic community and the fragmentation of the ministry within it.<sup>37</sup> These are issues of radical importance, and they form a part of the contemporary experience of parish communities and those ministering within them.

The church must learn from this experience. This vital development within Roman Catholic ministry will be influenced by tradition and theology, but it will be shaped even more by what we learn from lived experience. Hence the importance of such projects as “Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership,” which is currently conducting a serious and wide-ranging study of this development in the United States, and is expected to report on it in 2008.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> James Provost, “Temporary Replacements or New Forms of Ministry,” 60; Borrás, *La Parrocchia*, 172; Sharon Euart, “Parishes without a Resident Pastor: Reflections on the Provisions and Conditions of Canon 517.2 and its Implications,” *The Jurist* 54:2 (1994) 381-383.

<sup>37</sup> *In Diversitate Unitas* (cited above in footnote 14), 67.

<sup>38</sup> A joint project funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., and in partnership with the National Association for Lay Ministry, the Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development, the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, the National Association of Diaconate Directors, the National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association, and the National Federation of Priests’ Councils. (Source for current data: [emergingmodels.org](http://emergingmodels.org))