

# A PASTOR'S TOOLBOX



# A Pastor's Toolbox

*Management Skills for Parish Leadership*

Edited by Paul A. Holmes



LITURGICAL PRESS

Collegeville, Minnesota

[www.litpress.org](http://www.litpress.org)

Cover design by Stefan Killen Design. Cover art © Thinkstock.

Unless otherwise noted, the Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version: Catholic Edition, Copyright © 1989 and 1993, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Excerpts from the English translation of Preface V of Easter from *The Roman Missal* © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Other scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the New American Bible may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Other scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible with Revised New Testament and Revised Psalms* © 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC, and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the *New American Bible* may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Excerpts from the English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for use in the United States of America copyright © 1994, United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—Libreria Editrice Vaticana. English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Modifications from the Editio Typica* copyright © 1997, United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with Permission.

Excerpts from *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition, New English Translation*, copyright © 2012, 1999, Canon Law Society of America, Washington, DC are reprinted with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of this text may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Appendix C is taken from the Statement of Purpose and Procedures of the Office of Conciliation of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul & Minneapolis and is used by permission. All rights reserved.

© 2014 by Order of Saint Benedict, Collegeville, Minnesota. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, microfilm, microfiche, mechanical recording, photocopying, translation, or by any other means, known or yet unknown, for any purpose except brief quotations in reviews, without the previous written permission of Liturgical Press, Saint John's Abbey, PO Box 7500, Collegeville, Minnesota 56321-7500. Printed in the United States of America.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9

---

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A pastor's toolbox : management skills for parish leadership / edited by Paul A. Holmes.  
pages        cm  
ISBN 978-0-8146-3808-8 — ISBN 978-0-8146-3833-0  
1. Pastoral theology—Catholic Church. 2. Christian leadership—Catholic Church.  
3. Parishes. I. Holmes, Paul A., editor of compilation.

BX1913.P348 2014  
254—dc23

2013037427

# Contents

---

Preface vii

*Thomas J. Healey*

Introduction 1

*Paul A. Holmes*

1. A Theology of Management: Why We Do What We Do 5

*Paul A. Holmes*

2. Pastoral Leadership 19

*Robert Stagg*

3. A Six-Month Game Plan 31

*Jim Lundholm-Eades*

4. Getting Started: The Parish Business Office 41

*Maria Mendoza*

5. Developing a Comprehensive Human Resources Program 50

*David Boettner*

6. Risk Management 63

*John McGovern*

7. Best Practices in Parish Internal Financial Controls 73

*Charles E. Zech*

8. Fundraising as Christian Stewardship 84

*Kerry A. Robinson*

9. Pastoring and Administering a Mission-Driven Church 93

*Jack Wall*

10. Building Councils 102  
*Dennis Corcoran*
11. Standards for Excellence 112  
*Michael Brough*
12. Parish Planning 124  
*Jim Lundholm-Eades*
13. Unity in Diversity 138  
*Arturo Chávez*
14. The Pastor and the Diocese 148  
*Franklyn Casale*
15. In Pursuit of Priestly Well-Being 161  
*Paul S. Manning*
- Appendix A: Performance Improvement Memo 171
- Appendix B: Total Compensation 172
- Appendix C: Procedures of the Office of Conciliation, Archdiocese  
of Saint Paul and Minneapolis 174
- Contributors 177

# Preface

---

Thomas J. Healey

It is both a pleasure and honor to prepare this preface to *A Pastor's Toolbox: Management Skills for Parish Leadership*. Above all, it's a chance to provide readers with some history and context around the Toolbox for Pastoral Management initiative and to thank the many committed and talented people who worked so hard to bring this first-of-its-kind program, and now its companion handbook, to life.

The idea for this handbook came to me like a bolt out of the blue—or was it the heavens?—as I sat at Mass in a Jesuit church in San Francisco about five years ago. The fact that I should have been praying is beside the point. Because we were having some problems getting the Toolbox for Pastoral Management off the ground as quickly as we wanted, I realized we were depriving many new pastors of a valuable learning opportunity. So, *why not do a book in the meantime?* Why not fill the void with a valuable resource based on Toolbox presentations that new pastors—who are the first to admit they didn't go to the seminary to learn business skills—could readily and conveniently draw on? The resource could be a sort of how-to guide designed to strengthen pastors' critical skill sets in church administration, finance, and personnel management.

Enter Fr. Paul Holmes, professor of servant leadership at Seton Hall University. A high-energy type as anyone who knows him will attest, Fr. Holmes took the book concept and prepared an exhaustive list of temporal administration topics that needed to be covered. With the creative and intellectual input of Michael Brough from the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management and Jim Lundholm-Eades, director of parish services and planning for the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, the project began to jell. The only thing missing was the

Toolbox seminars themselves to provide content. Fortunately, those sessions were soon launched, and after we had completed three weeklong, face-to-face workshops—all judged unqualified successes by everyone involved—we knew we had a green light for our book. To that end, many of the wide-ranging seminar modules were edited and adapted to the appropriate format, and earnest discussions began with Liturgical Press. The result of that process is what you now hold in your hands.

As for the umbrella Toolbox for Pastoral Management program, the story begins with Lt. Gen. James Dubik, who was in charge of accelerating the training of all the military services and police forces in Iraq and Afghanistan before retiring from the U.S. Army. Lt. Gen. Dubik decided to channel his extraordinary training experience in an entirely different direction: creating a skills-based program for new pastors that would emulate the work of the Leadership Roundtable (of which Jim is an active member) in the areas of finance, personnel, and planning.

The next step was to take that seedling to Seton Hall University, which over the past quarter-century had earned a global reputation for the continuing education of priests through its International Institute for Clergy Formation. We sat down with Msgr. Robert Sheeran, president of Seton Hall, and Kurt Borowsky, chair of Seton Hall's board of regents, to determine if their university had the resources and interest to explore an executive education program for new pastors, similar in concept to those run by many of the nation's top business schools. Msgr. Sheeran was indeed interested and asked us to check back in a month. We did and found ourselves in the company of Fr. Holmes for the first time. He came equipped with not just a rough idea for a collaborative effort but a detailed, eight-page prospectus of what the "learning outcomes"—module by module—should be and the best approach for delivering them. Providing further impetus to the project were two enthusiastic supporters: Archbishop John Myers of the Archdiocese of Newark and Bishop Arthur Serratelli of the Diocese of Paterson (who would be a speaker at our first-ever Pastor's Toolbox workshop).

Vital support came from two other outstanding leaders: Fr. Don Hummel of Newark's Office of Continuing Education of Priests and John Eriksen, then-superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Paterson. John was key in identifying faculty for the initial Toolbox for Pastoral Management. Others who provided valuable help along the way were Msgr. Jim Mahoney, vicar general in the Diocese of Paterson,

and Kerry Robinson, executive director of the Leadership Roundtable, through her consistent advice and inspiration.

We're proud that the Toolbox for Pastoral Management is now an established program, offering multiple seminars annually at locations across the country. Reviews from attendees have been uniformly excellent, and an outside assessment by Dr. Vic Klimoski of St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, was laudatory. But we're hardly resting on our laurels. We're committed to improving and fine-tuning the program to ensure it is consistent with the changing needs of new pastors, as well as the Catholic Church. The same can be said of this book. Regarding it as a dynamic project, we intend to add new chapters and revise existing ones in sync with the evolving Toolbox presentations.

Finally, I offer thanks to the people who have made this book possible. First and foremost are the individual members of our outstanding faculty who so skillfully presented their material at Toolbox sessions. A special callout is due to Geoff Boisi, founder of the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management. Many thanks to Randy Young for his superior editorial skills in adapting these presentations to book format. He was able to capture our presenters' thoughts and, at the same time, honor their words. Thanks, too, to Kelly Tedesco, Lisa Metz, and Kimberly Mailley for their hard work in organizing the myriad details of the Toolbox events. And a very special thanks, once again, to Fr. Holmes for his outstanding work in orchestrating both the handbook and the workshop components of the Toolbox for Pastoral Management. He has proven to be a very gifted, and effective, maestro.



# *Introduction*

---

*Paul A. Holmes*

Welcome to *A Pastor's Toolbox*!

It is no secret that Catholic pastors often feel overwhelmed and underprepared for the administrative rigors of their jobs. Today's parish leaders are expected to be holy and prayerful spiritual guides, great preachers, and compassionate confessors, and also to make important decisions in key areas like finance, budgeting, hiring and firing, fundraising, risk management, relationship-building, and more—often with virtually no transition or training. And with all the requisite education in philosophy and theology that seminaries must provide future pastors, in addition to all the needed formation in priestly spirituality and pastoral care, our seminaries can do little to prepare priests to deal with the difficult temporal issues pastors face.

*A Pastor's Toolbox* is designed to help fill that void. The chapters that follow contain valuable information, insights, and practical tools that pastors need in order to begin handling the complexities of parish management in the twenty-first century. Which budgeting and financial analysis competencies are key to running a strong fiscal house? What steps should your parish take to protect its assets? How do you manage the new skills essential to fundraising? Why is working seamlessly with laity so important to your long-term success? What do you need to know about hiring, evaluating, coaching, and inspiring members of your parish team? How do you deploy best practices to operate a parish effectively?

These questions and many more are candidly addressed in *A Pastor's Toolbox* by experts, both clergy and lay, with years of experience and leadership in their respective fields. With a generous grant from Lilly Endowment, both Seton Hall University and the National Leadership

## 2 *A Pastor's Toolbox*

Roundtable on Church Management have collaborated in creating a weeklong face-to-face workshop experience to address the critical issues of parish management—especially for new pastors. Offered over the last several years in various locations across the country, these fifteen presentations are now reaching a much wider audience, thanks to Liturgical Press who has published the handbook you now hold.

*A Pastor's Toolbox* begins with “A Theology of Management: Why We Do What We Do,” in which Fr. Paul Holmes sets forth the spiritual reasons for understanding the pastor’s administrative tasks as flowing from (and not antithetical to) his baptismal and ordained identity as priest, prophet, and king (essay 1). You will also read Fr. Robert Stagg’s view of a pastor’s power and authority in “Pastoral Leadership” (essay 2), noting that a pastor’s power comes from above and below, but just as important, from within. Jim Lundholm-Eades provides a handy roadmap for a pastor’s first months in his “Six-Month Game Plan,” identifying the “sanctifying” role as a necessary focus when starting out (essay 3). In addition, a new pastor must look to the day-to-day operations of his parish, so Maria Mendoza helps the pastor hit the ground running in her “Getting Started: The Parish Business Office” (essay 4).

Today’s parish leader does more than celebrate the sacraments, crucial as this is; he must also manage the parish’s human, financial, and physical resources. Fr. David Boettner writes of how to deftly manage employees and volunteers in “Developing a Comprehensive Human Resources Program” (essay 5), and John McGovern provides the details of “Risk Management” (essay 6), insisting that a pastor cannot eliminate risks to people, money, and physical plant, but he can surely minimize those risks and keep them from spinning out of control. In his “Best Practices in Parish Internal Financial Controls,” Charles Zech asserts that, while the Catholic Church is not a business, pastors do have a stewardship responsibility to employ sound business practices and tools (essay 7). And in “Fundraising as Christian Stewardship” (essay 8), Kerry Robinson describes the major obstacles that have traditionally stood in the way of effective fundraising within the church, and how infusing the task with “a palpable sense of joy, purpose, and an incredible closeness to God” can help overcome these roadblocks.

None of a pastor’s administrative tasks can be accomplished by him alone. Mission-driven institutions like the church require that the pastor find ways to partner with various people, both in and beyond the parish’s borders, inviting them to become part of the church’s mission. To this

end, Fr. Jack Wall demonstrates how to “partner with excellence” in “Pastoring and Administering a Mission-Driven Church” (essay 9). And in essay 10, Dennis Corcoran offers sage advice about the critical role of building parish and finance councils to assist the pastor in his management of the parish. Michael Brough, in “Standards for Excellence” (essay 11), explains that there are processes, policies, and structures to help pastors stay on course, presenting a collection of performance benchmarks that offer a comprehensive blueprint for a well-managed and responsibly run Catholic parish.

One of a priest’s chief tasks as pastor is pastoral planning, so Jim Lundholm-Eades provides some important tools in “Parish Planning” (essay 12). The pastor must also be savvy in handling the diverse nature of today’s parish, so Arturo Chávez provides some very helpful reminders in “Unity in Diversity” (essay 13). A ready resource exists for all pastors and Msgr. Franklyn Casale talks about making good use of them in “The Pastor and the Diocese” (essay 14). And, finally, all pastors, both those with little or no experience and those with a great deal, must attend to all these tasks, both spiritual and administrative, without losing sight of their own health. Fr. Paul Manning, in “In Pursuit of Priestly Well-Being” (essay 15), looks at the church’s ordination rite and finds indications of how to remain healthy in both mind and body.

There are, of course, many more issues facing pastors in today’s church. It is nevertheless the hope of all those who have collaborated to make *A Pastor’s Toolbox* a reality that this handbook will assist in making the pastorate a grace-filled and successful endeavor, full of blessings for the pastor himself but also for all those committed to his pastoral care!



# I

## *A Theology of Management: Why We Do What We Do*

---

*Paul A. Holmes*

In giving new pastors the skills and know-how they need to handle the complexities of church management in the twenty-first century, *A Pastor's Toolbox* is by necessity focused on what a pastor does. Here at the beginning of this handbook, I'd like to shift that natural focus to *why* a pastor does what he does. Put another way, I'd like to concentrate on a theology of management.

I believe, quite simply, there is only one goal in your work as a pastor: the *salus animarum*—the salvation of souls that was begun by Jesus Christ and continues through his church. This salvation takes several forms.

First, there is *your* salvation. You're one of those souls in the *salus animarum*. From a theological and spiritual point of view, you will be a pastor—a shepherd—of many souls, including your own.

Second, there is the salvation of your sisters and brothers—the ones who have been entrusted to your care. There is your management team, the liturgical assembly that gathers each day (especially on Sundays), and, beyond them, all your registered parishioners. And canon law asks pastors not to forget what I refer to as your “yet-to-be-registered” parishioners. In fact, canon law directs pastors “to make every effort, even with the collaboration of the Christian faithful, so that the message of the gospel comes also to those who have ceased the practice of their religion or do not profess the true faith” (c. 528 §1).

### **So, What Are We Managing?**

The fact that we're even discussing a “theology of management” might surprise a lot of people. It would have especially surprised many

bishops over a half-century ago. One particular American bishop wrote in 1948, "I observe that some pastors have arbitrarily and boldly presumed to charge the parish treasury large amounts of money paid to a lay parish secretary. This is definitely unlawful and cannot be tolerated. All secretarial work must be done by the pastors and their assistants."<sup>1</sup>

How the world—and the church—has changed! But even in a more modern context, what exactly are we hoping to manage in our roles as pastors? The answer, I believe, has three parts.

First, you will be managing *resources*. These include *human resources*, namely the time and talents of people; *material resources*, particularly your physical surroundings, also known as the "plant"; and *spiritual resources*, essentially the hopes and dreams of the people in your care.

Second, you will be managing *expectations*. This includes wrestling with weighty theological questions such as where are we coming from, where are we going to, and how are we going to get there.

And finally, you will be managing *risks*, for if we don't manage risks today, we'll be managing crises tomorrow.

## Recognizing the Roles of a Pastor

Vital to an understanding of a theology of management, I think, is a recognition of what exactly the roles, duties, and tasks of a pastor are. And I can assure you there is more than a nuance of difference among each.

### *The Six Priestly Roles*

In *The Handbook of Religion and Social Institutions*, Dean Hoge writes that as far back as the 1950s research focused on the six roles that priests play or inhabit: (1) teacher, (2) preacher, (3) priest, (4) pastor, (5) administrator, and (6) organizer.<sup>2</sup>

It's clear that any discussion about a theology of management must take into account all six roles if we are to honestly answer the question, "Why do we do what we do?" From a scriptural point of view, I think we can generally acknowledge that Jesus not only inhabited all six roles, he *modeled* them for us. Consider:

His disciples actually called him *Teacher*, and he himself told them, "You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am" (John 13:13).

Jesus was also the *preacher* par excellence, as evidenced by what he said immediately after visiting the synagogue, opening the scroll of Isaiah, and proclaiming his first (and I'd say only) liturgical homily: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). In this, he was telling the assembly that salvation was happening before their very eyes—or, more appropriately, with their very ears.

If he wasn't before, Jesus certainly was a *priest* on the Cross, offering the sacrifice of his body and blood as we do today in his memory. And, as one of the Prefaces of Easter declares, he was what we can never be: He "showed himself [to be] the Priest, the Altar, and the Lamb of sacrifice." Once again, he was the priest without equal.

Was he also a *pastor*? Of course he was. The Latin word *pastor* means shepherd, and we remember that he called himself the Good Shepherd. No finer pastor ever lived as he sought out the lost sheep and carried it home. In fact, one of the earliest images of Christ is a sculpture showing a young shepherd (pastor) carrying a lamb on his shoulders. In art and in the hearts of the earliest Christians, Jesus was a pastor (shepherd) before he was anything else.

As for the roles of *administrator* and *organizer*, St. Paul included administrator (and, I would guess, organizer) in a whole list of ministries within the church in his first letter to the Corinthians:

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. . . . Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then deeds of power, then gifts of healings, forms of assistance, *forms of leadership*, various kinds of tongues. (1 Cor 12:1, 4, 28, italics added)

Paul stops counting spiritual gifts long before he gets to the gift of administration, seeming to throw it in at the end. But this is not to discount administration as a gift of the Spirit, or to deny that it is an "appointment" in much the same way that apostles, prophets, and teachers are appointed. Miracles are in the mix, but as you'll discover, you will be expected as pastor to perform quite a number of these!

## How Many Hats Does a Pastor Wear?

Taking those six basic roles into account, what, then, would a job description of “Catholic priest” look like?

It is an interesting question—one which the authors Joseph Ippolito, Mark Latcovich, and Joyce Malyn-Smith expended a good deal of time trying to answer. As part of an assessment project they called *In Fulfillment of Their Mission: The Duties and Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest*, they developed this simple description: “A Catholic Priest [serves] the people primarily in parishes, and also in schools, hospitals, prisons, and other settings, through acts of Christian Ministry including celebrating liturgy and sacraments, education, *administration* [my emphasis] and pastoral care.”<sup>3</sup> From that baseline they developed a list of nine duties that a priest is expected to perform today as integral parts of his job: (1) he celebrates liturgy and sacraments, (2) he provides pastoral care and spiritual guidance, (3) he teaches the faith, (4) *he leads parish administration* [again, my emphasis], (5) he practices a ministry of presence with parish groups, (6) he participates in the life of the diocesan church, (7) he engages with diverse publics, (8) he engages in professional development, and (9) he engages in personal development.

Unfortunately, the priest does not get to pick and choose which of these nine duties he will perform. We are expected to perform *all* of them. It is the fourth duty, however, that I’d like to single out. When you lead the administration of a parish, you are fulfilling a major responsibility in your life as a priest and pastor. Be aware that it is not an extra duty. *It is at the core of who you are.*

To add another layer to the already complex job of being a pastor, the aforementioned assessment project found there are five essential tasks that help define the duty of “leading parish administration”:

1. Initiating strategic planning grounded in Gospel values and diocesan mission.
2. Overseeing the implementation of a strategic plan.
3. Leading the parish’s pastoral and finance councils.
4. Animating ministries, apostolates, and volunteers of the parish.
5. Overseeing the stewardship of parish finances, including budget, fundraising, and diocesan assessment.<sup>4</sup>

## The Practices of Ministry

The duties and tasks I've just described could collectively be called the "practices of ministry." They are important to know because they will consume the bulk of your time and energy as pastor. In *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* Kathleen Cahalan provides a theological basis for what we do as pastors. More specifically, she explains that ministry is but one vocation among many in the Christian community and is best identified through the practices of teaching, preaching, leading worship and prayer, pastoral care, social ministry, and administration.

Ministry is a verb, Cahalan affirms, something that people *do*. And she emphasizes that ministry is learned over time and through great practice. "The professional practice of ministry constitutes the dynamic interaction of what we know, competence in the skill to act, and the moral virtues of the person we are and are becoming," she writes. "Practice is the integration of doing, knowing, and being."<sup>5</sup>

Finally, she reminds us that God practices divine communion as three Persons in relationship. As "Trinity," God is a communion of divine relationality who made us for both relationship and communion. As such, the practices of God are meant to draw us into deeper communion with one another and the three divine Persons.

For its part, the Trinity conveys an insight that is immensely important to our ministry. All of us have been created in the image and likeness of a God who isn't only singular (God is one), but plural (God is three) as well. In other words, God doesn't have to go outside himself for intimacy, nor does he have to go beyond himself to find partners in his work.

Some students recently took a course titled "The Theology and Practice of Pastoral Ministry" as part of a Lilly Endowment grant. The students discussed the benefits of having pastors write sermons in community. What emerged from their colloquy is important to our own discussion. "It dawned upon us," the course leader recalls, "that perhaps one of the radical implications of the Trinity, the divine community that is God, is that pastors should never do anything alone, that all ministry should be done in community."<sup>6</sup>

I would suggest that one of the major implications of a "theology of management" is that none of us should be acting like a "lone ranger," or a Zeus sitting atop Mount Olympus hurling lightning bolts and issuing divine fiat. As singular creatures made in the image of a "plural" God,

we have a theological mandate to go beyond ourselves and act in community. Indeed, all ministry should be done in community.

## The Pastor as Priest, Prophet, and King

Perhaps the most theological way to understand a pastor's ministry is to remind ourselves of our baptismal identity. Ever since our baptism, we have not only been priests but prophets and kings as well. Our ordination to priesthood only served to strengthen those three faces—known collectively as the *munera Christi*—just as Christ was priest, prophet, and king.

The documents of the Second Vatican Council never tire of speaking of this tripartite identity. In *Lumen Gentium* and the decrees on bishops and the training of priests, as well as the decree on the laity, our identity as priests, prophets, and kings is continually highlighted. The Catechism picked up on this: “By ordination one is enabled to act as a representative of Christ, Head of the Church, in his triple office of priest, prophet, and king” (§1581).

As the *munera Christi* make up our identity, so do they comprise our job description and work agenda. Let's take a closer look at what I mean by that.

### *What is essential about our identity as priests?*

After only two years in my first parish, I was invited to join the staff of the Newark (New Jersey) Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, the most perfect expression of the French Gothic in the Western Hemisphere. Only the stained-glass windows at Chartres are brighter. Over the years, I came to enjoy giving tours of this most magnificent building. One of the things I recall as I spoke about the stunningly beautiful colors streaming in from those stained-glass windows was the story of a seven-year-old girl who was taking the tour of another famous church. She listened carefully to the stories of the saints pictured in the windows and, at the end of the tour, announced to her mother that she knew who the saints were. “So, who are they?” the mother asked. “They're the ones who let the light shine through,” the wise young girl replied.

This, of course, is just what priests are supposed to do. Even the word saint in Latin is *sanctus*—the word for holy. We're the ones who,

in our *munus sanctificandi*, make things holy. And in doing so, especially as pastors, we are supposed to become saints; we are supposed to endeavor to make all things, and all people, holy. That little girl I just mentioned got it just right: we're the ones who let the light—the light of Christ—shine through all we are and all we do.

*What is essential about our identity as prophets?*

Most of the theology written about the *munus propheticum* focuses on our role as preachers and teachers. But I would like to sharpen that focus a bit. To do that, I need to tell you what I know about sheep. Yes, sheep.

I was born in Newark, New Jersey, and I can assure you there weren't many sheep in my neighborhood. There wasn't even much grass. All I know about sheep I learned years later from the window washer at the North American College in Rome. His name was Achille. After noticing that he'd disappear for weeks at a time, Achille finally told me one day that he wasn't really a window washer. He was a shepherd, and he'd save up all his vacation days and take them all at once so he could return to the Abruzzi hills every few months to tend his sheep.

It turns out that everything we've heard about sheep from Jesus is true. As a shepherd, Achille would go out into the countryside and call his sheep—by their individual names—and each would come running at the sound of his voice. Achille confirmed for me a truth about sheep that underlies one of Jesus' parables. He told me that sheep hate being alone. In fact, should a lamb get separated from the flock, it will start shaking from fear, eating only the grass that grows at its feet. But once those blades of grass are gone, the sheep won't take one more step to eat, or even drink from a pool if one was nearby. It will shiver and shake—to death.

That's why Jesus insisted that a shepherd has to leave the other ninety-nine of his flock and go find the one that is lost. A good shepherd knows that a sheep on its own is a matter of life and death. This is why I think it's important to remember that the *munus docendi* may be about teaching and preaching, but it's also about *reaching*.

Indeed, reaching is what we're supposed to do through our own teaching and preaching. We're supposed to reach those who are listening to us—and more than that—we need to reach those who aren't sitting before us too (those “yet-to-be-registered” parishioners).

*What is essential about our identity as kings?*

When speaking about the *munus regendi*, it is common to speak about governance (in fact, this task of Christ is often called the *munus gubernandi*). As pastor, the governance of the parish is entrusted to your care. This requires pastors to be familiar with an astonishing range of issues, including financial, human resources, risk management, physical plant, and diversity, to name just a few.

Any theology of management today is well grounded in these tasks of governance. But I'd like to focus on another dimension of the *munus regendi*, and do so with a story.

One of my favorite works of art is Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*, a larger-than-life-size sculpture of six men in ropes and chains with disbelief, horror, and fear written on their faces. There is some fascinating history behind this iconic work of art. When England's Edward III laid siege to Calais in 1347, France's King Philip VI ordered the city to resist. The people of Calais—every man, woman, and child—fought valiantly, even to the point of starvation. And when they were finally forced to surrender, Edward was so angry that he wanted the city razed to the ground. After his privy council intervened, however, he offered to spare the city's residents if six members of Calais' town council agreed to die in their place. It was this moment—when these six defeated men appeared, with nooses around their necks—that Rodin captured in his famous sculpture.

What we don't learn from looking at the iconic work of art is that the burghers' lives were spared. England's Queen Philippa is alleged to have begged for their release, saying to her husband, "If not for love of me or our unborn child, then, please, for the love of Christ, let these men go!"

This immortal story hints at the power of kings. They can do what so few are able to do: they can grant clemency; they can let the guilty go free; they can forgive the unforgiveable. This, I feel, is the essence of the *munus regendi*—the virtue of unmitigated mercy. Why is this so important to our discussion? Because as you go about your pastoral ministry, this is the virtue that will speak the loudest about your role as king. As a pastor, you will be charged with managing—but managing in a way that flows from your baptismal and ordained identity.

### *Authenticity and the Munera Christi*

What does your baptismal and ordained identity say about your managing ability? Above all, I'm suggesting that you must be authentic. In other words, you have to be *who* you are *wherever* you are. Let me put that in the context of priest, prophet, king—with an emphasis on six skills that will come in handy as you go about your tasks of pastoral management, viz., a priest's holiness and gratitude; a prophet's truthfulness and fidelity; and a king's forgiveness and judgment.

*Priest as manager:* The symbolic locus of the priest is, of course, the altar. The person your parishioners see at the altar each day must be the same individual they meet everywhere else—over in the school, at the parish finance council, in the pastor's office. The skills (or virtues) you hone at that altar are, especially, holiness and gratitude. And applying those two skills to the five management tasks you have as pastor might look like this:

#### *Holiness*

1. Ensure that elements of strategic plan let the Light of Christ shine through.
2. Ensure that prayerfulness guides the plan's implementation.
3. Guide parish and finance council members in holiness.
4. Lead ministers and volunteers toward holiness.
5. Ensure stewardship efforts are grounded in ethical principles.

#### *Gratitude*

1. Ensure that strategic plan has a eucharistic focus.
2. Ensure that implementation expresses gratitude for everyone's gifts.
3. Express gratitude for the work of parish councils.
4. Keep all ministers and volunteers grateful for their ministry.
5. Express gratitude to contributors and donors.

*Prophet as manager:* The symbolic locus of the prophet is the pulpit. Authenticity requires that the person you are in the pulpit must be the

same individual your parishioners meet everywhere else. If we admit that the skills you hone in that pulpit are, especially, truthfulness and fidelity to the Gospel, then applying those two skills to the five management tasks you have as pastor might look like this:

### *Truthfulness*

1. Be honest about the parish's ability to reach strategic goals.
2. Keep planning participants grounded in the truth of the Gospel.
3. Guide councils in truthful reporting in both programs and finances.
4. Support all ministers in an honest appraisal of their skills and talents.
5. Ensure that the parish budget reflects mission and goals, and vice versa.

### *Fidelity*

1. Ensure that the strategic plan is faithful to Catholic teaching.
2. Encourage planning participants to deepen their faith.
3. Ensure that council agendas are faithful to parish mission.
4. Animate all ministers and volunteers in faithfulness to church and Gospel.
5. Reach out to donors and contributors with an emphasis on Gospel fidelity.

*King as manager:* Acquainted as we are with the story of Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*, we can affirm that the symbolic locus of the king is the confessional. The man in the confessional must be the same man your parishioners meet everywhere else. The skills that are honed in the confessional are, especially, forgiveness and judgment. And, if so, then applying the two skills (or virtues) of the confessional would look like this:

### *Forgiveness*

1. Ensure openness, by all, to the parish plan.
2. In overseeing implementation, be patient with all participants.

3. Guide councils' openness to all council members' gifts.
4. Gently ensure that all parish ministers and volunteers have requisite skills.
5. Cultivate donors' and contributors' responsible stewardship of the parish.

### *Judgment*

1. Exercise careful judgment about when to initiate the planning process.
2. Be careful that goals include care for the financially and spiritually poor.
3. Ensure parish's councils have proper membership and no conflicts of interest.
4. Offer ongoing formation for sacramental and program ministers.
5. Ensure that contributors and donors are mindful of Gospel values.

In sum, the virtues of holiness and gratitude, of truthfulness and fidelity, of forgiveness and judgment, are the same skills on which a strong theology of pastoral management focuses our attention.

## **Is the Parish a Factory, Family, Jungle, or Culture?**

Two experts in organizational theory, Leo Bolman and Terrence Deal, suggest that we can view our parishes in one of four different ways: as a factory, a family, a jungle, or a culture.<sup>7</sup> You might think that none of these adequately describes what a parish really is (except, perhaps, a family), but you need to be aware that you and the people you will be working with will unconsciously view the parish in one, or more, of these ways.

### *Parish as Factory*

If you, your staff, or your parishioners view the parish as similar to a *factory*, you are said to be viewing it through a *structural frame*. This view emphasizes the parish's goals, specialized roles, and formal relationships. The structures of the parish are designed to fit its environment,

and there must be a clear division of labor, rules, policies, procedures, and hierarchies. The most benign understanding of the structural frame is simple: the goal is to find a way to organize and structure groups and teams in order to get results.

*Pastor's challenge:* You need to find a way to attune structure to Gospel, mission, and goals.

*Strategy for change:* You may need to consider realigning formal roles and relationships.

But before you consider making any changes in parish structure, Bolman and Deal caution that change in any organization can (1) cause people to feel incompetent, needy, and powerless, (2) create confusion and unpredictability, (3) generate conflict, and (4) create loss.

### *Parish as Family*

If you view the parish as a *family*, you are said to be viewing it through a *human resources frame*. Your parish is like an extended family, with individual needs, feelings, prejudices, skills, and limitations. Therefore, the human resources frame focuses on how to tailor the parish to satisfy human (and spiritual) needs, and to build positive and interpersonal and group dynamics.

*Pastor's challenge:* You will need to align organizational and spiritual needs.

*Strategy for change:* Focus on training and support for your parish management team, as well as for all those collaborating with you in ministry.

### *Parish as Jungle*

If you view the parish as a *jungle*, you are said to be viewing it through a *political frame*. From this perspective, the parish serves as an arena, or contest, where different interests compete for scarce resources. And not unlike the U.S. Congress, a lot of time is spent bargaining, negotiating, compromising, and even coercing. The political frame focuses on how to cope with power and conflict, build coalitions, hone political skills, and deal with internal and external politics.

*Pastor's challenge:* You need to develop an agenda and get everyone to sign on to it.

*Strategy for change:* Establish various "arenas" for decision making.

## *Parish as Culture*

If you view the parish as a *culture*, you are said to be viewing it through a *symbolic frame*. I happen to favor this frame, since it seems best suited for what we are called upon to do as priests. The symbolic frame treats the parish as a theater or, as Bolman and Deal call it, a “temple.” This culture is created and propelled by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes and myths, and not necessarily by policies and formal authority. The symbolic frame focuses on how to shape a culture that gives purpose and meaning to work and build team spirit through ritual, ceremony, and story.

*Pastor’s challenge:* You need to create (or, at least, protect and embody) faith, beauty, and meaning.

*Strategy for change:* Remember transition rituals.

Bolman and Deal maintain that a successful organization must develop all four frames. While we may personally feel comfortable in only one of them, the ability to recognize with what frames your team members and parishioners are in sync will be an important measure of your success as a pastor.

## **A Final Thought**

I’ve focused heavily on your baptismal and ordained identities to explain how the pivotal roles of priest, prophet, and king can inform your actions as a pastor. The three symbolic locations attached to these roles—altar, pulpit, and confessional—are all familiar to us, and the people around us come to expect that we’re being authentic when they meet us at these venues.

I firmly believe that the skills and virtues we bring to each of these locations are the same ones that should guide our work as pastors. For that reason, I urge you to keep the roles of priest, prophet, and king uppermost in mind as you learn about and become acclimated to your myriad responsibilities as pastor. Never lose sight of the fact that:

Holiness and gratitude need to be staples of your pastoral demeanor. Truthfulness and fidelity will be two important measures of your success.

And, finally, forgiveness and judgment will serve as the cornerstones of your management style.

Rest assured that if you abide by these tenets, you will not only act as though you know *what* you're doing as you go about the *salus animarum*, but you will also be acting in a way that suggests you know *why* you're doing it. More than anything, that is what a theology of management should accomplish.

## Endnotes

1. Pittsburgh Bishop Hugh Boyle, qtd. in Kristen Hannum, "The Parish That Works: Business Practices for the Church," *U.S. Catholic* 76, No. 7 (July 2011): 12–13.

2. Dean R. Hoge, "Religious Leadership/Clergy," in *The Handbook of Religion and Social Institutions*, edited by Helen Rose Ebaugh (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc., 2006), 373.

3. Joseph Ippolito, Mark Latcovich, and Joyce Malyn-Smith, *In Fulfillment of Their Mission: The Duties and Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest* (Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association, 2008), 8.

4. *Ibid.*, 16.

5. Kathleen Cahalan, *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), xi.

6. Qtd. in Christian Reformed Church in North America, "Creating a Culture of Pastoral Excellence," Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Project Report, 2007. See [http://www2.crcna.org/site\\_uploads/uploads/spe/lillyannualreport\\_2006.pdf](http://www2.crcna.org/site_uploads/uploads/spe/lillyannualreport_2006.pdf), 8.

7. See Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2008), 15–16.