Pastoral Leadership in the Faith Community

The Dance of Passion and Professionalism!

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Objectives

• Anchor leadership in a theology of ministry
• Identify the shifts and challenges in ministry and leadership
• Propose three new images for leadership

Impacting Factors

• Societal influences
• Church attitudes
• Personal history/experiences

Which is it?

• What is the difference between leadership, management and administration?

Leadership
The capacity or ability to move a community through change, towards its mission and vision
Sharon Parks, Leadership Can Be Taught

Management
Management is to handle or direct with a degree of skill ... to exercise executive, administrative, and supervisory direction ... conducting ... the judicious use of means to accomplish an end.
Miriam Webster

Leadership
Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts towards accomplishing goals in a given situation.
Hershey and Blanchard
Challenges of Leadership

• "Leaders today are faced with enormous challenges, most of them not of their own doing and for which they are not prepared by their professional training…
• In this environment no leader can hope to succeed by using old-style mechanistic management …
• Attempts to lead through command and control are doomed to fail …"
  – Margaret Wheatley, Leading From the Eye of the Storm

Ministry

Ministry is a public activity performed by a person, flowing from grace, and using one’s gifts on behalf of the Church in service to the kingdom.

Thomas O’Meara

Ministry is grounded in the primary reality of Baptism (#1). This reality happens in the context of lifestyle and marketplace (#2). We can live out our baptismal commitment more directly to the community through a functional ministry based on the needs and gifts (#3) or even in a full time, professional position (#4).

Trends and Shifts

From functional approach to ministry to one that is based on the giftedness of the individual Christians.

Trends and Shifts

From a well established, hierarchical model to an unstructured, parochial approach to shared ministries.
Trends and Shifts
From the perception of full time ministers as "doers" of ministry to a vision of such persons as "enablers" of ministry.

Trends and Shifts
From a clarity of understanding of the nature and purpose of ministry to a sense of ambiguity.

Trends and Shifts
From an understanding of ministry as flowing from Holy Orders to an understanding of ministry flowing from Baptism.

Lay Ecclesial Minister
Their ecclesial service is characterized by:
- Authorization of the hierarchy to serve publicly in the local Church
- Leadership in a particular area of ministry
- Close mutual collaboration with the pastoral ministry of bishops, priests and deacons
- Preparation and formation appropriate to responsibilities

Co-Workers in The Vineyard of the Lord (2005)

Leadership as Ministry
The agenda for Christian ministry:
1. Bring the ministry of leadership back into the community
2. Recognize leadership as a plural activity in the group

James and Evelyn Whitehead

Leadership
A Person?
"I" (centered in the leader’s sense of being responsible for the life of the community, sometimes with staff, addressed through meetings and tasks)
Leadership

**A Role?**

“We” (focused on the leader and staff working together as a team to provide for the pastoral life of the faith community – assisted by parishioners)

**Our Responsibility**

**A Function?**

“Community” (Pastoral leaders see the community as a whole, with all the baptized assuming responsibility for the community of disciples)

Leadership

**Networked Leadership**

- organic, dynamic relationships
- leadership can come from anywhere in the system
- Community transcends hierarchy (pyramid is too stable for a changing world)

Two Tasks

- To nurture commitment (thrives on shared vision and shared identity)
- To foster collaboration (mobilizes the groups’ gifts, strengths and resources)

James and Evelyn Whitehead

Challenge

Ministry leaders in all settings are challenged to create opportunities for people to use their gifts in appropriate service to the community and to foster their commissioning by the community.

Pastoral Leadership

**Courageous** - lead from vision and hope

**Compassionate** - attentive to the needs of the community

**Collaborative** - calls forth the giftedness of the community - requires humility and vulnerability
Visionary Leadership

• Tolerance for complexity
• Adaptive
• Creative: pastoral leadership

Complexity: Church

• The rise of a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic community
• The rise of a networked society
• The polarization of differing ideologies
• Understanding theology, but not ministry
• The rise of a seeker generation
• And ?

Today's Leadership Challenge

Acts of leadership must move people beyond familiar settings into unknown territory of greater complexity, requiring new learning and new behaviors.

Sharon Dolaz Parks, Leadership Can Be Taught

Adaptive Leadership

Adaptive leadership
– Moves through uncharted territory
– Sees the effort as a task of the whole
– Is willing to be vulnerable (i.e. not be the one with the answers)

Adaptive versus technical leadership

Adaptive Leadership

Leading from the balcony
– sees the community as a whole,
– knows the culture, needs and longings of the community
– knows what needs to happen first, next and last to move the community toward conversion

Ronald Heifitz Leadership Without Easy Answers

Adaptive Leadership

• Think politically
  – Systems, power and authority
• Orchestrate conflict
  – move beyond leadership as providing solutions
• Give the work back
  – Responsibility shifts back to the people
• Hold steady
  – The community has the collective intelligence, resources and gifts
"Creativity is the ability to see the ordinary as extraordinary; the essence of creativity is not a technique, but an attitude; An attitude of curiosity, openness and celebration."

DeWitt Jones, Seeing the Ordinary as Extraordinary: Techniques for Unlocking Your Creative Potential

"If our prayer is the expression of a deep and grace-inspired desire for newness of life—and not the mere blind attachment to what has always been familiar and 'safe', God will act in us, and through us renew the Church by preparing in prayer what we cannot yet imagine or understand."

Thomas Merton, Contemplation in a World of Action