

Official Communiqué

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Pastoral Letter to the Priests and Deacons Pastoral Agents and Collaborating People in the Parish

PARISH SERVICE

Reflection on the future of the parish for the past three years has already led the majority of parishes to create an evangelization project and pastoral animation which permits them to continue the Church's mission with new ardour. Other parishes or sectors are working on finalizing their project: I can only encourage them to complete this important work. In most cases, the implementation of these evangelization projects calls for new agreements between parishes. It also brings out the question of service in the parish : how are we equipped to realize such ambitious projects? How to divide up the functions and the tasks of the different contributors? What is the specific role of the priest? Do we need new ministries?

Before answering these questions and proposing directions for parish service in the coming years, I think it is important to base all propositions on a unified vision of Church and to link our service to a deep spiritual and pastoral sense.

I. A VISION OF THE CHURCH

The Church begins with the Gospel. The Gospel begins with Christ. An authentic vision of the Church supposes then that we turn our eyes toward Christ and his Gospel.

1. *Eyes turned toward Christ*

We cannot be Church and serve in it without Christ : Christ who is present in the Gospel, in the liturgy, in the community, in the poor . It is He, through his Spirit, who leads us to the communion which is the Church. It is He who keeps us connected to the source which is the Father. It is in Him that we form one body (1 Cor. 10:17). The mystery of the Church does not allow for easy definition. Vatican Council II presented it by borrowing many complementary images without allowing one to take precedent over the other. There exists, however, a description of the mystery of the Church which is seldom evoked, and yet which is offered by the Constitution

Lumen Gentium. It is found in the chapter which deals with the People of God :

*All those who look with faith upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, God called and has established them as the Church, that in the eyes of everyone she might be the visible sacrament of this saving unity.*¹

To look toward Jesus with faith is the first consideration to keep in mind when we strive to be Church and to serve it. Not any kind of look, but a look of faith, with the gift of faith, a look upon Jesus who personifies humanity, humility, and salvation. Together, by looking toward Jesus with faith, our eyes meet and make unity and peace possible, for he is the *source of unity and peace*. And all of those who look with faith upon Jesus... God has called, he has made them the Church. Every member of the Church is called. Those who serve the Church are people called and sent forth. They are not the authors of the mission, they are ministers of it. God is the author of the mission. As Members of the Church, we all answer a call, a vocation. Within the large number of those called to be Church, some, a few, are called to serve in the diversity of ministries and charisms given to them. Their look at Jesus Saviour should give inspiration and meaning to their service. Jesus is the model of a servant, a shepherd, of a one who is sent. And those whom God calls, he established as the Church so that they might be... the visible sign of this saving unity. Therefore the sign is the means to unity. Our look upon Jesus, the author of salvation, leads us to become the visible sign of a salvation which is already there. It is only to the extent that together our eyes are turned toward Jesus, the author of salvation, that we can be the Church, that we can be an effective sign of salvation, that we can evangelize and bring to fruition God's plan for the world at the heart of a particular Church and even to that place in the Church which is the parish.

2. A taste for the Gospel

If the Gospel begins with Christ, the Church begins with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, simply because faith comes from the Word. What is evangelization? After three years of conferences, congresses, colloquiums and essays, the question returns periodically : What is evangelizing? How do we evangelize? It is normal for these questions to be asked. It is an indication that a simple definition of evangelization does not sufficiently evoke our commitment to the work of evangelization. The Gospel and evangelization, start with an encounter with Someone who will affect all future encounters. Jesus, the Christ, is the Good News, He is the Gospel. He is the gift of God. He is Salvation. He is the Word, God's word. Faith is our receptance of Him, our encounter with Him, the response that we give Him, our adherence to Him, our following of Him. The Gospel is at the same time the message or the teaching of Jesus. It reflects the actions, attitudes and intentions of Jesus, the welcome which is reserved for Him. The Gospel gives an account of the faith or the adherence given Him by individuals and by the first Christian communities. It is in this context of a Church that the Gospel is transmitted, understood and put into practice, an Apostolic Church, with Apostles, disciples and Christian communities. This Gospel is marked with the breath of the Spirit. The Spirit is the one who gives a taste for the Gospel. The Gospel opens us to an encounter with Jesus, to prayer, contemplation, and action in the manner of Jesus. The Gospel instructs, inspires and supports. To enter the Gospel assumes a poverty of heart, a heart open to the action of God, a listening heart.

To announce the gospel, to evangelize, is therefore to welcome it, to share it, to put it into practice in the Church. Evangelization implies a proposal of faith, of adherence to Jesus Christ; it implies building a fraternal or ecclesial relationship, it leads to living the Gospel or to putting it into practice, and finally, it leads to the celebration of the Good News in which the very gestures of Jesus are made present. We have presented elsewhere the different stages or times of

1 Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, II, 9 §3.

evangelization : the initial introduction, catechesis, ministry. I will go back to that later. Deepening these facts will allow us to implement progressively a new evangelization. The value of this evangelization will always depend on our personal and community relationship with the Gospel itself.

3. A Church in communion

Twenty years after the Vatican Council an extraordinary synod was called in Rome to evaluate how far we had come and to consider the future. The vision of Church which came out of this synod was that of communion. Reviewing the documents of Vatican II and their progressive implementation awakened better yet the Trinitarian source and the model of this communion: the Father's plan to elevate humanity to communion in his divine life; the focal point of communion in Jesus Christ come to inaugurate the Reign of God the Father on earth; and to spread this communion in the concrete life of the Church at all its levels of actualization thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit. The central idea of communion restores the unity we have sometimes had a tendency to oppose: primacy and collegiality, hierarchy and people of God, evangelization and sacramental life, tradition and creativity, teaching and experience...

Communion, however, is not an idyllic concept. It is a gift of God, it is also a project to be realized. In the fulfilment of this communion we have all experienced meeting with red tape and obstacles, resistance and disputes, sufferings and hurts. Along the way to communion, we meet people disappointed in a Church that goes too fast or disappointed in a Church that goes too slowly, people hurt by the demands of communion or by conditions required for its realization. We meet people worried about divisions, conflicting opinions and ways of acting which they witness in the Church. Communion like the Reign of God: it is already realized, but it still to come. The Church is already realized as communion yet is always becoming. That is why it fills us with hope while at the same time as it suffers from a poverty of Gospel workers to cultivate and harvest an immense field.

Communion in the Church calls for understanding and heart, obedience to the faith and the courage of discipleship. The founders of Christianity needed a loving understanding to write and transmit their documents. From century to century, pastors and theologians, mystics and witnesses of the faith have continued this deepening of the faith by developing an understanding of the mystery of God and of the mystery of the Church, while at the same time unfolding the implementation of sacramental life, the liturgy, ministries, morality, and a relationship with the world. Their goal was communion : «What we have seen and heard, we tell you also, so that you will join with us in the Fellowship that we have with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.»(1 John 1:3)

Again today , we are called to make our own the great acquisitions of loving understanding of the faith by being confronted with new challenges which constantly question our faith. Communion is a gift and a mission, an inheritance and a project. Service to this communion in the Church implies a solidarity and a sense of the responsibility which places its trust in a common knowledge of the mission and the conditions to exercise it, as well as on a like faith reflecting unity of hearts and spirits.

I would suggest to you that you reflect on Christ, the Gospel and Church communion before embarking on the question of parish service. I hope that we will never lose sight of the profound meaning of the mission entrusted to us and of the One in whose name we are sent.

II. PARISH MISSION

The general title given to this document - *Parish Service* - could give the impression that this is of concern only to people who assume responsibility within it. The parish is the subject of a mission of which God is the author. Whoever says mission says sending. We don't give ourselves a mission, we receive it. This is very much the case of the parish. Remember : *All those who look with faith upon Jesus, as the source of unity and peace, God called; he established them as the Church, so that she might be for each and all, the visible sign of this saving unity (LG II, 9§3)*. True, the parish is not the whole Church. It is in the universal Church and in the particular church which is a diocese that we find the characteristics of a Church. The decree of Vatican II on the pastoral responsibility of bishops says clearly: *The diocese, linked to its pastor and by him joined in the Holy Spirit thanks to the Gospel and the Eucharist, constitutes a particular Church in which the Church of Christ, one, holy, catholic and apostolic is truly present and acting.*²

It is interesting, for our discourse, to remember that in the three first centuries of the Church, there was no distinction between parish and diocese. The first particular Churches were the church of the city. The Acts of the Apostles witnesses to this. In them, we speak about the Church of God at Rome, at Corinth, at Thessalonica, at Smyrna, at Pergamus, etc. This particular Church was not subdivided into parishes. It was the Church of a city with its bishop-pastor. The priests attended to the bishop and were not sent into parishes. Only one community per city, only one Eucharist presided over by the bishop, that was the image of the particular church of the first centuries. It not until the fourth century with the Occidental increase in the number of Christians, that "instead of multiplying the number of episcopal communities, they chose to entrust the direction of new communities, under the bishop's authority, to one of the priests who attended the bishop and concelebrated with him."³ It was thus that progressively the diocese became chequered into parishes, which were therefore connected to the mission of a particular Church. The parish is at the service of the mission entrusted to the diocesan Church, but without consuming it.

In fact, we can easily understand that a parish does not encompass the movements, associations, members of institutes of consecrated life, theological resources, pastoral services, missionary personnel, commitments in the world which are necessary to a diocesan Church and its mission. The parish must be able to offer, however, what is essential to become a Christian and to be a local Church. The essential is not the minimum, but everything necessary to ensure the transmission and development of the faith, so that it will be celebrated worthily and productively, shared and radiated in the world, and more immediately in the place where the parish is located. The parish needs viability and vitality to accomplish its mission. That is why the bishop has the responsibility of modifying it, or closing parishes or joining them to other parishes so that they might accomplish their mission. The bishop has, above all, the duty to give the parish every means possible, especially by promoting alliances with other parishes in the same sector. Having said that, we must now explain the parish's mission.

A three-pronged mission

2 Vatican II, *Christus Dominus* Decree on the pastoral responsibility of Bishops, II, 11.

3 BORRAS, Alphonse. *Les communautés paroissiales (Parish Communities)*. Paris, Cerf, 1966, p. 16. For a more detailed history of the parish, see André CHARRON in : *La paroisse en éclats*. Montreal, Novalis, coll. Théologies pratiques, 1995. pp. 13-39.

Every time Vatican Council II explained the mission of bishops, priests and the laity in the Church, it did so in reference to the triple messianic function of Christ, Prophet, Priest and King. Before explaining how each participates in this triple messianic function, the same Council makes us understand that it is first the whole Church which receives this prophetic, priestly and kingly mission.⁴

1. The prophetic duty of the parish community : to welcome, live and transmit the Good News

Christ Jesus is the first evangelizer : «I must preach the good news (the Gospel) of the Kingdom of God, because that is what God sent me to do» (Luke 4:43). This mission which Jesus receives from the Father, he entrusts to the Twelve : «Go to the whole world and preach the Gospel to all mankind» (Mark 16:15). As Pope Paul VI reminded us : «The command given to the Twelve (...) also applies to all Christians, though in a different way».⁵ Quoting different passages from Vatican II, Paul VI reminds us that it is the whole Church which has the mission to evangelize : «By a divine mandate, it is incumbent upon the Church to preach the Gospel to every creature»,⁶; «the whole Church is missionary ; the work of evangelization is a fundamental duty of the People of God»⁷. In the sixth chapter of the same Exhortation, Paul VI touches on the specific responsibilities of each of the evangelization workers : the successor of Peter, the bishops and priests, religious, the laity, families, young people, and the various ministers.

This evangelizing duty begins by listening to the Word : «Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how can they call on him if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not preached? And how can the message be preached, if the messengers are not sent out?» (Rom. 10: 14-15) This is how the evangelizing community is born : «Those who welcome with sincerity the Good News, by the strength of this welcome and the sharing of faith, join together in the name of Jesus to search for the Kingdom, to build it and to live it. They form a community which is an evangelizer in its turn. As an Evangelizer, the Church begins by evangelizing itself (...). It needs to hear constantly what it must believe (...). That means, in a word, that it always needs to be evangelized, if it wants to keep its freshness, enthusiasm and strength to evangelize».⁸

Evangelization, we know, is also preaching Jesus Christ, who himself came to preach the Kingdom of God and to bring it to fruition : it is teaching, proclaiming, but it is also witnessing life according to the Gospel, putting the Gospel into practice in the world in which we evolve; it is the celebration of this Gospel; it is an ecclesial work, a work of communion.

To welcome, live and transmit the Good News implies also denouncing what is opposed to it and discerning the signs of the times, that is whatever can favour the acceptance and recommendation of the Gospel, whatever in contemporary culture can be favourable ground for the Good News to be welcomed, take root, develop and bear fruit.

4 The biblical basis of this triple function designates the People of God as a priestly and kingly people: 1P 2, 9-15; Ap 1,6,5,10. The text of the first epistle of Peter is a baptismal catechesis which applies then to all the baptized and which gives an account of the radical newness of the members of the People of God.

5 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* on the evangelization of the modern world, (E.N.) no. 13.

6 Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae* on religious freedom, no. 13 (see also LG, no. 5).

7 Decree *Ad Gentes* on the missionary activity of the Church, no. 35.

8 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 15.

In what way will this Good News be transmitted? We already know the times of this evangelization: the introductory preaching (also designated as missionary activity), catechetics, pastoral ministry. More specifically, «The Evangelization process is (...) organized in stages or in 'essential times' : missionary activity (introductory preaching or new evangelization) for unbelievers or for those who live in religious indifference; the activity of catechetical initiation for those who choose the Gospel and for those who need to complete or restructure their initiation : and pastoral action for the faithful Christians having already reached maturity within the Christian community. These times are not final stages : they have to be repeated, if necessary, to see that they bring the evangelical nourishment best adapted to the spiritual growth of each person or the community itself».⁹

For each of these times of evangelization, I will explain for whom it is intended and how it is achieved.

A) The first introduction

For whom is it intended?

The first introduction is intended for unbelievers and for the baptized of all ages who have distanced themselves from the faith, who live a life far from Christ and his Gospel. For these baptized people, it is a new evangelization; for unbelievers, it is a missionary activity. For all, it is a call to conversion, an encounter with Jesus Christ and his Gospel.

How do I achieve it?

By words and by gestures : by charity lived according to the Gospel, by the search for justice and peace, by the sense of service and of pardon, we are already entering the work of evangelization; by the witnessing to the new way of being and living as a Christian. We evangelize by the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, by saying in whose name we are acting, by accounting for the hope which inspires us.

B) Catechetics

Catechetics is an organized, systematic formation of the faith. More than a teaching (it is also that), it is learning the whole Christian life which permits an authentic life in the footsteps of Christ, focused on him as a person. It is an essential basic formation centered on the core of Christian experience, on the certainty of faith, on the most fundamental evangelical values.¹⁰ It is made up of six dimensions : 1) knowledge of the faith; 2) liturgical life; 3) moral formation; 4) prayer; 5) belonging to a community; 6) the missionary spirit. «If catechetics neglects one of these dimensions, Christian life will not reach its full development».¹¹

For whom is it intended?

For those who choose the Gospel and who need to complete or restructure their initiation, for those who are returning to walk in the footsteps of Christ. This catechetics then, is intended for

9 Congregation for the Clergy, *General Catechetics Directory*, Rome, 1996. P. 51, no. 49.

10 *Ibid.* p. 70, no. 67

11 *Ibid.* p. 92, no. 87

catechumens, for children and young people, but also for adults. It should be linked with the procedures of Christian initiation.

How is it achieved?

By initiating to the faith and to Christian life those who become converted to Jesus Christ and by integrating them into the Christian community.

C) Pastoral activity

The pastoral activity of the Church aims at the constant development of the gift of communion and of mission in the faithful through continuing education of the faith, the sacraments and the practice of charity.

For whom is it intended ?

For the faithful already gathered together, for faithful Christians who have already reached maturity of the faith within the Christian community.

How is it achieved ?

By a continuing education of the faith; by the celebration of the faith in the sacraments; by formation in the practice of charity and in commitment within the world; by the development of fraternal ties in the community; by the development of a missionary sense which makes the community in each of its members, an evangelistic community.

2. The priestly function of the Parish community: to offer itself to the service of God and our brothers and sisters.

This priestly function belongs to the whole People of God. Concretely, it is in the Parish that it is practiced. It is the function of the priestly people which thus participates in the priesthood of Christ. It is Baptism that gives us participation in the priesthood, what allows the baptized to continue Christ's mission. Any other participation in the priesthood of Christ is but the development of this fundamental integration. The Constitution *Lumen Gentium* in its chapter on the People of God, explains the meaning and the scope of this common priesthood¹² for all the faithful.¹³ Basing itself solely on the New Testament, the Constitution provides the four distinct elements of a common priesthood¹⁴: 1) the faithful offer spiritual sacrifices and offer themselves, which indicates that they are «celebrants» and not only users or beneficiaries; 2) the common priesthood makes the baptized witnesses, called to defend and to spread the faith; 3) the common sacrifice leads the baptized to unite themselves to the offering that Christ makes of himself on the cross and thus manifests the sacrificial dimension of the entire priesthood; 4) finally the priestly function is expressed finally in an effective, active charity.

12 It is the common priesthood (for all the faithful) and not the priesthood of the laity as we sometimes say in an erroneous way.

13 Constitution *Lumen Gentium* on the Church, II, 11.

14 The priestly vocabulary never refers to the minister in the New Testament, but always to Christ, to the community, to members of the community.

The rest of the Constitution on the common priesthood of the faithful reviews each of the sacraments emphasizing in what way it commits the life of each and of all the People of God. It is the common priesthood. Which leads to a sacramental life. In other words, it is not only the act of worship but the sacramental life which permits the priestly function to be practiced. The Parish community, like the priestly community, seems therefore the one which, in the liturgy, in the concrete life of its members, in conjugal, family and social life, is called to be actively responsible for its life of faith and for its diffusion.

The priestly function is also sometimes designated as the function of sanctification. Here again, we remember with chapter five of *Lumen Gentium*, that the call to sanctity is universal, that sanctity is life in communion with God and that it leads to communion with our brothers and sisters.¹⁵

3. The kingly function of the Parish community: to bring about God's project in the heart of the world.

Christ the Lord has made a new people «a kingdom (...) for God his Father» (Ap. 1, 6 and 5, 9-10. This kingdom¹⁶ is the subject of the Good News which Jesus came to announce and to bring about. It is part of the mission of the Church to announce it and bring it about. It is therefore the whole People of God who receive the mission to work to make the Kingdom of God come. In what does this condition and this kingly function consist? : «The condition of the people is the dignity and freedom of sons of God (...). Its law is the new commandment to love as Christ loved us. Its destiny is the Reign of God, inaugurated on earth (...) this people (...) represent the whole human race, the strongest seed of unity, hope and salvation».¹⁷ In chapter IV of *Lumen Gentium*, the Constitution goes back to the preface of the feast of Christ the King to describe the Reign of God in whose service all the faithful are consecrated : «reign of truth and of life, reign of holiness and of grace, reign of justice, love, peace, reign where creation itself would be set free from its slavery to decay to share the glorious freedom of the children of God» (Rom, 8: 21)¹⁸.

The elements of the kingly function of the People of God evoked in the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* are the same as those which are developed in the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* on the Church in the world today. They correspond to what we ourselves designate as the commitment of the Church at the heart of the world.

The first words which describe the kingly function of the People of God are spiritual freedom (or obtained by the Spirit). This saving freedom is freedom from evil, but it is also what allows the faithful to guide their brothers, here and now, until the reign of God. This freedom involves the Parish community in the world to make living conditions acceptable, to evangelize culture, to promote justice, to develop solidarity. This kingly function of the Parish community aims finally at creating unity between humans, all that endangers unity belonging to the reign of evil and not to the reign of God. The kingly function finds its final realization in unity and harmony on the

15 For a deeper understanding of the common priesthood, consult Mgr. E.J. DE SMET, *Le sacerdoce des fidèles in L'Eglise du Vatican II*, vol. 2, pp. 402ff. Paris, Cerf, 1966.

16 «The Kingdom of God is the presence of God himself among men, an active, stimulating, saving presence to the extent that it is welcomed and accepted.» E. SCHILLEBEECKX, *l'histoire des hommes, récit de Dieu*, Paris, Cerf, 1992. p. 180. The General Directory for Catechetics, pp. 110-115., explains the different dimensions of it.

17 Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*. LG II, 9§3.

18 *Ibid.* IV, no. 36.

personal, community, family and at the social, private and public, national and international levels.

Like the prophetic and priestly function, the people of God, in exercising their kingly function, become a sign of salvation, an instrument of solidarity, a sign and means of unity with God and of the unity of the whole human race, from the concrete place which is the Parish community.

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This triple participation in the messianic function of Christ, prophet, priest and king, being practiced at the level of the universal Church and the diocesan community, finds its usual, daily expression in the Parish Christian community. The gifts, charisms and ministries are given to it so that the community can achieve its mission. Now, we have to develop the ways which the People of God can and should be organized to accomplish their mission.

III. THE PARISH PASTORAL TEAM

In the first two parts of this document, we spoke of the Church and its mission without distinguishing the different components of the People of God. I wanted to emphasize what is common to all members of the Church and to point out that all are responsible for its mission. That is one of the important aspects of the new awareness that the Church gained of itself with Vatican Council II. However, so that the whole community would practice the mission entrusted to it, God provided it with gifts, charisms, and ministries which the New Testament talks about and which were rapidly organized and defined very early in the primitive Church. It was thus that at all levels of actualization, universal, diocesan, and Parish that the Church was established organically and that the ordained ministers distinguished themselves as a service. The believing community practised the triple mission presented above. The ordained ministers did not exhaust, however, the gifts and charisms granted to the Church for it to accomplish its mission. That is why at the level of the local Church, which is the Parish, we will talk about the Parish team to designate the group of people called to facilitate the implementation of the Church's mission locally.

The triple ecclesial function practised by ordained ministers

The Church, the People of God, in all its degrees of actualization is established hierarchically¹⁹ or organically. It signifies through the ordained minister, that it is grace, that it is of divine initiative, that it receives itself constantly from God. That is signified in the implementation of the three functions which we presented above: the prophetic, priestly and kingly function.

Prophetic function and teaching

In dealing with the responsibility characteristic of ordained ministers within the prophetic function of the Church, the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* stresses how important it is that union exist between the bishop and the Roman Pontiff just as it should exist between priests and their bishop in their function as teachers : «Bishops teaching in communion with the Roman Pontiff, are to be respected by all as witnesses of divine and Catholic truth. In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent of soul. This religious submission of will and of mind must be shown in a special way to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff» (LG III, 25) And further on, «Priests, informed cooperators with the episcopal order are its aids and instruments called to serve the People of God. They constitute one priesthood with their bishop, but with different functions. Associated with their bishop in a spirit of trust and generosity, priests make him present in a certain sense in the individual, local congregations of the faithful, and take upon themselves his duties and concerns, discharging them with daily care». (LG, 28)

The same communion is required of deacons who are called «to serve in the ministry of the liturgy, of the word and of charity, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests» (LG 29). It is then in a perspective of communion, and to be of service to the communion of the Church that

19 «Etymologically, the word *hierarchy* means «sacred origin» or «sacred principle». Theologically speaking, it designates first the Trinitarian origin of ecclesial communion. Legally speaking, it designates the hierarchical order existing in the communion so that in a permanent way it is received totally from God by means of the powers which Christ entrusted to his Church through the Twelve». Ministers Committee of the AEQ. *New Ministerial Practices*, Fides, Saint-Laurent, 1993, p. 154, note 8.

ordained ministers are entrusted the duty of teaching, which is always considered the first duty of their ministry. Each one according to the responsibility confided to him, is called to be the sign of fidelity to the teaching of Christ and the apostles.

Priestly function and presiding of the liturgy

Ordained ministers take part in the priestly function of the Church as dispensers of the mystery of grace for the sanctification of the faithful. It is in presiding over the sacraments and especially in presiding at the Eucharist that this sanctification takes effect and that the Church is established one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic. In this perspective, «the bishops are the principal dispensers of the mysteries of God, just as they are the organizers, promoters, and guardians of the entire liturgical life in the Church committed to them».²⁰ On the other hand, «Through the ministry of the bishop, God consecrates priests who participate in a special way in the priesthood of Christ. They function in sacred celebrations, as ministers of Him, who by His Spirit, exercises His priestly functions in the liturgy for us without ceasing.»²¹

Kingly function and pastorate

As for the way in which ordained ministers practice the kingly function, the Council characterizes it by words which mean that they practice according to the vision of the Reign of God, a role of government, of regency, of direction, but always like servants. They are called to guide, to lead, to be pastors. In all the texts which deal with the kingly function of ordained ministers, it is always the pastoral function which is emphasized, a vision of the building of the Church.²²

Participation of the laity in the Church's mission

On the other hand, «(pastors) know how much the laity contribute to the welfare of the entire Church. They also know that they themselves were not meant by Christ to shoulder alone the entire saving mission of the Church regarding the world. It is their noble duty to shepherd the faithful and recognize their ministries and charisms that each one according to their proper roles may cooperate in the common undertaking with one heart».²³

This conciliar teaching was taken up again by Pope Paul VI and by Pope John Paul II. Pope Paul VI, after having stressed the importance of the active presence of the laity in temporal realities, affirmed : «The laity can also feel called or be called to collaborate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for its growth and life, practicing very diversified ministries according to the grace and the charisms that the Lord wishes to place in them. It is not without privately experiencing a great joy that we see a legion of pastors, religious and lay people, infatuated with their evangelising mission. They search for even more adapted ways of preaching the Gospel effectively. We encourage openness , in this line and with this concern which the Church perfects today. First openness to reflection , then to the ecclesial ministers able to rejuvenate reinforce their own evangelizing dynamism. It is certain that next to some ordained ministers the Church recognizes the place of unordained ministers who are capable of ensuring a special service to the church, some of whom are placed in the ranks of pastors and

20 Decree *Christus Dominus* on The Pastoral Responsibility of Bishops, II, 15, § 1.

21 Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis* on the Ministry and the Life of Priests, II, 5, § 1.

22 «If some among the faithful are appointed ordained ministers, *it is so that all the faithful might grow in the unity of one Body*». That is the purpose of the ordained minister according to the study made by Rémi PARENT of no. 2 of *Presbyterorum Ordinis* in : *Prêtres et évêques. The service of ecclesial presiding*. Paris, Cerf, 1992, pp. 133-136.

23 Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, IV, 30.

devote themselves in a special manner to the service of the community»²⁴

Pope John Paul II speaks in the same way : «Pastors (...) should recognize and promote the ministries, offices and functions of the faithful laity, offices and functions which have their sacramental basis in Baptism and Confirmation, and furthermore, for many among them in Marriage... In addition, when necessity and utility requires it, pastors should according to the norms established by universal right, entrust to lay people certain offices and certain functions which while connected to their own ministry as pastors, do not require the characteristic of orders (...). We must remark, however, that the practice of such a function does not make a faithful lay person a pastor...»²⁵ In his latest Apostolic Letter, John Paul II comes back to this question : «Beside the ordained minister, other ministers, appointed or simply recognized, can flourish to the benefit of the whole community, supporting it in its many needs : from catechetics to liturgical animation, from education of the young to the most diverse expressions of charity.»²⁶

Vatican Council II and the Synods which followed it have therefore recognized the importance of the collaboration of lay people in the service of the Church and most especially in Parish service. What is affirmed in these theological and pastoral documents is also found expressed in the law of the Church and consigned to the Code of Canon Law. «So that parishes might be real Christian communities, wrote John Paul II, local authorities should favour adapting Parish structures with the great flexibility granted by Canon law, especially in promoting the participation of the laity in pastoral responsibilities...»²⁷ For, the Code of Canon Law in dealing with the traditional form of parishes, and echoing LG IV 30 affirms the principle of collaboration : the pastor does not exercise alone the pastoral responsibility entrusted to him ; other people participate in this exercise of pastoral responsibility, notably, the faithful laity.²⁸ This collaboration can take the form of a presbyterial collaboration «when the pastoral responsibility of a parish or of many parishes can be entrusted in solidarity to many priests. on condition, however, that one of them be named moderator of the exercise of pastoral responsibility, that is, that he will direct the common activity and will answer for it to the Bishop.»²⁹

Canon 517 § 2 to which we refer most often should be read in light of the preceding canon. It reads as follows: If for reason of the lack of priests, the Bishop of the diocese might believe that the participation in the exercise of a pastoral responsibility should be entrusted to a deacon or another person not of presbyteral orders or to a community of persons there must include a priest to provide the priestly powers and faculties, a moderator of the pastoral responsibility.

Throughout these passages two principals are affirmed: the impossibility of alienating the role of an ordained minister in a parish and the participation of the laity in the exercise of the pastoral responsibility in a parish.

24 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 73.

25 John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* on the vocation and the mission of the laity in the Church and in the world, Rome, 1988. No. 23.

26 John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* at the end of the Great Jubilee of the year 2000. Rome, 2001, no. 46.

27 *Christifideles Laici*, no. 26.

28 Code of Canon Law (CJC), canon 519.

29 *Ibid*, Canon 517§ 1. This canon is important to take into consideration because it provides explanations of language which are applied in the following paragraph thus, the word moderator of the practice of the of pastoral responsibility is defined as the one who «will direct the common activity and will answer for it to the bishop».

The Instituting of a Pastoral Team

The form that the previous principles take in our diocese is translated in the institution of a Pastoral Team in a parish. This way of exercising the pastoral responsibility in a parish was proposed and put into practise in 1985.³⁰ It was encouraged with a renewed persistence in 1994.³¹ To prove this affirmation Bishop Hubert presented a document : «From now on we work as team». It is time to recognize with satisfaction that this working in teams is greatly spread. It has become the most common form of service to a parish.

Today, seven years after the last document, we bring other precisions to the pastoral team. These are the reasons.

In the first place, the fact that priests and co-ordinators are called to work in more than one parish or in parishes made up of many Christian communities requires anew application of pastoral teams.

The multiplication of co-ordinators and the decrease in the number of priests calls for a greater precision of their function and specific tasks and the connections between the ministry of co-ordination and the ministry of priest.

Putting the projects of evangelisation and pastoral animation into practice necessitates a redevelopment of ministries within the pastoral team.

The documents of 1985 and 1984 on pastoral teams uses language not usually evoked that due to new experiences has given rise to diverse interpretations and ways of experiencing pastoral teams. It seems to me to be important to review so we can ensure a better communion in the teams and in the parish communities themselves.

But, the determining factor of the present document resides in the fact that I wish to institute pastoral teams as the norm of service to a parish. Also, it is important to establish a number of precisions that will serve as norms or reference in our church.

30 Service to the Pastoral Community, Mandated Pastoral Team, Longueuil, September 1985.

31 Diocese of Saint- Jean-Longueuil, Mandated Pastoral Teams In A Parish, Longueuil, February 1994.

Description of a Pastoral Team

The pastoral team in a parish has designated priests and mandated pastoral agents³² who participate each according to the ministries that is entrusted to them for the direction of the Christian community for which they received the mandate. It is evident that the service of the parish must be able to count on many other collaborating persons volunteers for the most part. These persons do not receive a mandate from the Bishop. The mandate is given to the persons who exercise a role or function in connection with the ministry of President entrusted to a parish priest or moderator of the pastoral responsibility.

Various Forms of Pastoral Teams

The pastoral team in a parish can take many forms. It could be composed of the parish priest, a priest collaborator and pastoral agents. The parish priest exercises the function of co-ordinator of parish activities. Also, a parish team could consist of a priest moderator of the pastoral responsibility, a person as co-ordinator of parish activities, especially when the team works in several parishes or when a parish is made up of several Christian communities, including other necessary pastoral agents to fulfill the mission of the parish. When estimated necessary or useful to the pastoral responsibility plan, the Bishop designates a moderator of the pastoral rather than a parish priest. (voir Canon 517). A moderator is designated when pastoral agents have important specific responsibilities to exercise the pastoral responsibility especially when one of them assumes the function of co-ordination.

Mandated Members of the Team

We have mentioned that the present document does not address mandated pastoral teams. The reason is that is people who are mandated for specific functions. A pastoral mandate is given to a physical person not a moral or legal person. On the other hand, when people are mandated they are called to work in a pastoral team. Strictly speaking, we need to speak about instituted pastoral teams.³³ This precision would also wish to emphasize the fundamental equality between team members without blotting out the difference that derive from the pastoral responsibility of the priest or moderator. The same applies to responsibilities entrusted to the co-ordination of pastoral activities. The pastoral team is a place of organic communion that realizes in its own way the communion, which is the whole church.

The Pastoral Responsibility

The different documents that we have cited or evoked permits us to affirm the participation of the pastoral agents in the exertion of the pastoral responsibility. The pastoral responsibility, in the strictest sense, belongs to the pastor. The expression «Pastoral Responsibility» is a legal and theological expression reserved for those whom, by nature of their Episcopal or presbyteral ordination represent sacramentally Christ and Pastor and attests to the diversified action of the Holy Spirit.³⁴ We speak of the full pastoral responsibility to denote their functions that are characterised within the three functions entrusted to the whole people of God. This pastoral responsibility is entrusted to the parish priest or moderator which makes him the president of the

32 The description of pastoral agents is furnished in «Les nouvelles pratiques ministerielles, p. 28. They are designated by the expression lay agents or religious not ordained. It is not appropriate to speak of unordained agents. Rather, we speak of priests and mandated pastoral agents.

33 To speak of the institution of a pastoral team signifies giving it a permanent character, the sort that even if members change, the team remains and the members follow in solidarity the mission entrusted to them.

34 Borrás, Alphonse ; op. cit. p. 193.

community. The other agents participate in the exercise of the pastoral responsibility in the way they find themselves associated with the pastoral direction of the community, each according to the mandate entrusted to them.

Members of the Pastoral Team

The function of the parish priest or moderator of the Pastoral Responsibility.

We have already said, the parish priest or the moderator presides over the parish community in the name of Christ. In midst of the team or community, he is the sign of the apostolicity of the community. In other words, he is called to guarantee that the teaching, sacramental truth, liturgy and pastoral orientation of the community conforms with the whole church. He witnesses to the initiative of God at the heart of the team and for the parish community : the Church. The Word and the sacraments are gifts of God which we receive. The parish community is an hierarchal community in the sense we have expressed above. Her communion with the Diocesan Church and the Universal Church is signified by the ministry of her pastors as well as in the beginning of the church. In annex you will find deliberate precisions on the ministry of moderator of a pastoral responsibility.

At the heart of the pastoral team, the pastor is not chaplain of an association that has its proper consistence without him. Neither is he like the priest who is called to render services like in a hospital or school. He presides at the heart of the pastoral team and for the parish to put into effect the three functions essential for the vitality of parish church.

The co-ordinator of Parish Activities

The decrease of priests and the complexity of tasks to be assumed for a parish to fulfill its mission called us to create a ministry of co-ordination of parish activities. this function is closely associate to that of pastor of a community. today, this function must take into consideration an elaboration, constant updating and the putting into action the animation and evangelization project of the community. The co-ordinator plays a principal role in the distribution of tasks within the pastoral team and in the harmonious articulation of all those who intervene in the good functioning of a parish or group of parishes. Besides carrying the responsibility of administration, the function of a co-ordinator consists of being a support for each team member and must ensure that all dimensions of communion and the mission are taken into consideration. We will find in the deliberate provisions on the ministry of co-ordination and its antiquation with the function of moderator of a pastoral responsibility.

The Other Members of the Pastoral Team

We must consider the mission entrusted to the parish according to the three functions of the people of God, and also think of the important number of people distanced from the faith and life of the Church. It is evident that we must be able to count on well formed pastoral agents who will be able to take on a principal responsibility in the work of evangelization in development of sacramental life and in the support of Christians involved at the heart of the world. Their ministry is essential as well near the children, youth, families and adults. Far from replacing volunteer collaborators they must call forth and guide their participation in this common work.

To honour the three functions devoted to a parish it is necessary to assure at least one person to assume the responsibility of catechetics in the parish. One person should assume the

responsibility for the catechumenate and Christian Initiation. We should also entrust an agent with all that concerns social and charitable ministry. It is possible that a parish is unable to afford this personnel. It is then necessary that two or several parishes share the agents they need to assume these responsibilities. This is also the case for youth ministry and faith education of adults.

The proper presbyteral service could be assured with difficulty by one priest in a parish that consists of more than one community or in a pastoral unit. We must then call upon priest collaborators, when ever possible to assume the facilities of a vicar.

Animation of Communities

Two situations could require that someone be designated as an animator of the community. When a pastoral unit or regrouping of two or more parishes it might be fitting that besides the parish priest or moderator and co-ordinator of pastoral activities another person be named as the animator of the community to ensure a permanent ministry in one or the other of the parishes. The same possibility occurs when a larger parish consists of two or more communities. The attached documents in Animation of Christian Communities and Pastoral Units has the required provisions on this subject.

Ordinary and Extraordinary Ministers

Ordinary ministers are those who act in virtue of their ordination and the jurisdiction they give to a Bishop. Extraordinary ministers are those whom by reason of the absence or impediment of an ordinary minister require a personal specific mandate which authorizes them to act in determined circumstances. Concretely, in our diocese a certain number of persons are able to act as extraordinary ministers of baptism and preaching. Their ministry and way of preaching is found in two documents we refer to.³⁵

Reorganised Ministries

Next to ordinary and extraordinary ministries there is a place for recognised ministries. These consist of functions essential to the viability of the parish. These ministries sanctioned by the bishop are well identified and carry a specific duration. Up until now, the functions exercised by pastoral agents are considered as ministries in the larger sense even though they are a participation in the exercise of a pastoral responsibility.

The formal recognition of these ministries is a means of precisioning the field of activity of agents in the service of a parish and in accord with neighbouring dioceses.

Pastoral Team and Parish Council

As we have said above, the pastoral team in a parish is situated in the order of the pastoral direction of a parish. The team is responsible for the implementation of evangelisation and

35 Jacques BERTHELET, *The Extraordinary Minister of Baptism. Pastoral Orientations and Guidelines*. Official Communiqué 5, Longueuil, September 1999. Bernard HUBERT, *La faculté de prêcher pour les agents de pastorale laïques. Directives épiscopales pour le diocèse de Saint-Jean-Longueuil*, 1992. (At the present time, this document is available in French only).

pastoral activity. The pastoral team does not eliminate the pastoral parish council³⁶ that represents the parish community and is responsible for «maintaining council» of discerning evangelical conformity of its life and witness. The parish pastoral council constitutes a privileged place of exercising synodality and allowing the community to continually have a say through the members of the parish pastoral council. I greatly wish that these councils will recover where possible the place where they can begin again in the heart of the parish and that their articulation with the pastoral team and other suitable interventions will be better defined favouring the implementations of evangelisation projects and the pastoral animation of the parishes.

Pastoral Teams and Fabriques

Among the persons who play an important role in pursuit of the mission of parishes are the president of the Fabrique and the wardens. The administration of the Fabrique entrusted to them is wholly oriented toward the realization of the mission of the parish. It is extremely important to establish harmonious and constructive relations between the Fabrique members and the pastoral team and especially among the members of the Fabrique, the pastor and the co-ordinator of parish activities. The multiplication of Fabrique presidents favours the vision of these connections.

36 In a good number of parishes we speak rather of Pastoral Orientation Council. Note the importance of the use of the word council. We will soon prepare a document on this subject.

CONCLUSION

The present document has attempted to situate the service of the parish in the dynamic of evangelisation and pastoral animation of our church. It remains a working document to be perfected but is offered as a norm or point of reference for the implementation and development of pastoral teams in our diocese. I ask, therefore, that the documents published in the parish and information that we will furnish be in harmony with the present document and that the latter put into practice with the same sense of church that inspired it.

The service of the parish demands indeed that the members of the team be united with each other and the Bishop by a profound spiritual communion. Thus pastoral service can not be fruitful except in this communion.

As pastor of the church at Saint Jean-Longueuil, I give thanks to the Lord for the gifts He has given, ordained ministers and pastoral agents capable of giving a new breath to the work of evangelization entrusted to us. I pray to him, insistently, to keep us in the communion of the Church, in the joy of the work of the Gospel and in the friendship of Jesus the Christ.

Given at Longueuil, April 15, 2001, on the Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord.

□ Jacques Berthelet, C.S.V.
Bishop of Saint-Jean-Longueuil

Jean-Pierre Camerlain, priest
Chancellor

Annex 1

THE PASTORAL UNIT

In a context where the Parish Christian Communities are brought into a reflection of their mission and able to articulate and elaborate evangelisation and animation projects the necessity to discern appropriate adjustments to implement the mission ineluctably presents themselves. These adjustments principally touch on the regrouping of parishes or the inter-parish planning to be realized to obtain this goal.

Three options present themselves. The first consists in putting in place concentrations and collaborations with neighbouring parishes. This option does not demand legislative disposition or particular administration. A second option consists of setting up a new parish from existing parishes. This option necessitates judicial dispositions so far as civil law as well as those of ecclesial laws. A third option is also offered. It is possible to create a new unit that we generally call a pastoral unity, which regroups several parishes without ending their judicial existence. This last reality is what we will treat in this document. What is said here of pastoral unity must be situated in a larger context. For this reason it is fitting to refer to the official document of Bishop Jacques Berthelet, c.s.v., on « Service to the Parish » and to complimentary documents describing the profiles of the position of priest moderator, co-ordinator and the pastoral animator of a community. A document on the Pastoral Council is forth coming to complete this ensemble.

What Is a Pastoral Unit

1. Definition

A pastoral unit is defined as the regrouping of several parishes, having a geographic proximity instituted by the Bishop, endowed with a method of organization and planned collaboration, permanent and regular, to assure together, on a determined territory and thanks to the pastoral team it has been given, the mission of the church in all its dimensions.

2. Explanations

- The pastoral unit is instituted by the Bishop. It is not the parishes that « gives it » a method of organization but the Bishop who institutes this new model of functioning. The pastoral unit must in effect answer to the judicial demands both civil and ecclesiastic and this new model needs to be officially recognized. According to ecclesiastic law each parish of the unit retains its status as a parish. According to civil law it is the same for each of the Fabriques in the unit.
- For the service of the pastoral unit, the Bishop will institute a pastoral team made up of all the mandated persons called to participate in the exercise of the pastoral responsibility. To be assured of its good functioning, the team will be given the appropriate mechanisms keeping in mind the responsibilities of each one.
- In a pastoral unit, a parish priest as moderator of the pastoral responsibility is named by the Bishop. He responds to the Bishop or his representative for his mandate. In a pastoral unit there is only one parish priest or moderator. This parish priest or moderator exercises his proper ministry at the level of the entire unit and judicially is the parish priest or moderator of pastoral

responsibility for each of the parishes that make up the pastoral unit. If other priests are named for the service of the pastoral unit they are by the title of priest collaborator.

- In each pastoral unit, it is fitting that someone be designated by the Bishop as co-ordinator of parish activities. She answers for her mandate to whoever the Bishop designates.

- In each of the parishes belonging to the pastoral unit we must assure that there is a sufficient presence of a pastor, of the co-ordinator of one or more of the parish pastoral animators and persons who assure a welcome (receptionist, secretary). In certain cases, if judged appropriate, the Bishop will mandate an animator of the community. The animator of the community is the person who answer to the team for one or another of the communities that make up the pastoral unit.

- A pastoral council or an orientation council must be constructed at the pastoral unit level or again if appropriate to maintain existing councils in each of the legal communities of the pastoral unit until the concertation connections can be established.

Working toward a pastoral unit

1. Initiative

As it is the Bishop who has the responsibility to institute a pastoral unit, it is permissible for him, if he judges it necessary, after taking the advice of those regionally responsible, to take the initiative to invite a group of parishes to grasp the route that will lead these parishes to form a pastoral unit.

The initiative could also come from the parishes. A discernment must however operate with those responsible for the pastoral region where the concerned parishes are situated with the support of diocesan concerned services such as the Service to the mission of communities and the Department of Human Resources. The Bishop will be informed of the steps taken in this enterprise.

The result leads to the institution of a pastoral unit by the Bishop following a certain number of stages. They are presented as follows.

2. The stages of the route

The initial discernment

The first reference for operating an initial discernment before leading eventually to the constitution of a pastoral unit is an evangelization project and to elaborate on the pastoral animation for a sector regrouping of several parishes. This project should be elaborated in connection with the regional pastoral and approved by the Bishop. It is in reference to the project of evangelization and pastoral animation that the question of opportunity is asked and not to endow themselves in a structure of collaboration and concertation. The question to ask ourselves, then is this : Is the constitution of a pastoral unit of a favourable nature to institute a project of evangelization and a pastoral animation which has been elaborated?

Preliminary collaborations and concertations

The collaborations and concertations between the future parishes of the pastoral unit must be realized, from which will be putting in common certain services. This experience will accompany informing and sensitising the life forces of the parishes concerned on the nature, meaning and rapport anticipated from a pastoral unit. These collaborations and concertations concern :

- The pastoral personal and the pastoral team of each parish. Eventually, a team is formed and designated to assure the service of the parishes called to form a pastoral unit.
- The pastoral councils or orientation councils called to plan with the perspective of forming one single pastoral council for the future pastoral unit.
- The Fabriques are called to do there planning to put together certain financial support of pastoral personnel.
- The assembly of parishioners of each of the parishes, who are summoned to an assembly to receive adequate information to allow them a large opportunity to speak out on the adjustment project in connection with the project of evangelization and pastoral animation. It would be convenient to gather several times to resume this information and opportunity to speak out by the parishioners of the ensemble of parishes called to form a pastoral unit.

The final discernment

The final discernment consists of an evaluation of the experiences of collaboration and concertation in connection with putting into practice of an evangelization project and pastoral animation. Do these lived experiences allow them to believe that the formula of a pastoral unit will favour putting into practice a dynamic and effective project of evangelization and pastoral animation? The discernment is made by the life force groups of the parishes concerned in connection with the appropriate regional services. If the conclusion is positive, a request is made to the Bishop. This demand must be made by the authorized representatives of the parishes concerned and approved by those responsible for the Region. Those responsible for the Region with the appropriate diocesan services will prepare hypothesis for the formation of a pastoral team to whom the future pastoral unit will be entrusted as well as the designation of lay presidents of the Fabrique. They submit these hypotheses to the Bishop.

The decision of the Bishop

The Bishop studies the request that has been addressed to him and takes his decision. The response is transmitted in writing and if it is positive it is fitting that it be sanctioned during a visit of the Bishop himself.

April 15, 2001 The direction of Services to the Mission
with approval of the Bishop of the Diocese

Annex 2

Moderator in a Parish ³⁷

1. Mandate The mandate of a moderator is to guide the exercise of the pastoral responsibility of one or several parishes. In general it is with the collaboration of a co-ordinator of pastoral activities in view of accomplishing the mission according to a given project of evangelization and pastoral animation.

He carries out his mandate in communion with the Bishop and in connection with those responsible in the region. He encourages among others concertation and taking responsibility by persons involved in the parish especially the co-ordinator of parish activities therefore recognizing the importance of the mandate and providing a constant support in the exercise of their responsibilities.

He is called to exercise this responsibility with other persons mandated by the Bishop. By virtue of his presbyteral ordination this priest has responsibilities that incumbent him in a particular way to understand.

Preside over the ministry of the Word, the celebration of sacraments, communion and the mission of the community. This implies that :

- a) Signify and recognize as ecclesial the life and practice of the community :
- Announce and actualize the Word;
 - Edify and maintain fraternal communion;
 - Promote mutual service of the members of the community and involvement in the heart of the world;
 - Celebrations of the faith and the work of the Spirit.
- b) Signify the communion with the Bishop and between the community and other communities of the region of the diocese.

The mandate of moderator is renewable for a duration of three years according to the norms established by the policy concerning nominations.

³⁷ The profile of this position carries a certain number of precisions announced in the text by Bishop Jacques Berthelet «The Service of the Parish».

2. Duties In virtue of his mandate fulfils a certain number of duties, particularly the following³⁸ (In the case of two or more parishes or Christian communities it will be necessary to make the desired adaptations).

a) In connection with the Christian community

- To preside at the celebration of sacrament; see to delegating someone with the required faculties if unable to be there himself as president;
- Participate whenever possible as a resource for sacrament preparation;
- Preside at the ministry of the Word and assure quality preaching;
- Attend to what the community has a project of evangelization and pastoral animation;
- See that the priorities or options of the community are in link with this project as well as policies and orientation of the diocesan church;
- Sensitising the Christian community to the ecclesial and pastoral dimension of financial administration of a parish including helping and sharing;
- Participate in P.P.C. meetings;
- Participate whenever possible in the important events of the community.

b) In connection with the pastoral team

- Attend to the work of the pastoral team that favours the development of the community in all its dimensions and promote co-responsibility of all the baptized with regard to the mission;
- See that all the members of the team carry together the pastoral support of the community and open up to the needs of evangelization as a whole;
- See that members of the team are given or receive formation and the means in connection with their appointment;
- Assure certain pastoral tasks with the other members of the team.

c) In connection with the Fabrique³⁹

- Collaborate closely with the President of the Fabrique;
- Attend to assuring a pastoral presence to the Fabrique meetings either by himself or a delegated person;
- Support the efforts and initiatives of the Fabrique in the fulfilling of tasks in connection with the mission including the project of evangelization and pastoral animation;
- To encourage possibilities of collaboration and concertation

38 A certain number of tasks correspond to those that relate to the function of co-ordination and animation. For this subject check the profiles of both functions.

39 If the moderator has to collaborate with more than one Fabrique they must have a president of the Fabrique. It could happen he or another person can gather these presidents.

with the Fabriques of the other parishes;

- Keep the Fabrique up to date on the principle orientations and pastoral priorities of the Diocesan Church, recall as needed authentic rules and legislation;

d) In connection with other services

with the other parishes;

- Develop and maintain lines of communication and concertation

- Encourage representation of the community at events and activities of the town as well as regional and diocesan events;

- Assure connections with diocesan services, appeal to them when necessary;

- Collaborate with those responsible for the region and diocese for different requests as situations that call for a concertation of efforts and competence;

3. Criteria
criteria, notably :

To fulfil this ministry; it is important to consider a certain number of

- the sense of Church and its mission;

- a recognized and appropriate university formation;

- an experience and pastoral service and involvement;

- a witness of an involved life of faith;

- a will to be co-responsible and a concern for the sharing of tasks;

- an ensemble of capabilities and habits that relate to the management of parishes and of pastoral animation in a parish (cf. Grille d'évaluation).

15 April 2001

Department of Human Resources

With approval of the Bishop of the Diocese

Co-ordinator of Parish Activities⁴⁰

1. Mandate The co-ordinator's mandate is to assure the harmonious functioning of one or several parishes regrouped in view of accomplishing the mission. Also, responsible for the animation of the project of evangelization and pastoral animation.⁴¹

In virtue of this mandate this person is called to be an agent of communion who exercises a ministerial service recognized by the Bishop. She is closely connected to other persons involved in the parish especially the moderator and those responsible for the region.

The realization of this mandate calls between others :

- to work as team;
- a division of tasks according to the charisms and ministries of the personal in place;
- a recognition of the mandate and support given to the moderator;⁴²
- a choice of priorities and a plan of action articulated concerning the project of evangelization and pastoral animation.

The mandate is for a duration of three years including a year of probation or insertion. The mandate of the co-ordinator is renewable along the same norms established by the policy concerning nominations.

The person exercising this ministry answers to the Bishop for their mandate or the person designated by him.

40 This function and its «raison d'être» is explained in the text «The Service of Parishes», by Bishop Jacques Berthelet. The co-ordination consists of an important participation in the exercise of a pastoral responsibility which according to canon law is entrusted to an ordained minister. This function relating to the administration of a parish as pastoral unit is presented as a ministry which for different reasons and necessities could be entrusted to a mandated pastoral agent by the Bishop as a means of assuring service.

41 By parish clusters it is understood the parishes are part of a sector, pastoral unit or other type of grouping who are called to put a unified team in place. We can refer to the text on pastoral units.

42 For an understanding of the function of priest moderator we can refer to the profile of the position.

2. Tasks By virtue of their mandate the co-ordinator fulfils a number of tasks, particularly the following:⁴³

a) **In connection with one or a cluster of parishes**⁴⁴

- plan and co-ordinate activities of one or another of these levels (parish or inter parish);
- favour concertation between the different groups working at one of another of these levels;
- develop lines of communion and collaboration between the clustered communities;
- attend to putting in place and updating the project of evangelization and pastoral animation in collaboration with the P.P.C.;
- participate in P.P.C. meetings;
- attend to the renewal, formation and the recognition of volunteer collaborators
- attend to the distribution and circulation of information;
- attend to the answering current affairs.

b) **In connection with the pastoral team**

- assure the proper functioning of the team, and work with others to prepare and animate the meetings;
- see to determining priorities for the year and the sharing of tasks within the team;
- in collaboration with the priest moderator supervise the members of the team in accomplishing their respective mandate;
- assure certain pastoral tasks with other members of the team.

c) **In connection with one or several Fabriques**⁴⁵

- in collaboration with the priest moderator favour connections of understanding, collaboration and fraternity between the members of the Fabrique, pastoral team and P.P.C.;
- in agreement with the priest moderator assure a presence at Fabrique meetings;
- plan with the president of the Fabrique, in the framework of assuring the personnel of involved support;

d) **In connection with other services**

- to develop and maintain connections of concertation and communion with the other Parishes;
- favour representation of the Parish or cluster at events and activities in the town, as well as at Region and Diocesan events;

43 Refer to the profile of animators of a Christian Community.

44 When there are more than one community in a parish it is necessary to adapt.

45 When there are more than one Fabrique it will be necessary to adapt.

as needed;

- assure connections with diocesan services and appeal to them
- collaborate with those responsible at the Region and Diocese for different demands and situations a concertation of efforts and competence.

3. Criteria

To fulfil this function we must consider a number of criteria, notably :

- a sense of church and its mission;
- an appropriate and recognized university formation
- an experience of pastoral involvement in a Parish;
- a witness by their life style and involved faith;
- a willingness to be co-responsible and concern with sharing tasks;
- an ensemble of abilities and qualifications in relation to the administration of a Parish and the pastoral animation of a Parish (cf. Grille d'évaluation);
- availability in the evening and weekends.

15 April 2001

Director of Human Resources

with approval of the Bishop of the Diocese

Animation of a Christian Community⁴⁶

1. Mandate The animator of a Christian Community is mandated to animate one of the Christian communities of a Parish or pastoral unit in view of accomplishing the mission according to the project of evangelization and pastoral animation of the group of Parishes.

In virtue of this mandate the person is called to be an agent of communion in close connection with different persons who exercise a ministerial service recognized by the Bishop.⁴⁷

The realization of this mandate calls forth among others :

- to work in team;
- a sharing of tasks according to charisms of the personal in place;
- a concertation and mutual support with the moderator and co-ordinator;
- a choice of priorities and a plan of action that takes into consideration the project of evangelization and pastoral animation.

This is a three-year mandate including a year of probation or insertion and is renewable according to the norms established by the policy concerning nominations.

The person who exercises this ministry answers for their mandate to the Bishop or a person designated by him.

2. Tasks In virtue of their mandate the animator fulfils a certain number of tasks; particularly the following :⁴⁸

a) In connection with the Christian Community

- to plan and co-ordinate activities of the community and the different communities;
- attend to the priorities of the community in connection with the project of evangelization and pastoral animation;
- attend to developing a fraternal climate (welcoming in the community a presence to persons and events);
- attend to the renewal, formation and recognition of volunteer collaborators;
- attend to the distribution and circulation of information;
- attend to current affairs;

46 See text by Bishop Berthelet «The Service of the Parish».

47 Among these persons are the moderator, co-ordinator, other team members, those responsible for the region.

48 See position profile «Co-ordinator of Parish activities».

- participate whenever possible in important activities and events (Volunteer Day, Founding Anniversary, Easter Vigil, Christmas Mass ...).

b) In connection with the pastoral team of the Parish or of a pastoral unit⁴⁹

- participate in team meetings;
- contribute to determining the priorities of the year and the sharing of tasks within the team;
- assure certain pastoral tasks with other members of the team;
- assure a demonstration of the lived experience of their community;

c) In connection with the Fabrique meetings in pastoral unit

- collaborate closely with the president of the Fabrique;
- plan with the president to ensure a support to the personnel involved in the Parish;
- participate when asked in the Fabrique meetings in the Parish where she is animator.

d) In connection with other services

- favour the partnership of the community with other communities of the Parish or at the pastoral unit;
- favour the representation of the community at events and activities of the town;
- participate if necessary at P.P.C. meetings of the Parish or pastoral unit;
- assure connections with diocesan services and appeal to them when needed;
- collaborate with those responsible for the region and diocese for different demands and situations that call for a concertation of effort and competence.

3. Criteria
notably :

To fulfil this function we must consider a certain number of criteria

- the sense of Church and its mission;
- an appropriate and recognized university formation;
- an experience of service and pastoral involvement in a Parish;
- a witness of life style and involved faith;
- an ensemble of abilities and qualifications that relate to the administration and pastoral animation of a Parish (cf. Grille d'évaluation);
- an availability evenings and weekends.

49 For an understanding of pastoral unit see text on this subject.

15 April 2001

The direction of Human Resources
with the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese