

**BISHOPS AND DIOCESAN
COUNCILS VIEW
THE EPISCOPATE:
A Study in Church Leadership**

**The Committee on Pastoral Development
House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church
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Preface

The Study of the Office of Bishop ("Bishops & Diocesan Councils View the Episcopate: A Study in Church Leadership") began in 1975 and was completed in 1979. It was undertaken in order to provide information, out of actual experience (i.e. empirical research), regarding the conduct of episcopal tasks and responsibilities in our times. The data that has been gathered has come entirely from the lives, the ministries, and the experiences of those persons who were bishops in 1975, 1976 and 1977; and from persons who were serving on Diocesan Councils in 1977 and 1978.

This report contains no theorizing about the way things ought to be in the church and in the episcopate. It simply states the way things are.

The purpose in doing the study was primarily to assist bishops in an analysis of their task and role, and to try to reach a clearer understanding about what is actually expected of bishops by the church in the final quarter of the 20th century.

The data can be used in a variety of ways, but one of its most helpful uses is in informing newly elected bishops about what is in store for them. The insights that have been gathered are neither new nor novel nor entirely original. Most bishops-elect would probably be able to guess with little effort many of the conditions which would prevail in their new jobs. However, it is most useful to have the data affirm certain realities so that one does not have to depend entirely upon guess work and intuition to discern the shape of things to come.

With this data in hand we can now tell bishops-elect with reasonable certainty what they can expect. This study is also a means of suggesting to candidates in an episcopal election what factors they need take into account in making an informed judgment as to whether or not they are qualified for the episcopate and whether or not it is likely that they will be happy in it.

There is an old chestnut that describes a telephone call from a diocese which has just completed an election. The caller, in his impetuous enthusiasm, reaches the priest who has been elected and blurts out: "I just want to tell you that we have elected you as our bishop and now we want to know if you will accept." The priest replies: "Yes, of course." Then a slight pause — "and what diocese is this?"

Such an account suggests that being elected to the episcopate anywhere is an end in itself and that thoughtful analysis of needs and capabilities in advance is uncalled for.

There was a time when elections did, in fact, follow this more simple line. There are those people in the church who wish that we could return to that simplicity and trust only a spontaneous movement of the Spirit to guide us in selecting bishops.

However, we now know more than we did years ago about the complexities of organizations; how similar structures differ significantly from one another; and how organizations are influenced by local and regional cultures. We have also come to know more about human behavior, the analysis and discernment of skills and capabilities, and how to match the temperament of an individual with that of a large group.

Some years ago vacancy consultation started at the parish level as a way of selecting, more wisely, priests for parishes. The process has now spread quite

generally throughout the church; and it is not surprising that it has been adapted for use at the diocesan level.

This process seeks to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. It does not replace the Holy Spirit. It creates a more intense way for the Holy Spirit to gain access to a group procedure. It forces us to use the best tools available to us for data gathering, for the analysis of information, and for projecting our life into the future. By definition any election is a political process, but under these newer circumstances the process is more open and hence healthier.

The results of this study can help us determine in advance what a new bishop will have to adapt to, what the major determinants will be in influencing the quality of his episcopate, and what the existential reality is with which he must cope.

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I INTRODUCTION: RATIONALE FOR THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

A. Rationale:

There is a certain sense in which the episcopate remains always unchanging and unchanged. And yet it exists in times and under circumstances where a great potential for change is present. Today that potential is a reality. While maintaining continuity with the past, the episcopate, as we now see and experience it, is quite different in practice from what it was in the past. In undertaking a study of the office of bishop in the 20th century, one could not overlook the possibility that the future might bring further change in the episcopate, and particularly in the ways that diocesan bishops and diocesan councils work separately and together in expressing the ministry of the church. While we may suspect that this will be the case, we will not know with any certainty how to cope with the future unless information is gathered as to how these two entities work separately and together right now.

The nature and function of the episcopate, whether it has changed, how it may have changed, and how it may change further, are concerns of more than academic interest. At the very least, this kind of information is of great value in developing educational and consultative services for new bishops as they undertake the demanding task of diocesan leadership, and are called upon to face the positive, negative, and conflicting images held of bishops by the people of their dioceses. Additionally, it would seem that all diocesan bishops and their diocesan councils and standing committees would benefit by having some better grasp of the realities of being a bishop in the last quarter of the 20th century. Dioceses differ in ways which influence a particular person's exercise of the office of bishop. Improved knowledge of these realities and increased expertise in addressing them might well aid diocesan bishops, diocesan councils, and other diocesan commissions and committees in alleviating the strain associated with the episcopate. The increase of such knowledge and expertise should increase the effectiveness of any bishop.

For these reasons, primarily, the Committee on Pastoral Development of the House of Bishops decided to launch the first national empirical study of the role of diocesan bishops in the United States. Diocesan bishops and diocesan council members provided the data. This study is intended to be a benchmark — that is, a collection of data and information to which at future times reference can be made to discern any changes taking place or new trends developing. Its value, in part, is to provide this base line data against which future research on bishops and councils can be compared.

B. Design of the Study:

The research was designed in several phases. Each phase was intended to contribute to the next:

First, a questionnaire was sent to all diocesan bishops in early 1975. By the spring of 1975, 95% of the bishops had returned their questionnaires. Initial analysis was done and a research memorandum based on the information gleaned from the survey was prepared for internal distribution to the research team. The memorandum was used as a base for the development of time diary forms, interview guides for future in-

interviewing with bishops, and in the construction of the questionnaire for diocesan council members.

Second, bishops were asked to keep time diaries for one month in a standard form, including questions such as: "What activities do you consider most important, least important? What activities in terms of time and effort do you feel were most understood by laity and/or clergy in your diocese?" These forms were returned by 71% of the diocesan bishops. They were summarized by the spring of 1976. Findings from this phase of the research provided valuable clues for areas to be investigated in depth in face to face interviews with bishops.

Third, face to face interviews were conducted with a representative sample of diocesan bishops whose selection was based upon the characteristics of their dioceses. An attempt was made to interview bishops from dioceses in different geographical areas which varied in size, wealth, clergy density, and other factors. The factor of tenure in office was also taken into consideration. Some of the interviews were with very recently consecrated bishops. Other bishops interviewed had been consecrated for ten years, some twenty years, and a few for even longer periods of time. Forty-three interviews in all were completed.

Fourth, the above three sources of data were combined in a written preliminary report. It was mailed to all diocesan bishops just prior to the meeting of the House of Bishops in September 1977. A verbal presentation of this combined data was also made at that meeting. After the verbal presentation, bishops were divided into small groups to discuss the report. They were provided with a set of basic questions distributed to all participants which were designed to guide these discussions. In each group a bishop was appointed to serve as moderator, while another bishop agreed to serve as reporter. Each reporter was responsible for summarizing the major concerns of this group and for recording his report in the fullest possible manner immediately following the meeting. These reports were then transcribed and have been used to augment the data drawn from the other sources mentioned above.

Fifth, in the spring of 1977, prior to the meeting of the House of Bishops, questionnaires were mailed to approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of all members of each diocesan council in the continental United States. This group was randomly selected and totaled 626. Three hundred and eighty seven questionnaires were returned. This returned rate of 62% was achieved without any follow up. Because larger dioceses tend to have larger diocesan councils this return slightly over-represents the opinion of diocesan council members in the larger dioceses.

II BISHOPS AND DIOCESAN COUNCILS: CONFLICTS AND COOPERATION

A. The Episcopate in the 20th Century.

Let us make clear at the outset that this was intended and designed to be **a study of the office of the bishop, not of men who become bishops.** At the same time, no discussion of the office can be complete without some acknowledgement of the fact that the persons who undertake the job differ among themselves in particular areas of expertise and preferences for various tasks; they differ with regard to theological orientation; and they differ in attitudes on salient issues affecting the contemporary church.

Bishops have much formal and informal power in their dioceses. To some extent they define their own episcopates. This means that individual attitudes, attributes, and competencies of men who become bishops may well affect the way the office is defined in day to day practice.

It is the office of bishop which is of interest in this study, and special interest is taken in ways in which the office of bishop is implicitly or explicitly defined by the incumbent, by the diocesan conditions, and by influential persons among both the clergy and the laity. The degree to which bishops can function effectively, or can make themselves and their dioceses happy with the way they are fulfilling their episcopal duties, depends in considerable measure on the fit between the characteristics and the priorities of the person and the unique characteristics of the particular office which he fills. The office is defined by the expectations of significant church-involved people in their diocese. (Some of these significant people include both lay and clergy members of diocesan councils.) The resources allocated to this office and other conditions under which the bishop is called upon to operate also determine a great deal regarding the bishop's effectiveness and contentment.

The man who becomes bishop has, it is hoped, some private life outside the exercise of his duties. However, since this is a study of the office of the bishop attention to the bishop as an individual is minimal. It is of interest largely in the extent to which the bishop's private life is enriched or deprived by the time and energy consumed in his episcopal activities; this balance in turn will have significant consequences for the effectiveness of the individual episcopate and the personal satisfaction derived from it by the bishop. For example, the degree to which the bishop has time for his own spiritual and intellectual growth, the degree to which he has leisure to enjoy the companionship of friends, indulge in hobbies, sports, and cultural events, will inevitably affect his happiness. Satisfaction and effectiveness in the episcopate will also be affected by the quantity and quality of supportive relationships for his work that the bishop is able to establish with clergy and laity in his diocese, and with other bishops.

This is a study of the office of the bishop, but attention is given to: 1) how characteristics of the individual persons affect the way in which this office is defined operationally; 2) and how satisfied bishops and others in their dioceses are with the task foci and method of operating attempted by bishops.

Time diary analyses indicate that bishops work on the average of **71.3 hours per week**, most of which is spent in administration, parish and mission visitations, and travel. Although wishing they had more time for study, prayer, and private life, few seemed to want to spend much less time in any endeavor. About half, however, feel that they "do not have time to do the job I should be doing" (57%), suggesting that their work, though deemed meaningful and satisfying, is nonetheless too demanding at times, and, perhaps, they need help in delegating some work to others. Fifty-four percent of the bishops seem to feel this way.

While the data demonstrates that bishops put in a heavy work week, it is almost inevitable that **some people** in their dioceses will feel that they should be putting in more time on certain specific activities. It is likely that another group in the diocese will feel that some other activity should consume more of the bishop's time than it does. A slight majority of bishops (53%) found that there were expectations which most people in their dioceses held of their role as bishops that conflicted with **their own** preferred concept of the role.

Such findings suggest that whereas bishops are glad to be bishops most of the time, at least half are having some difficulty getting their definition of the episcopate accepted by significant people in their dioceses.

B. The Life and Work of the Diocesan Council and the Bishop

This study indicates that members of diocesan councils in most dioceses are elected by convention alone and are almost equally divided between clergy (49%) and laity (51%). In a minority of dioceses the convention shares this power for choosing new members with regional bodies who elect some, and in a few instances, with the bishop who appoints several.

The laity on diocesan councils are in great majority male (80%). They are often upper-level business executives and professionals: doctors, lawyers, scientists, professors. Clergy and laity on these councils are primarily white (93%), and have at least a four year college degree (80%), and make \$16,000 or more per year (73%). These clergy and laity may not be typical of the average man or woman in the pew or pulpit. A third (34%) are from small churches of 100 members or less; slightly under a third (30%) are from churches of between 101 and 200 members; 16% are in churches from 201-300 members, and the remaining 20% in churches with over 300 members. One quarter of the respondents are members of churches in small towns or rural areas; nearly one-half are located in churches in small cities or metropolitan suburbs (48%), and the remaining quarter (27%) are attending churches in large metropolitan cities. In brief, the members of diocesan councils are probably nearly representative of the range and variety of churches in a diocese and of the layleaders within such churches.

These clergy and laity have been members of their diocesan councils on an average of 3 to 5 years; 29% have been members for four years or more. They spend an average of 3.9 hours a month in work related to the diocesan council or other diocesan committees and task forces; 31% spend 16 hours or more per month in this kind of work.

The diocesan councils meet an average of 7.3 times a year; 28% meet four times a year or less; 41% meet 10 times a year or more. The coun-

cils vary in size from 8 to 65 members; the average council has 24 members - with usually 3 or 4 ex-officio members. Diocesan staff attend most council meetings.

The support of the diocesan council will be important to any bishop in putting into operation the policies he desires. The manner in which the council works not only with the bishop but with one another, cannot help but influence the work of the diocese and hence the function of the bishop and his office.

C. Cooperation and Conflict

Diocesan council members agree in majority (64%) that during the last year there was at least some conflict among the clergy and lay members of their council concerning proposed programs, policies, and procedures. One-fifth of the council members noted that in fact quite a bit of conflict occurred.

Politically divisive issues revolving around liturgy within the church — namely the new Prayer Book, ordination of women and the ordination of homosexuals, frequently precipitated overt conflict within the councils. Differences of opinion among council members on basic theological presuppositions and how to deal with difficulties in the diocese were far more important than the open or the hidden conflict over policies and programs that emerged within the councils.

For instance, nearly one quarter of the council members reported fairly strong theological disagreement with their bishops — most of these finding him "too liberal" theologically for their taste. Only 16% of the council members saw themselves as clearly divergent from the rest of their council. The majority perceive themselves in theological accord with their bishop and with other council members. It should be noted that perceived theological differences can provide fertile soil for conflict on other issues which are prominent within a council.

Reality problems with which the diocese may be confronted, such as diminishing revenues and declining number of parishioners, may also cause confrontation within the council over how to deal with such difficulties.

Council members were asked to indicate the degree to which fourteen listed problems were characteristic of their diocese. From majority responses, it appears that major problems affecting most dioceses are the following:

1. "More communication and interaction is needed among parochial clergy within the diocese" (affirmed by 79%)
2. "The Diocese has not been able to secure sufficient funds" (affirmed by 68%)
3. "There has been a decrease in the church membership within the diocese" (affirmed by 67%)
4. "More communication and interaction is needed between the bishop and parochial clergy" (affirmed by 56%)
5. "The diocese has difficulty developing common goals and setting priorities for implementing objectives" (affirmed by 55%)
6. "More communication and coordination is needed between the Bishop, Standing Committee and Diocesan Council" (affirmed by 47%)

When council members are prone to see major difficulties as

characterizing their diocese, the more likely they are to report conflict within the council as occurring fairly frequently. While disagreements could potentially break out over how to deal with the major problems listed, the problem most likely to illicit intra-council conflict was the sixth one listed above, dealing with the perceived lack of good communication between the bishop, the standing committee and the diocesan council.

Although only 31% of the council members reported that it was even somewhat true that "there is insufficient attention paid to the express needs of the laity within the diocese" — it may be that this perceived problem may cause conflict within the diocese between lay and clergy members.

The sheer number of problems confronting a diocese and the presence of a particular major problem on which there is a division of opinion, combined with sometimes differing theological orientations (which probably surfaced in discussions on the new Prayer Book and the debates concerning the advisability of ordaining women and homosexuals) can easily lead to conflict within the council. The relative wealth of a diocese does not prevent problems from arising nor does it eliminate intra-council conflict. On the contrary, larger and richer dioceses were somewhat more likely to have a greater number of perceived problems than smaller, poorer dioceses and even more likely to report conflict within the diocesan council. There could be several reasons for this. One, however, is probably that since the larger dioceses have larger diocesan councils this increases the likelihood of a greater variety of viewpoints being represented among the members at times of decision and planning on various matters of significance.

A major factor in the intensity of conflict which emerges in council meetings is probably not just the problems presenting themselves for solution and the resolving of differences of opinion on what these solutions should be, **but the trust level within the council**. Sixty-one percent of the council members polled said it was at least somewhat true that "In my diocese, many people seem more interested in their personal goals or private agendas than the good of the diocese as a whole". The more strongly people agreed with this statement, the more likely they were to perceive conflict among the members. Also, written comments indicated that when distrust was high, the conflict tended to be high as well, but not overt.

Conflict is not necessarily bad if it is overt and handled well when it arises, and many council members were sophisticated in making this distinction. Conversely, as a number of council members noted, conflict within the council becomes destructive to the functioning of the group and to the bishop and his policies when it is not voiced. Comments from members of different Diocesan Councils illustrate this:

- "Members of the Council in the past year have been unwilling to confront bishop, staff and each other with honest disagreement."
- "So much time is spent in deciding 'how' to do something, that we never do anything about the growth of the Church. The conflict rears its head more outside of the Council meetings than within. Many members wear a 'Diocesan Council mask'. It is much like Congress; endorses plans but never describes ways to accomplish them or implement them."

- "Our Council seems to avoid conflict, perhaps out of respect for a new bishop, perhaps because most members tend to see the Council as an instrument of the Bishop's will, and probably because its meetings are structured in such a way that even discussion is almost impossible. In our conventions, however, a great deal of conflict emerges but it is rarely handled in a healthy way. Our method is avoidance, with occasional public ventilation."

- "There is almost intolerable strain at times, but often conflict is only manifested in sullen hostility, and then some remark will set things off. Often the hostility is only dealt with back at home and suppressed at the meeting.

Diocesan programs obviously approved by the Bishop **always** pass at the meeting, but are often resisted back at home by the same man who voted for it."

- "Much conflict is covered with 'politeness'. Many issues not addressed because of a full agenda."

- "Our present situation is not one of joyous unanimity, exactly. More often, 'we get through the agenda', but do not have a great sense of accomplishment. More conflict to a degree — might give people a sense of doing something worthwhile."

While the bishop, as illustrated in the foregoing quotes is seldom blamed personally for instigating conflict, he is often directly or indirectly blamed for not being able to handle constructively the conflict which emerges among diocesan council members.

To be sure, one of the major problems a bishop may face is that members of the diocesan council differ among themselves in regard to which actions they expect from the bishop. Only 14% of the bishops said they "rarely or never" were faced with conflicting expectations of them by their diocesan councils, and only 23% of the bishops said they had encountered conflicting expectations of them from council members at least somewhat frequently during the last two years. In a later section of this report, discussion will be given to what some of the more prevalent conflicting expectations of a Bishop's role and appropriate behaviour are. At this moment let us simply note they exist and can cause difficulties in relations between diocesan council members and their bishops.

To lighten this picture considerably and give it a more positive side it should also be noted that the diocesan council members are **rarely** dissatisfied with their bishop's performance overall. Any disappointments they express in the kinds of actions their bishop takes and/or his lack of expertise in various areas are usually charitable. Diocesan council members are more likely to cite lack of proper training for a bishop and are cognizant of conflicting demands made of their bishop as reasons for their dissatisfactions than they are to feel their bishop is incapable of learning or purposefully negligent.

Diocesan council members appear to be sensitive to the job difficulties and the opposing demands made on their bishop - perhaps they are more sensitive than many bishops realize. Proof of this is seen partly in the fact that a majority of council members (61%) feel that their bishop's effectiveness would be increased by having his job goals more clearly specified by his diocesan council or standing committee. Far fewer were in favor (33%) of having his job goals more clearly specified

by the House of Bishops. This desire for clarity may indicate some awareness of the fact that discrepant demands were being placed on their Bishop.

Certainly, there was a general understanding that the bishop could not be held totally accountable for falling short of fulfilling the expectations of all persons when there was little specified agreement on what the job of the bishop entailed in their diocese. This perceived need for a better job description of the episcopate on the part of the diocesan council was also observed by many of the bishops. Slightly over half of the bishops felt that they needed their job goals more clearly defined by "my local diocese". A very limited number of council members (28%) wanted the job goals of their bishop more clearly defined by the House of Bishops. Even fewer bishops (19%) wanted their job goals more clearly defined by the General Convention. Whether bishops wanted their job goals defined by someone or group other than themselves or not, fully 63% wanted help on "how best to define my task (s)". Only 13% felt they needed no help here.

Nevertheless, no matter how clear the job definition of the episcopate might be, it is probable that the bishop will still have to do some negotiating with conflicting interest groups about the way he spends his time, and will almost certainly still have to act as a mediator when conflict arises among others in the diocese and in the council. As indicated in the data, conflict among clergy, among members of the diocesan council, and no doubt, among other groups as well is fairly prevalent these days in dioceses. Bishops are not all, by any means, especially adept at handling conflict. Slightly over one-half of the diocesan council members responding (59%) felt the effectiveness of their bishop would be improved by his acquiring more expertise or getting assistance in "dealing with conflict as an arbitrator." If the bishop does not acquire more expertise himself, it was felt that he should learn how to seek and use assistance in the whole matter of dealing with conflict. About half the bishops felt that they could use assistance in such interpersonal conflict areas as: "how to receive hostility from others and deal with it constructively", "how to handle transference (someone is angry about something and takes it out on me)", "handling stress".

Analysis of the questionnaire data from bishops indicated that those bishops who most felt the need of assistance in handling conflict directed at them or in resolving conflict among individuals in groups in their dioceses were those who had either been ordained fairly recently, or those who were relatively younger than other bishops. It may take some years of experience as rector of a large parish or several years as bishop of an average diocese, to learn the skills of handling conflict among others in a successful manner and to avoid becoming emotionally embroiled in the process. At any rate it seems that younger, newly consecrated bishops would welcome some assistance in conflict management. Their diocesan councils might also welcome their obtaining such assistance. It is interesting to note that dealing with conflict situations was a matter of great concern to seven of the eight new bishops interviewed by the Rt. Rev. Fred Wolf in preparation for his monograph entitled "Moving Into the Episcopate" (pg. 35) (A copy of this monograph is available through the Office of Pastoral Development, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.)

D. Review and Preview

On the whole, bishops are relatively happy and content. Almost all (95%) feel they can live with their "own episcopal authority relatively well." Ninety-two percent feel that their clergy manage to live relatively well with the bishop's authority; and 85% feel that the laity are comfortable in this regard. Furthermore — they feel that they can move things along pretty well in diocesan planning and program development (79%). Diocesan council members are also relatively pleased with their bishop's leadership and with that of the council.

Given this generally happy situation, it is nonetheless true that some bishops and diocesan councils are experiencing more conflict than cooperation in their work together; and, in varying degrees, from time to time experience conflicts, blocks, and disappointments with one another. Many of these negative aspects of an otherwise positive picture ensue from ambiguities concerning what the bishop's task is and the competencies that are seen as needed to accomplish that task.

In the following sections of this report we will consider various definitions of the episcopate held by both bishops and lay and clergy leaders. These various definitions will help us discover what aspects of the bishop's role are most likely to be ambiguous, defined differently, or be valued differently by the bishops and others in their dioceses. Attention will also be given to the effect of the characteristics of dioceses and of bishops on the way bishops and lay and clergy leaders give importance to different parts of the episcopate. The purpose here is to attempt to ascertain whether or not there are certain episcopal leadership styles or foci of activities which accord better with the expectations and needs of some dioceses rather than of others. It is hoped that delineating points of particular confusion and disagreement over what should be involved in the exercise of the office of bishop will substantially aid discussions in dioceses over job descriptions of bishops and enable those discussions to be more focused and subsequently more fruitful.

III LOOK DEEPER — POINTING A DIRECTION

A. The Bishop — Captain in a Turbulent Sea: Diocesan Council Members — Navigators

What is it like to wear the purple in an anti-authoritarian era and during an age of liturgical reform? Perhaps it is much like being the captain of a ship which has been blown into uncharted waters and whose navigators point in different directions — all thinking that they know better than anyone else (including the captain) where to go — but nonetheless navigators who are expecting the captain to take responsibility for the final decision.

In the last two decades there have been changes, especially among the youth, in the deference persons give to all social, political, and religious institutions. Generally, authority is less likely to be vested in any single organization or person. The degree to which this “anti-authoritarian” culture affects the office of bishop in the amount of personal authority he is able to wield simply because of his office — seems to vary somewhat from diocese to diocese. Probably bishops can make all important decisions by themselves in dioceses with a strong Anglo-Catholic tradition. In regions of the country noted for their social and political liberalism, such as in vast urban spreads of the East and West coasts, bishops can and are expected to make most important decisions in consultation with other diocesan leaders. Overall, it is probably true that the episcopate is in practice less vested with authority than it was fifty years ago. It would seem that this development is at least “theoretically” welcomed by many of the younger bishops.

During the last two decades changes in understanding of social and religious values have occasioned changes in the liturgical practices of the Episcopal Church. Two such changes with consequences for the episcopate of most bishops have been the new Prayer Book and the ordination of women. Recent events within the church and/or House of Bishops seem also to have raised apprehensions among both bishops and diocesan council members about what directions future changes in the church or dioceses might take.

Neither bishops nor diocesan council members in large majority are opposed to change *per se*. Fully 82% of the bishops agree that “this age of liturgical reform is good for the church”. Similarly on a series of items measuring orientation to change, the majority of the council members are quite open to the possibility of further changes being made. For example, 76% of the council members feel “there is really something refreshing about enthusiasm for change in the church”, and 74% further agree that “effecting real social change is possible at the present time in the church”. Half the council members believe that the first target for change should be the policy of the national church or diocesan bureaucracy as a whole, while slightly under a half feel rather that the behavior of individuals must change first before new policy has any effect. Council members in four-fifths majority agree that “any organizational structure becomes a deadening weight in time and needs to be revitalized”. It could be possible that this could hold for local, regional and national church structures.

As bishops suspect, however, not all changes are equally palatable to diocesan councils. They also suspect that the manner in which wel-

comed changes have been introduced has not always been palatable. Diocesan council members are especially likely to feel that recent changes have taken place with little thought or planning. Three-fifths (61%) of the council members agree at least somewhat that “many people in the church seem to favor ‘change for change’s sake’ without first considering how good existing structures and programs are”. On the whole, diocesan councils in the year of this study can best be characterized as open to considering proposals for changes, but nonetheless they are people who will scrutinize any such proposals carefully before giving them their approval or support.

Some open-ended comments made by diocesan council members in three areas of concern emerge as particularly important.

1. **Unity and Harmony in the Church and in the Diocese:**

Many comments indicated a desire for an end to doctrinal disputes, and a fostering of toleration (especially on the national level) for a variety of positions, and a development of some common goals for the church.

— A good proportion commented in addition that on the national level it might be wise to cease changes of the recent magnitude for a while, so that everyone could catch their breath. On the diocesan level unification seems to mean for lay and clergy members of the council — a more cooperative working relationship between bishop, clergy, and laity in achieving agreed on diocesan goals.

— The establishing of a higher sense of unity and harmony for the Episcopal Church in the United States nationally, regionally, and locally is a common and fervent hope of council members. There is disagreement over whether or not a high priority should extend to making an effort to establish more unifying and harmonizing relationships with the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. With regard to this issue a few diocesan council members make vehement arguments either *pro* or *con*.

— The desire for a greater sense of unity and harmony is more of a voluntary sharing of ideas and resources in relationship to the extending of the ministry of the church than any specific call for structural change. Most of the diocesan council members pleading for greater harmony and cooperation indicated that they would be opposed to any “Roman peace” imposed by the national church. They do not appear to be disposed to accept any less local autonomy on the diocesan level which might be entailed by a greater centralization nationally.

2. **Developing Spirituality:**

A number of comments suggested a refocusing of energy into more spiritual channels and a firmer focus on the Gospel as a final authority for action. However, this was mentioned much less frequently than item 1 (cf. above). This kind of spiritual solution to current ills besetting the church, **was most frequently advanced by priests**. Although occasionally voiced by lay members, many of these priests felt that if a more conservative and spiritual theological focus was stressed in the church and dioceses, not only would evangelism and recruitment efforts be more successful, but

bishops could more easily reassert their ecclesiastical authority. These priests (estimated at between a fourth and a third of all clergy members of the total diocesan council sample) are distressed at the democratizations (read disintegration) of the liturgical and faith tenets of the Church and the episcopate. The following quote from a priest on a diocesan council is illustrative of the perspective of this faction:

"I think the whole matter of being a bishop in the Episcopal Church hinges on the two matters of pastoral (episcopal) identity and authority. I don't think most of our bishops realize how much the rest of the church invests in their identity and authority, and how important they are to us. In my opinion, our bishops in recent years have failed us dreadfully on these two points — that is they don't seem to realize who they are (identity) and they seem to have abdicated the authority the Church tries to give them . . . Men and women need-want to know Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Our Bishops would find their job easier if they ministered to that need through their identity and authority.

Many staunch Episcopalians have become disenchanted with the Church over what our bishops have done or failed to do. People in general seem to be flocking to those churches who know and show who their Lord is — and how they follow him. The need in society is immense! Can we today proclaim ourselves as members of the Apostolic Faith as we minister to a steadily declining church? The matter of Episcopal identity and authority is of cardinal importance in answering this question."

It is safe to say that there exists another vehement faction within the councils and the church as a whole, however, that have far more liberal views concerning theology and in terms of the manner in which the bishop should exercise his vested authority. Irritation toward the bishop expressed by these liberals was most frequently in wishing he would be less accommodating to the fundamentalist strains within the diocese and give more attention to social outreach activities. **Though both liberals and conservatives on diocesan councils would join together in wanting a change in their diocese toward more outreach — they differ in the purpose and target of this outreach.** The conservatives want more evangelistic effort in reaching the unchurched with the express intent of making them members. The liberals care little for this goal — wanting more attention to outreach ministry to the disadvantaged simply to aid them.

It is unfortunate for a bishop to be confronted by a diocesan council divided along these lines — especially if it involves his leadership style as well.

3. **Management and Raising of Money:**

A need for better stewardship on the diocesan level was strongly voiced by at least a third of the lay members of the diocesan council. It should be recalled that a majority of these male lay persons were corporation executives and businessmen and may have known what they were talking about in describing diocesan fiscal policies as a disaster area.

Often combined with expressed desires for changes in the way

dioceses managed their money, was a desire to see dioceses use people better, especially lay people with business expertise. Generally, most diocesan council members (in two-thirds majority) believed there was sufficient attention paid to the expressed needs of laity. Lay council members were more likely than clergy council members (in response to open-ended questions on desired diocesan changes) to call for more lay involvement. These lay men and women were as likely to blame lay persons for not bothering to get involved as they were to blame bishops and clergy for not soliciting this input. Clergy and bishops err more in not using laity **effectively** — e.g. using a businessman on a Christian education commission and a school teacher on the finance committee. According to these council members such personnel policies work against the lay persons who wish to make a maximum contribution to the church and the diocese.

These are the major kinds of changes desired on an abstract level and on the theoretical-theological level. Such changes do not often conflict with one another. However, at the level of practice these changes can be in conflict — especially in terms of the kind of actions or leadership style that is expected.

Social and cultural changes in society have had an effect on how persons view the authority and goals of many institutions — including churches. For a number of reasons mainline Protestant denominations have been experiencing a decline in the number of new members and in financial resources. Reference to this decline can be found in the study by David A. Roozen, entitled "Church Membership and Participation". The data of interest to us is found on page 69. The document is published by the Hartford Seminary Foundation. It is the loss of membership and decline in financial resources which have largely occasioned concern with appropriate goals, priorities, and leadership styles at the local, regional, and national levels of the major Protestant denominations. Several of these denominations have experienced sweeping changes in their national organization, governance, clergy deployment practices, and in a host of other areas. These policy changes have been undertaken so as to deal with changing needs and conditions. They have sometimes evoked resistance with different segments of the membership in these denominations. In fairness they have also sometimes strengthened commitments to the church.

The Episcopal Church has not escaped these developments and their consequences. So far as the office of bishop is concerned some of these consequences have been an increased ambiguity in the role of bishop and conflicting expectations regarding his performance. Later on in this monograph we will examine this area further.

B. **The Bishop — Defender of the Faith, Middleman, "Chief" Priest, Guardian, Innovator.**

Bishops are not only leaders of their dioceses, but also, perform functions similar to those of a governor of a state. They are expected to carry out decisions made by the national governing body. As govern-

ors, bishops may find themselves having to irritate local constituencies by their obligations to implement new national "laws". Also, like governors, bishops may be faced with the situation of trying to enforce a "law" which is on the books, but which a majority of the constituency consider old fashioned and even irrelevant. Occasionally that majority might think that this kind of "law" is something that should be retained as an ideal value action, condition, etc. — but not something that the church constituency is actually expected to uphold in their personal lives.

Recently, bishops have had to play a visible (and sometimes distasteful) role in their dioceses of communicating and implementing changes in liturgy and canon law passed by the General Convention. This aspect of the episcopate was frequently mentioned by bishops in small group discussions at the 1977 House of Bishops meeting as a source of conflict and hostility directed at them. When the bishop must implement a national policy unpopular with one or more groups within his diocese, the tendency is often to "blame the bishop" for trying to implement the policy, even to the point of implicitly inferring that the bishop is at fault for its creation. Occasionally, however, comments made in interviews with bishops and on diocesan council questionnaires indicate that the problem may be less with the nature of the new law or policy itself, than with the bishop's lack of knowledge and skill about how to implement new policies effectively, and whether they are initiated by the bishop or the General Convention. Similar sentiments are indicated in the analysis of the questionnaire data to be discussed shortly.

1. **The Bishop — Chief Liturgical Officer and the Chief Priest**

Not only are bishops expected to carry out the liturgical duties specifically assigned to the episcopate, such as confirmation, but they are also expected to exercise some oversight of liturgical activities and standards of the churches in their jurisdiction. Generally, **Bishops seem to enjoy their own liturgical duties performed in churches, but tend to dislike being liturgical "overseer"**.

In regard to the first, only about 40% of the bishops in the survey thought that most people in their dioceses expected them to spend the majority of their time as chief priests. It can be assumed that **all** bishops would agree that this was at least one of the role activities expected of them. Further, it seems that there is little conflict here between their own preferred role emphasis and that expected by most in their dioceses, since even among the 40% who felt strongly pressured to put major emphasis in this role by their diocesan constituents, only 8% report any conflict with their own preferences for attention to this role. Time diary results from bishops disclose that parish and mission visitations are not only cited the most important activity on the average, but also an activity most bishops like and on which they spend a great deal of time. Approximately 16% of their typical work week or nearly 12 hours per week is spent on the average in this activity.

In contrast, being a chief liturgical officer was often unpleasant. A reason for the bishops' dislike of this role frequently is when they actually insist on strict liturgical standards being applied in their churches, many churches not only failed to meet these stan-

dards, but the church membership, both lay and clerical heartily resent what they perceive to be the bishop's "interference".

In the analysis of the questionnaire data it is revealed that 55% of the bishops reported themselves at least sometimes "wondering how to administer the doctrine, discipline and worship of the church when others seem to be deviating from it". Fourteen percent of these bishops found this to be a real problem. Bishops who experienced difficulty here were also those who felt pressured to put a lot of energy into this area. These bishops are apt to be those who feel that they do not have enough time to do the job that they would like to be doing. Apparently, they are pressured to put energy into a lot of other areas and roles as well. Other correlations of data suggest that these bishops often feel insecure in their authority position within the diocese and usually this is because they are newly consecrated.

Interviews with bishops indicate that those bishops who experience little or no difficulty with being chief liturgical officer or "overseer" are either those who have been successful in refusing to take **sole** responsibility for this role or those who have succeeded in not taking **any** responsibility along this line. Bishops who were able to induce lay and clergy members of their dioceses to share the liturgical oversight responsibility with them, and cooperatively set criteria for acceptable practices, were relatively content in being designated "chief liturgical officer". Interview results suggest that a small proportion of the bishops (under 10%) do not experience difficulty in implementing the role of chief liturgical officer, because they have abandoned all efforts to fulfill this task. These bishops are most likely to be in dioceses with a strong, congregational tradition in which clergy and laity design the worship service tradition to suit themselves and would not tolerate "orders from above".

From another perspective, it might be said that bishops have a relatively easy time being chief liturgical officers when they are **not** expected to take on the task of being **the** "guardian of what was and is" in liturgical areas, especially since a majority of them (82%) believe "the age of liturgical reform is good for the church".

Nearly three-fifths of the bishops surveyed agreed that "most people in their diocese expected them to be the "guardian of what was and is", though less than 10% indicated that this was a strong expectation on the part of most people in their diocese. However, for slightly over a fourth of the bishops it is more emphasis than they themselves like, and they have experienced conflict concerning this role.

It is possible that some bishops have been overly sensitive to a few outspoken individuals in their dioceses or, they may overestimate the amount of importance that leaders within the diocese attach to their being liturgical overseers and "guardians of what was and is". This makes them tend to put more time and emphasis on these two often-related roles than most people in the diocese want them to do. This is suggested by the fact that 56% of the diocesan council members say that their bishop **does** give at least "much" emphasis to the role of chief liturgical officer. Seven-

teen percent of the council members say "little" or "none". Sixty-nine percent of the council members say their bishop gives at least some emphasis to being "guardian of what was and is". Only about a quarter of the council members selected liturgical officer in their choices of three most important roles of a bishop. About 15% selected guardian as one of the three most important roles for the bishop to fill. This whole area seems to be one which is fraught with misconception and poor communication between the bishop and diocesan leaders.

It also seems to be a most important area for clarification. Those bishops, for example, who felt most concerned about how to administer the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the church are more likely than not those for whom this is a problem. For some it is enough to make them want to consider the idea of retiring early. Bishops who feel difficulty in fulfilling their role as chief liturgical officer are more likely to request assistance in: dealing with hostility directed at them; dealing with blocks to innovation; and in having their job goals better defined either by their own diocese, or possibly by the House of Bishops.

2. **Bishop as Preserver, Evolutionist and Innovator**

To clarify role expectations between bishop and diocese, it might be fruitful to begin by attempting to discover how the bishop sees his own role. One of the major questions here is whether or not this role does include actually defending the faith against those who would change its tenets or expression in some way, as well as defending the faith against unbelievers and purely secular humanists. It is not clear whether or not diocesan leaders expect this of their bishop. Some dioceses might well prefer a bishop who would develop new forms of worship and encourage diversity, while some dioceses might instead prefer a bishop who had a more vigorous and less inclusive definition of appropriate Episcopal Church worship practices. Conversely, some bishops would be happier in one such diocesan situation but definitely not in the other.

Interviews with a sample of bishops were useful in delineating three major types in terms of basic orientation among bishops about how to be the chief liturgical officer, or defender of the faith. About one-fifth or one-sixth of the bishops see themselves as "preservers of the faith". They feel their duty is to protect the canons, doctrines, teachings, liturgical and worship practices, against those who would alter them. This interview data would seem to indicate that these bishops feel that many such challenges for change are opposed by charismatics.

The model group — at least one-half and probably two-thirds of all bishops — are less preservers of the faith than "adapters of the faith". These bishops see themselves as evolutionists in that they are willing to see change come, but would prefer to see it come slowly. They believe in, as one put it, "evolution, not revolution" in theology, dogma, canon law, and worship.

Another minority of bishops in essence reject both the "preserver" and "evolutionist" (or adaptor) roles, and conceive of

themselves as "faith-culture innovators". These latter bishops see their mission not as reacting to the culture as much as taking an active stance in trying to adjust the theology and worship practices to the cultural and social realities of their diocese in order to participate in effecting social change. Such bishops are not content to wait for evolutionary changes to take place in the faith and worship tradition, but rather aim to change the tradition quickly. As one put it, "there is nothing in the tradition worth preserving".

It is one thing to want to change the culture, the society, the church, and theology, but is quite another thing to know how to begin to do so. "Faith-culture" innovators, typically younger bishops in poorer and more conservative dioceses, are particularly apt to be frustrated in what they may rightly perceive is expected of them in "defending" and "preserving" the faith by leaders in the diocese, and frequently they express a need for some assistance in making desired changes. But this last need for assistance seems to be typical of many bishops. Fully 78% of bishops in the survey said they needed at least some help in enabling responsible innovation, and 72% want some help in dealing effectively with blocks to innovation. Nearly half the bishops surveyed say they perceive that most people in their dioceses expect them to be the enabler and supporter of experimentation and innovation, and perhaps, accordingly, nearly half the diocesan council members say their bishop does put "much emphasis on this role in practice."

There are indications that diocesan council members are not always delighted with this emphasis, especially the more theologically conservative. Only a third of the members include this role in their top three choices for the most important role emphasis. They are even less likely to want the three major role emphases of the bishop to include being "an advocate for social concerns" (14%). It seems that council members frequently view their bishop's actions as "an advocate for social concerns" defining or being one and the same with acting as "an enabler and supporter of experimentation and innovation".

While it may actually be the case in some instances that the bishops' attempts to experiment and innovate are in the area of community outreach, social activism, and the like, it may also, be the case that the bishops' other innovative programs are either not known by council members, or are sometimes erroneously "suspected" of being a form of social activism. At any rate, it would seem that the first step in helping bishops to be better innovators would be helping them to learn to clearly communicate (preferably in a non-threatening way) what precisely is the intent and content of the new policy, procedure, program they wish to institute.

At any rate, it seems clear that whether "preserver", "evolutionist", or "innovator" in liturgical and theological matters, most bishops would welcome assistance in adapting the faith to make it more relevant to present and potential members. They would also welcome assistance in implementing new policies and practices set by the national church as they try to be loyal within their own dioceses. This was particularly true with regard to the new Prayer

Book. Quite a number of bishops interviewed have some structural change in diocesan administration, or a new educational program that they would like to institute — if they could receive some help in getting it accepted and actively supported by their diocesan commissions, committees, and clergy.

C. Bishop as Prophet, Theologian, and Teacher

The degree to which bishops become involved in functioning as “preserver”, “evolutionist”, or “innovator” theologically, liturgically, and in other ways according to their individual preferences may depend partly on the degree to which bishops feel it is their duty to be prophets.

Few bishops on the survey (only 13%) felt that they were expected to spend **most** time by the majority of their diocese as a “prophet”. Further indications are that nearly three-fifths of the bishops felt they were excused from putting any effort into the “prophetic role” by their dioceses, a situation which is to most bishops’ liking.

What do bishops have in mind when they in main reject the prophetic role? Kirk defined the prophetic role of the bishop not as predicting future trends but rather acting as conscience leader for people, calling them back to the true spiritual path, and exhorting them to fulfill their Christianity.¹ This definition could in practice get very close to “preserver of the faith” and “chief liturgical officer” and may be a reason why some bishops abjure for themselves the prophetic role.

In the interviews a few bishops defined “prophet”, however, as someone who has the divine gift of prophecy, and since the Lord did not bestow this particular grace upon them, they feel quite free to turn their attention to other areas.

It can be estimated from interviews that the greater proportion of bishops had neither the first nor the second definition really in mind in commenting on their feelings about undertaking the role of “prophet”. They understood the role to involve them in being moral spokesmen on social issues, persons who could understand the complexity of the current socio-economic and political realities and predict their logical outcome if various actions (ideally derived from theological precepts) were not taken.

The interviews reveal that bishops who had this understanding of the prophetic role had a difficult or unpleasant experience themselves in acting “prophetically” in the sixties, and hence are not eager to undertake this role again. Some bishops felt, probably rightly so, that if diocesan council responses are indicative, there is, if not antagonism, at most, **little** support for their achieving visibility in the role of prophet.

The main reason, however, that bishops avoided the role of social prophet is, according to them, because they did not have the knowledge to undertake it. Even though they should want to speak out on social issues and felt courageous enough to risk disapproval from their diocesan constituents they felt that to be a good and effective prophet required not only theological expertise, but more importantly, dual competence in contemporary history, sociology, psychology,

economics, or political science. This did not mean they abdicated any attempt at speaking on social issues, but rather did it in a more covert fashion in sermons, prayers, and in their own actions.

About a fourth of the bishops did on occasion or fairly regularly act as social prophets. Questionnaire data combined with interview data suggests that these bishops had one or more of the following characteristics: 1) a commitment to the ‘social Gospel’ which leads them to challenge the Church, society and diocesan constituents to work on social issues in their community, in the nation and the world; frequently combined with; 2) a competent staff who will do research for them on matters they would like to make a knowledgeable prophecy about; 3) greater accumulation of years in the episcopate.

In responding to the questionnaire, bishops report that the longer they are in the episcopate the more they are pressured to undertake the prophetic role. Perhaps this is because diocesan constituents tend to expect more of the bishop as he accumulates experience in the office. Or, perhaps this is because, as indicated earlier, bishops who have been in the office for some decades are more likely than newer bishops to be adept at enabling innovation and hence perhaps less likely to antagonize constituents in making prophetic utterances on social-moral issues.

Some bishops see their ministry as more effectively accomplished through being a “teacher” rather than being a social critic. This calls for reflecting theologically on contemporary events in a way which enables others to re-examine their thoughts and actions.

Of the half of the bishops who see themselves as “teachers” only a fourth consider themselves “theologians” as well. Those who considered themselves theologians were more likely to be: 1) currently teaching in a seminary part-time; and/or 2) had a recently earned theological graduate degree, or 3) currently engaged in continuing education courses or private study in academic theology. The demands of the office may shortchange bishops who would like to be more theologically competent and/or have time to reflect theologically, as indicated by Bishops’ time diary analysis. Although bishops rated “reading and study” and “personal prayer and meditation” among their three most liked activities, the former activity consumed only 7% of their average week and the latter 3%, totally no more than 7 hours altogether at the most. It would be difficult to conceive of oneself as a “theologian” under these circumstances.

It is somewhat remarkable, in view of the time diary analysis, that so many bishops considered themselves “teachers”, when the average bishop spends no more than .07% of his typical work week (approx. ½ hour) in actual teaching. The answer to this apparent discrepancy lies in **how** bishops defined themselves as teachers. Most bishops interviewed saw their teaching function **totally** fulfilled through their preaching and writing.

The remaining (estimated) half of the bishops who saw themselves neither as “theologians” nor as “teachers” nevertheless did not feel they neglected these functions in the diocese. Rather they took on the role of enablers in promoting these kinds of activities in their dioceses through importing theologians to keep diocesan staff and clergy informed on current theological thinking and other matters of common

¹ The Reverend Richard Kirk, “A Behavioural Science View of the Organization and Function of the Bishop’s Office” in C.A. Hahn, *Path-Finders for Parishes* (Seabury Press, 1974).

concern and/or sought out local talent within the diocese to be the teachers of others.

All but about a quarter of the diocesan council members perceived their bishop as putting at least some time into being a "teacher-theologian", so perhaps bishops have been more successful than they realize in exhibiting these roles in their exercise of episcopal duties. This is fortunate, since nearly half of the council members included "teacher-theologian" as one of the three most important role emphases of bishops. This, of course, leaves half for whom it is not important that their bishop fulfill the "teacher-theologian" role. Diocesan council data provide indication that for council members to desire their bishop to act as "teacher-theologian" is an acquired taste — a taste that is acquired by having a bishop who performed competently in these roles. Diocesan council members who saw their bishop as putting a great deal of time into the "teacher-theologian" role were more likely than others to feel that "theological expertise and knowledge" as well as "speaking ability" and "writing ability" should be important qualities or abilities for a bishop to have.*

Although theological expertise was considered at least somewhat important by most, qualities, such as being "devout" and "inspirational to others", and skills such as "ability to deal with conflict", "expertise in dealing with groups", and "ability to deal with conflict as arbitrator and mediator" were generally considered "more important" episcopal attributes. These attributes were associated with the core roles of bishop as administrator and as pastor to be discussed later.

Both bishops and diocesan clergy and lay leaders have a lot of expectations about what form the episcopate should take, some clarified (though not necessarily communicated) and most somewhat hazy. The problem comes when one or the other's expectations are not met or are even violated. It is far better to articulate expectations, therefore, at the outset, and also at various points in the bishop's tenure to take into account changing conditions, needs, and expectations among laity and clergy in the diocese and changing abilities and activity preferences of the bishop.

D. The Bishop's Style of Leadership: Mix, Match or Mishmash?

One of the most important areas to clarify in interviewing candidates for the post of diocesan bishop and in developing diocesan expectations is the kind of leadership style that the candidate prefers and the style in which he feels himself to be most effective. At the same time it is important to have some definition of the kind of leadership style preferred and in effect allowed by lay and clergy diocesan leaders.

There are a variety of ways of classifying leadership styles. Self-administered tests have been designed to aid in diagnosis. Three broad types of leadership styles are commonly referred to as authoritarian (monarchial, autocratic), democratic (collegial), and laissez-faire (titular leadership, little or no exercise of authority, or semi-anarchy).

Few bishops interviewed made any claim to be "rulers" in their dioceses, nor expressed any desire to claim complete authority, which

*This data also indicates something about the tremendous importance that is attached to the planning for the election of a new bishop. Both candidates and nominating committees need to be clear about the qualities or abilities important for a bishop to possess. In the case of a person nominated, an honest self-appraisal of whether or not he does possess those qualities and abilities desired is essential.

may be a reflection of the anti-authoritarian spirit of the times. There were differences, however, among these bishops in the extent to which they would ideally like to exert final authority and incorporate others in diocesan decision making. Broadly, the two major preferred leadership styles of bishops can be termed "sharer of authority" and "retainer of authority". These two styles of leadership may be delineated briefly as follows:

Sharer of Authority: Nearly half of the interviewed bishops gave descriptions of their preferred and actual leadership with others (clergy, committees, council, commissions, etc.) in the diocese, where they played the role of supervisor, coordinator, and especially **enabler** of others' efforts to perform the work and expand the ministry of the diocese.

Retainer of Authority: At least a third of the remaining bishops interviewed described themselves more as those who fulfilled their leadership functions by delegating work, assigning responsibilities to others, and making all major decisions on who was to undertake what work and what policies would be implemented. A bishop with this orientation seeks input and advice from staff, experts, and constituencies on which to base the decisions, but he always casts the deciding vote.

Although these are the kinds of leadership styles bishops were most likely to claim they favored, it may be that in practice matters might be otherwise. The would-be "sharer of authority" might turn out to be a laissez-faire kind of leader, letting the work fall where it may. The person who aspires to be "retainer of authority" might, in reality, act as an emperor of the diocese, making all the important decisions himself. It takes assiduous questioning, investigation, and perhaps observation by diocesan clergy and lay leaders to grasp accurately what the episcopal candidate or already-elected diocesan's preferred leadership style consists of in fact.

Candidates and already-elected bishops should also investigate whether or not their preferred style is both acceptable to their diocesan constituents and indeed **possible** or effective, given structural characteristics of the diocese. One needs to note that dioceses differ in canonical structure and also with regard to the roles assigned to persons and to groups within diocesan structures.

Research results isolate various characteristics of dioceses which appear to be particularly important in placing constraints on the bishop's freedom to define his leadership style as he chooses. Although current issues and special crises within particular dioceses create conditions which impinge on the bishop's job definition and time, there seem to be three major structural characteristics of dioceses which most affect the job of bishop.

The first is the expectations of the active members of his diocese as to how he **should** operate. For example, a bishop who is deferred to by his diocese as absolute and legitimate ruler cannot, ironically, freely adopt a democratic leadership style and expect others to comply. Similarly, a bishop who is expected by his diocese to make decisions in cooperation with clergy and commissions would encounter strong opposition should he attempt to make most of the major decisions

himself. Bishops whose own preferences for leadership style differ from that strongly expected of them by most of their diocese are likely to experience not only personal stress, but are also apt to find they must in many instances change their style to conform with others' expectations in order to effectively discharge their episcopal responsibilities.

A second characteristic of a diocese which impinges on the bishop's freedom to choose his own way is the geographical spread of the diocese. Bishops in dioceses which are quite dispersed geographically — that is where clergy and laity have to travel four to six hours on the average to attend diocesan meetings — are going to have problems involving clergy and laity to any great extent in the on-going work of the diocese. In addition, bishops of larger dioceses must spend a higher proportion of their work week in travel than bishops of smaller dioceses, giving them less time to spend in consulting with others individually or in meetings concerning the management of the diocese. Bishops in such dioceses, regardless of their own preferences, may find that the "sharer of authority" leadership style is either ineffective or impossible, and they must therefore assume more personal authority in decision making.

A third characteristic of a diocese affecting episcopal leadership style is the relative affluence of the diocese. In the most affluent dioceses, bishops will have an easier time beginning new programs and continuing effective ones than bishops in the least affluent dioceses. They may find that they cannot run even the most necessary programs due to lack of funds. Further, in relatively affluent dioceses, bishops are likely to have a staff which can undertake some of the work — work which the bishops in the least affluent dioceses must undertake themselves if it is to be done at all. The most affluent dioceses frequently, though not invariably, have laity from higher socio-economic backgrounds involved in diocesan decision making, people who tend to be more forthright in criticizing those diocesan policies which they dislike than laity from less highly advantaged backgrounds. In short, relative affluence of dioceses can produce different kinds of constraints on the freedom of bishops to do as they would prefer in the office.

These three conditions can independently characterize dioceses, though they tend to coincide in distinct ways in the most affluent and the least affluent dioceses. The most affluent dioceses tend to be more geographically compact and have clergy and laity who strongly expect that the bishop will share decision making with them in return for their active involvement in the work of the diocese. In contrast, the least affluent dioceses tend to be geographically dispersed and have clergy and laity who expect the bishop to make all the major decisions as well as do most of the work of the diocese himself. Ironically bishops in the most affluent and the least affluent dioceses have less freedom generally to define their leadership style effectively than do bishops in dioceses of moderate affluence.

For whatever combination of reasons, bishops in the least affluent dioceses seem most dissatisfied with their opportunities to exert the kind of leadership style they desire. This may be because they feel over-pressured by the demands made on them in conjunction with the more limited resources available. They are more likely than other bishops to

express a need to have their job goals more clearly defined by the House of Bishops and by the General Convention, and by their local dioceses. It would seem that bishops from poorer dioceses do not care who defines their goals, as long as some help in clarifying them is provided. In contrast bishops from richer dioceses are not in favor of any group defining their job goals for them.

To a far greater extent perhaps than a century ago, expectations of diocesan constituents set conditions on the bishop's leadership style. A fourth of the diocesan bishops in the survey report that they are in dioceses in which most people expect the diocese to be run on the basis of "Bishop's Authority" — i.e. it is the bishop who is supposed to make all the decisions. A much larger proportion of bishops surveyed, slightly over three-fifths, report they are in dioceses in which most expect the diocese to be run on the basis of "consensus", i.e. the bishop is supposed to share decision making power with clergy and commissions. The remaining 15% of the bishops perceive either varying opinions among the active laity and clergy as to appropriate leadership style of the bishop, and/or disinterest and apathy about how the diocese is to be run, as long as it is run. Survey data further disclosed that nearly a quarter of the bishops were in dioceses where their own preferred style of operating (be it "consensus" or "bishop's authority") was at odds with the kind of leadership style they perceived was expected of them by the key people in their dioceses. As far as can be ascertained, the "mismatched" bishops, by their responses, were almost equally divided as to whether they would prefer to be in a diocese which had a tradition of operating on the basis of bishop's authority or in one which operated on the basis of consensus.

Diocesan council members responses to questions in the area of bishop's leadership style both muddle and illuminate this area. Some tentative conclusions emerge.

First, it seems that Diocesan council members are themselves happier with their bishop's leadership style than he may believe. For example, only 21% of the council members said that it was even somewhat true that their bishop "exercises too little control in the diocesan planning and implementation" and only 30% even somewhat true that their bishop "exercises too little responsibility and decision-making authority in diocesan planning and implementation". These council members may be in the "mismatched" bishops' dioceses. These somewhat dissatisfied council members were also those who were more likely to believe that their bishop was theologically at an opposite pole from them, so it may be that they are responding to more than their personal perception of their bishop's leadership style. Dissatisfied council members were usually open in commenting that the diocese was unclear as to what kind of leadership they expected and wanted in a bishop, and greater clarity at the time of election would have helped on both parts.

Second, however, it appears that it may be considerably more difficult to achieve this clarification than many may anticipate. Council members were divided in their perceptions of the kind of leadership style expected by most people of the bishop. Thirty-seven percent felt that most people expected the bishop to act on the basis of consensus within the diocesan council. Twenty-two percent felt that most ex-

pected the diocese to act on the basis of the bishop's authority. Forty-one percent perceived that people are divided in the diocese over whether they expect it to operate mainly on the basis of consensus or mainly on the basis of the bishop's authority. This last figure is considerably higher than the bishops' estimate, but even so may well underrepresent the number of dioceses which are actually divided in the kind of leadership expected of their bishop. For example, responses of council members were grouped by diocese for sixteen dioceses differing in size, affluence, and geographical location on the question of how "most people" in the diocese expected episcopal leadership to operate. The major thing this analysis disclosed is that within individual diocesan councils, there was a lack of consensus in perceptions concerning what most people in the diocese expected. This division of opinion seems to be characteristic of our culture. This would suggest that Episcopalians respond within the church in ways similar to the way they respond to other issues and organizations in our society and culture.

Sometimes the problem for diocesan lay and clergy leaders in attempting to delineate the kind of episcopal leadership they would prefer is that while they may know what they do not like they have difficulty in seeing and articulating what they **do** like. More frequently, they have difficulty in fully understanding the kind of episcopal leadership they **need**. The following comment from a clergy member of a diocesan council is illustrative of this dilemma:

"Our current bishop is one who has a leadership style almost 180 degrees opposite to his predecessor. The predecessor was an autocratic man, who had a hand in just about everything going on in the diocese.

The present Bishop is much more relaxed (perhaps too much) and lets things happen without feeling that he has to be personally involved. It is a welcome change for most of us, but one that may be working to the detriment of the diocese and its bishop."

On the other hand, bishops find they may inadvertently create dissension and confusion in their dioceses by alternating (seemingly at random) leadership styles. Several lay and clergy members said they cared less about the kind of leadership style adopted by their bishop than they did about his consistency in leadership style, e.g.

- "We have a constitution not a monarchical episcopate, but many bishops alternate between being passive and directive, as though they were seriously confused about their role . . . My own suspicion is that the bishops themselves must resolve some decision about who they think they are and how they see their work."
- "The bishop could be more effective if he could understand his way of leading, establish that, and **make it known** to the diocese. In too many cases, the bishop likes to lead by consensus (if that is possible), but then reverts back to the autocratic 'one man show'. That is O.K. with me, as long as I know what his procedure will be and he **consistently** follows it."

Part of this inconsistency on the part of the bishop may be his response to the diversity in expectations regarding leadership style and/or other newly discovered structural constraints in the dioceses which are placed on the kind of leadership which is most effective.

Such constraints would include geography and wealth as previously described above. It does take some time and perhaps, experimentation for a newly elected bishop to sort out these complexities. This is an especially difficult task if one is not aware of such complexities before assuming office — and the record would indicate that this apparently is usually the case.

E. **The Various Roles Valued by Bishops and Councils**

Changing cultural norms and new social issues emerging in the nations, states, and dioceses affect the church to varying degrees and, hence, the episcopate. Changes in expectations about the episcopate are generally in the direction of greater democratization in leadership style, but change has brought more ambiguity and disagreement about what the appropriate leadership task and style of the bishop should be in general and in particular dioceses.

In this section, it has been seen that bishops vary in their own preferences of putting time and emphasis in various episcopal roles — e.g. chief liturgist, innovator, teacher, theologian, etc. — and in the kind of leadership style they feel is either "right" or comfortable for them. Likewise, it has been equally evident that diocesan council members (and no doubt other diocesan leaders on commissions and committees) sometimes concur and sometimes disagree with their bishop and with one another on appropriate task emphasis and leadership style of the episcopate. Both bishops and diocesan council members, not surprisingly, call for assistance in resolving ambiguities in the job of bishop.

There is a major ambiguity about the episcopate that has not yet been discussed. This is the coordination (but more often the conflict) between what is seen as the "chief pastor" role of bishops and the "executive administrator" role. This dilemma deserves a special section, which follows next.

IV THE BISHOP AS VIEWED BY HIMSELF

A. Overview

The two major roles of the bishop — as viewed both by himself and his diocesan council — are manager of the diocese and chief pastor. In the ideal world and for some fortunate bishops these two roles are so in harmony with one another that actions and time taken for one also contribute beneficially to performance in the other. But for most bishops and council members, the time the bishop spends as manager or administrator of the diocese is time taken away from more pastoral activities, and vice versa. These are the two most time-consuming roles of the bishop and this factor is very salient. Also, it seems that depending on how the role of manager-administrator of the diocese is defined and how the role of chief pastor is operationally conceptualized, the very actions necessitated by acting in one role may undermine the bishop's effectiveness in the other role. As might be expected, bishops and council members have strong opinions on which of these two roles should be given priority and how each should be best carried out in the diocese. The diocesan council, it may be recalled, is made up in approximately equal proportions of clergy and laity — the latter of whom are largely corporation executives or professionals. The council thus in a sense symbolizes the duality in the episcopate itself. This dynamic has consequences within the dioceses for: 1) how the episcopate is viewed, and 2) the kinds of conflict bishops experience, and 3) the resources they have available to them in their diocesan leadership.

B. Bishops' Perspective on the Episcopal Roles of Diocesan Manager and Chief Pastor

The bishop is the chief administrative officer of the diocese and hence it is not surprising that three-fourths of the bishops report that they are indeed expected by their dioceses to be a manager. However, though bishops typically find they spend at least 14 hours a week in administrative work, most do not value administrative activities as much as some of their other tasks. Nonetheless, the majority of bishops do not feel any personal strain between their own preferences and the amount of emphasis they must place on the managerial role. There seem to be several reasons for this.

First, some bishops, although a small minority, frankly like administrative work. They prefer to spend as much of their average week as possible in administrative activities. These contented 'managerial bishops' believe they adequately fulfill all other episcopal roles, i.e. chief pastor, chief priest, teacher, etc., through the managerial role, and usually they believe they have the support of their dioceses for this definition of their job. From interview data, the best estimate that can be made is that these bishops comprise 10 to 15% of all bishops.

Second, a larger proportion of bishops resolve any potential conflict between their own time priorities and demands made on them as manager of the diocese by turning over much of the administrative work to others in the diocese. Some bishops are fortunate in being able to delegate quite a bit of administrative work to a staff. Others have been successful in inducing clergy and laity to undertake some of this work.

Nearly a third of the bishops **do** experience personal conflict concerning the amount of emphasis required of them in the managerial role. These are bishops primarily who, due to conditions within their dioceses, cannot as easily or at all employ the tactics used by the bishops described above in dealing with administrative functions. Either these latter bishops are not permitted by the majority of their dioceses to subsume all other episcopal roles under the managerial one; or they do not have the staff to whom they can delegate administrative tasks; or they do not have willing clergy and laity to relieve them of some of this burden. Asked to be all things to all people with little assistance, it is not surprising that the discontented managerial bishops are particularly apt to say that they do not have enough time to do the job they should be doing, that they want assistance in dealing with stress and hostility, and that they would like their job goals redefined by their local dioceses.

One of the things these bishops would prefer to be doing is spending more time in the pastoral role. Almost all bishops (97%) report on the survey that the majority of their diocese also expects them to be the "chief pastor". Forty-six of the bishops report this expectation is very strong. Almost all bishops themselves endorse this role emphasis, since only 3% experience any personal conflict here over what they would prefer and what most in their dioceses expect from them as "chief pastor". This statistic, however, may be somewhat misleading. Bishops would agree that there are several definitions of what "chief pastor" activities involve, at least among laity and clergy in their dioceses. For some, "chief pastor" may be seen as nearly identical with spiritual spokesman and guardian in the chief priest-chief liturgical officer roles discussed. Chief pastor means most frequently for all, but especially to laity, a parish/mission weekend or weekday visitation by the bishop. This is indeed one of the most time-consuming activities of bishops, taking up 16% of their average work week or 12 hours. (This amount of time is typically much higher for bishops in geographically dispersed dioceses who must travel far to reach parishes). Fortunately, the great majority of bishops rank this as their most important activity, and their most enjoyed one as well. Thus the fact that it is strongly expected of them by clergy and laity in their diocese, would be a cause more for elation than anxiety except for the apprehension of bishops that members of their dioceses are somewhat oblivious to the fact that they must also spend time in their offices if the diocese is to run smoothly. Another definition of "chief pastor" is being a counselor in spiritual and personal problems primarily for clergy in their diocese. While bishops interviewed believed they did fulfill this role indirectly for their clergy few indicated that they personally attempted to serve as a "pastor" in the counselor sense for their clergy except on a limited basis. The average bishop spends no more than three hours a week in counseling. Inadequate time and sometimes inadequate training in counseling are minor reasons why most bishops attempt to fulfill this role by delegating it to others in their diocese, notably psychotherapists and retired clergy. The major reason is that the bishops feel their administrative role in its aspect of having to be a judge of clergy interferes with their ability to be a pastor in the counselor sense, as illustrated in the comments of several bishops:

- “This is a dilemma. I am a competent administrator. I would like to be a chief pastor but that is impossible. You cannot judge and counsel.”
- “I am happy as a pastor but frustrated. I have too many clergy to handle. I feel the tension between judge and pastor.”
- “I am concerned with developing a sense of community among the clergy. I draw them together frequently . . . I set up the mechanism to handle clergy and their problems. I meet in parishes twice a year and get to know clergy and laymen. In problems, clergy do not go to bishops. They go to other clergy or my deans. The administrative role hurts the pastoral role.”
- “I have cut my administrative load in order to be a more effective pastor, but I have discovered that my relationships with my clergy have not improved. I am their judge and I have fired eleven in the past few years. Clergy go elsewhere for help. It is impossible, regardless of how committed a bishop may be, to be an effective counselor. You cannot judge a person and counsel him. You cannot reconcile the roles of administrator and pastor.”

Thus acting as a “pastor” for most bishops is enabling clergy to obtain counseling if needed, and acting pastorally themselves more by visiting parishes, preaching and talking with clergy and laity. “Pastoral role” probably referring primarily to parish visitation, but also including counseling of some sort as well. Almost all believed “ability to counsel clergy and laity” was of at least some importance for a bishop, and 72% of the council members felt it was “very important” that bishops possessed this ability.

It seems clear from the data that when the term “pastoral role” is used it refers probably and primarily to parish visitations, while at the same time including reference to counseling of some sort as well.

C. Diocesan Council Members; Perspective on the Episcopal Roles of Diocesan Manager and Chief Pastor

A slightly different perspective on the meshing of these two episcopal roles is obtained from the responses of diocesan council members. These responses will provide a pleasant surprise for many bishops.

The bishops noted often in the small group discussions of the preliminary report of the 1977 House of Bishops meetings that almost all people in dioceses preparing for an election say that they want a “pastor” in their new bishop. This expectation represents a problem, because at the same time these very dioceses proceed to make demands on their bishop and structure the diocese in such a way that the bishop must spend a major portion of his time in administration if the diocese is to survive. This tends to frustrate bishops. The data from the diocesan council members agrees with the impressions that the bishops have, namely that by far the most important role for a bishop ideally in their opinion is the pastoral role. Seventy-two percent of the council members say that the episcopal role of chief pastor of the diocese should ideally be given the greatest amount of emphasis in terms of the bishops’ time.

While many bishops feel that they are disproportionately burdened with the task of administration most diocesan council members (75%)

saw the bishop as actually giving “much” attention to the role of being chief pastor, and 50% of diocesan council members saw their bishop as putting a “great deal” of emphasis here in practice. In fact, council members were more likely to see their bishop placing a great deal of emphasis in terms of time and energy on being chief pastor rather than on being administrator or manager of the diocese. This data might lead us to conclude that there is more general satisfaction with the functioning of the bishop as pastor than many bishops might think.

To be sure, many clergy and lay members of diocesan councils would like their bishops to still spend more time in “pastoral activities” (read “parish visitation” primarily) and less in administration. Although such desires may partly support the apprehension of bishops, that lay and clergy leaders in their dioceses are naive about what administrative load is required of a bishop, most of the comments from clergy, and an especially large response from laity, reflected far more sensitivity to this problem than many bishops realize.

Addressing the matter frankly, there is a real question in the minds of council members, especially the business executives among them, on how competent their bishop is in management and administration. And though both clergy and laity may feel the pastoral role is most important for bishops, they also feel it important that there be efficient and effective diocesan management practices. Efficient management (which in their opinion is typically lacking) of the diocese would free the bishop to spend more time in pastoral duties.

Nearly all (94%) of the council members believed it was at least somewhat important for bishops to have the “ability to manage, delegate and coordinate work of the diocese”, and over half (54%) felt this was a very important ability for a bishop to possess. However, 60% noted the effectiveness of their bishop would be increased by his acquiring more expertise in management, and in administration.

Comments from council members indicated that these observations were offered most frequently in a friendly display of good will toward their bishop, rather than from a hostile-critical stance. In other words they did not “blame” their bishop for any perceived lack in administrative skills, but were sensitive to the fact that his prior education and experience seldom permitted him the opportunity to obtain the level of competence in these areas attained by some of the lay corporation and foundation executives on his diocesan council and other diocesan commissions and committees. If they fault the bishop at all for lacking administrative skills, it is for his failure to delegate work of this nature to experts. Here, again, this may simply be lack of knowledge on the part of bishops about how to best delegate work. (52% of the bishops agreed that they need some help in “deciding what jobs can be delegated” as mentioned earlier in this report.) But council members are also somewhat divided over whether it is best to turn most of the administrative detail over to diocesan staff and volunteers or whether bishops should be given some additional training in administration. The majority feel a balance between these two solutions is probably best since extra staff are costly, volunteers have only so much time to give, and at any rate — it would be wise for bishops to know something more about management and administration, since they do have to make final decisions in these areas. The following comments

from council members are illustrative of several of these points:

Pastor: "Many men are elected bishops because they are great pastors, teachers, and priests. After consecration, they must become administrators — a job for which they are unprepared. Professional administrators at the diocesan level would free bishops to be what they are best trained for."

Business Executive: "Running a diocese is similar to running a large corporation. There are few parish priests with the business training and experience needed to run a diocese. Yet this is the source of our bishops. A bishop-in-waiting (coadjutor) should be required to undergo business training to prepare."

Pastor: "Provision of administrative and managerial support to a naive bishop seems preferable to supplying theological and pastoral skills to an executive With so many laymen trained in business methods — why not put them to work for the church and let our bishops be bishops?"

Executive: "The bishop's **principle role** should be as chief pastor. Both clergy and laity need to be educated more about this and both need to respect it more. The **least role** of the bishop should be that of diocesan administrator. The National Church should consider a grant-in-aid program that would allow dioceses to receive aid to assist in establishing and maintaining a functioning position of diocesan administrator."

Pastor: "Imparting managerial skills is **critical**. Many bishops think they can solve these problems with specialists — I don't agree. The bishop whether or not he likes it, is looked to as chief pastor — but this, unlike your questionnaire, can't be separated from managerial skill any more than can a rector's function."

A number of laity on the diocesan councils noted that their bishops were not as open or perhaps aware that members of their councils possessed expertise in business, administration, and financial matters that these persons would be willing to offer as a contribution to the diocese. It would certainly seem wise for bishops to at least "check out" whether any such able and willing lay women and men with expertise in financial personnel or general management are members of their own diocesan councils.

V THE MAN BEHIND THE MANTLE: WHAT DOES HE NEED AND WANT?

A. The Bishop and His Wife

The data from this study and the investigation conducted by Bishop Wolf in 1978-79 ("Moving Into the Episcopate"), both indicate that while being elected to the office of bishop is generally viewed as a promotion, it is, at the same time, a major mid-life career change. It involves the need for different kinds of skills and attitudinal perspectives. The stress this kind of change may entail for the man who becomes a bishop can also be expected, as Wolfe points out, to be a source of potential stress for new bishops' wives. Indeed, bishops, of various degrees of tenure in the office, interviewed for this present study alluded to the fact that their wives were not always happy as a result of election to the episcopate. In fact, the reverse was sometimes the case. In the small group discussions of the preliminary reports at the 1977 House meetings, quite a number of bishops apparently strongly suggested that more attention be given in new bishop orientation and to orienting their wives as well, including them in the discussions of how a bishop's life is likely to differ from that of a rector's.

Implicit in this concern for bishops' wives shown by bishops is a concern for themselves and for future bishops. Election to the episcopate entails for the bishop, stress and anxiety as well as pleasure and excitement as he undertakes this demanding office. It also frequently involves a breaking of the social and especially the professional support systems which he has enjoyed as the rector of a parish. Under these circumstances it is particularly important that the marital relationship be a source of support rather than one of increased demand and possible conflict and stress.

B. Professional Peers

One of the reasons bishops lack the professional support systems that clergy enjoy is, as suggested in an earlier part of this report, that their role as judge conflicts with their role as confidant and friend. Another problem in forming support groups of professional persons (clergy and well-informed laity perhaps) within the diocese is that the others who do not form part of such a group may become jealous and suspicious of the time the bishop spends with them and the potential influence of these persons (who may come to be looked upon as a clique) upon the policy decisions of the bishop. Several bishops indicated this was the case in conflict-ridden dioceses. Several had been consecrated into dioceses in which either there had been open conflict among clergy, or their predecessor had incurred the wrath and distrust of factions — and they were forced to play the role of mediator in a situation where trust in the office of bishop was a scarce commodity. It is difficult to form professional friendships with individual clergymen and potentially supportive lay persons under such conditions.

Even assuming the bishop has a supportive family and a few close friends with whom he can relax and become a private individual, he may still feel the need for professional consultation and support from colleagues who are engaged in the same kind of work he is, or are at least cognizant of its dimensions.

Apparently an estimated two-fifths of the bishops do want such professional colleague support, but do not have it — and feel isolated from

both colleague relationships with other clergy in their dioceses and from peer relationships with other bishops. Survey data indicates that even a higher proportion — about two-thirds — feel the need of others "to know me as a person". A fifth of the bishops strongly expressed this need.

A large minority of bishops (about 40%) are lonely in their episcopal position. They have no professional colleagues and peers with whom they can discuss the stresses and joys, frustrations and successes they are experiencing in the office of bishop. These bishops are disproportionately in dioceses which are relatively impoverished and geographically dispersed, typically with clergy and laity who hold a very traditional view of the episcopate. Geographically spread-out dioceses make it difficult for bishops to establish colleague relationships with clergy four hours or more from diocesan headquarters. The lack of staff combined with amount of travel gives the bishop little free time to seek out supportive relationships. Such dioceses are also inclined to be those in which the bishop is most expected to be the judge (if not divine authority). This kind of elevated status makes it difficult for the bishop to establish open relationships with clergy in his diocese.

Newly consecrated bishops may be generally rather lonely as they begin a new way of life and work, but are apt to be especially lonely if 1) they are strangers to the diocese, 2) are in the kinds of dioceses just described; or 3) enter a diocese which is conflict ridden.

Bishops who felt well supplied with professional colleagues among diocesan clergy and sometimes other bishops were disproportionately, those who: 1) had been bishops for a decade or more, 2) were in relatively wealthy dioceses which tended to be run on the basis of consensus, and 3) had active clergy in close proximity to diocesan headquarters. In such dioceses there are sufficient monies and enthusiasm for embarking on new programs and relatively conflict-free relations among clergy and bishop, and among clergy and lay leaders. These fortunate bishops are further rewarded by approval of their peers. They are disproportionately nominated on the survey as "one of five" bishops who other bishops believed were doing an "excellent job" and whom they most "admired".

The most "admired" and respected bishops for their "excellent" work were also those bishops who seem least likely to feel the need for wisdom of other bishops, or for communicating with other bishops about specific aspects of bishoping. This may be yet another indication that they were indeed already well-supplied with professional friendships.

A number of interviewed bishops who enjoy satisfying colleague relationships both within and beyond their dioceses, tended to disparage the "lonely" bishops, saying things such as: "it's the fault of the man, not the office", inferring or stating directly their opinion that "lonely" bishops tended to have personality problems, or did not put out sufficient effort, were not trusting enough, etc., etc. Thus seeming to assign blame for widespread systemic problems of this nature. The conditions which create "loneliness" for many bishops in their dioceses are bad enough without having their episcopal peers subtly denigrating them for feeling lonely. Bishops who are presently well supplied with

professional friendships might do well to wonder just how isolated they might feel if they were suddenly transferred to the kind of dioceses in which the lonely bishops now disproportionately reside.

The House of Bishops meetings held once a year can hardly be expected to fulfill all needs for peer support. In interviews conducted in 1976 it appears that some bishops were able to use this time to strike up or cement some friendships with other bishops, while others commented that although they wished to use the meetings in this fashion they were not successful. This quote from a bishop who does not find the sessions of the House of Bishops helpful from the point of view of peer support sums up the frustration experienced by some.

"I have felt terrible loneliness. I have friends but no confidants. The House of Bishops offers nothing. My contacts with other Bishops have been only business contacts."

Noting the peer isolation felt by some bishops may, however, have had a satisfactory effect on subsequent House meetings. In a survey conducted by the Rt. Rev. Alexander Stewart at the 1978 House meetings, it seemed that one of the most important benefits of this meeting was the collegial sharing that occurred. Of the 96 bishops responding to Stewart's survey, for example, 53% agreed that "no matter what we accomplish or how I feel personally, it is important that we meet in order to share in a collegial way", and 58% agreed that though the meeting itself was "only somewhat useful . . . I did appreciate the chance to be in touch with my colleagues and enjoyed this aspect of the meeting."

Regional meetings of bishops, as several noted in the 1977 interviews, are often a good way of maintaining some professional support on a more frequent and intimate basis than House meetings typically allow. Also, there are some cohorts of bishops consecrated in the same year, who attended orientation sessions together, who have maintained contact with one another.

More concentrated effort to establish at the outset such support groups of new bishops would probably be welcomed. In 1977, newly consecrated bishops all report value received from the technical consulting.

Consultation offered by another more senior bishop as part of the new bishop support system developed by the Office of Pastoral Development has been referred to as a useful resource. However, new bishops are also likely to say that they needed more on-going support and consultation. A number indicated that it might also be most helpful to have this same additional support available through a group of bishops. It would be valuable to have an ongoing group in which bishops could exchange ideas and techniques, as well as share with one another their frustrations and joys in the office. Wolf's proposal (issuing from data contained in this study and his own interviews with new bishops in 1978) strongly recommends that the new bishop's orientation conference conducted under the aegis of the Office of the Presiding Bishop provide opportunities for new bishops to form colleague relationships with peers and to learn how to develop effective support systems within and without their dioceses as they enter the episcopate.

Important as peer interaction and support among bishops is, it will

not completely alleviate the isolation of those "lonely" bishops who feel the need of others to know them as a person, not just a bloodless ritual figure in episcopal vestments.

Responses from diocesan council members throw encouraging light on the somewhat dismal picture depicted by a large minority of bishops. In response to a question asking them how well they know the bishop of their dioceses as "a person", **no one** of the 386 responding claimed not to know their bishop in this fashion at all. In fact, fully half of the council members said they know him at least "quite well" as a person. This knowledge is apparently based on real contact: those council members who talked with their bishop the most frequently, were also those most likely to say they knew him well as a person. These council members were more likely to be those who were very active on the council, or who had served on other diocesan committees and task forces. Their time commitment was large. Council members who knew the bishop the best as a person were more likely to be clergy than laity. Clergy were also more likely to talk with the bishop frequently than were lay members of the council. Further analysis shows that lay members "knew" the bishop in direct proportion to the time they spent with him at meetings and working on common tasks. This same condition pertains to the clergy.

These kinds of findings underscore the validity, perhaps, of the importance diocesan council members attach to their bishop acting less as an administrator bogged down with paper work and more as a pastor out talking with people. Clergy and laity who talked more frequently to the bishop felt they had more personal power/influence in diocesan decision-making than those who didn't talk with the bishop as frequently — and hence may have been more ready to support the bishop's policies than those who did not have as much interaction with the bishop.

Diocesan council responses also, however, lend more support to a finding from data collected from the bishops that "loneliness" is a less important factor in dioceses which operate on the basis of consensus. Clergy who talked more frequently to the bishop were also more likely to say that most people expected the diocese to operate on the consensus rather than on the bishop's authority. Clergy who talked relatively infrequently to the bishop, were less likely to say this. There is no relationship between how frequently lay council members talk with the bishop and their perception of how most of them expected the diocese to be "run". Perhaps this is because clergy conversations with bishops are more likely to involve a discussion of organizational and policy matters as well as personal matters. Lay conversations with the bishop are more limited. Since similar relationships obtained between clergy perception of consensual decision-making in the diocese and knowing the bishop at least quite well as "a person", this might indicate that any steps bishops might take to include their clergy more in the real governance of a diocese might go a long way to lessening the isolation and professional loneliness of some bishops. One must say "might" with caution, however, because there are, as stated, indications that bishops are frequently "lonely" precisely because they cannot break through the stereotyping of them as absolute ruler of the diocese.

Bishops may also be quick to point out that simply talking with lots of people everyday, though it may be valuable in increasing morale of clergy and laity and enhancing their participation in the work of the diocese, does relatively little for them personally. A number of council members (both clergy and laity) appeared sensitive to this problem in comments offered, and themselves suggested the advisability of the bishop forming a support group of people within the diocese he finds congenial, helpful and trustworthy. To quote just one clergy member in illustration "I think bishops need to use a select number of clergy and laity for **personal** support and counsel. Perhaps **neighboring bishops** ought to be included." Some lay and clergy comments also indicated that they felt their bishop could get personal support more readily than he anticipated if he would only be willing to reach for it more clearly, or accept it when proffered. At any rate, there is sensitivity to the bishop's problem of potential isolation from support systems, shown on the part of many members of the diocesan councils, and a desire to help if possible.

C. Help Wanted and Offered

No more than a parish can exist in these times without a more mutual ministry of clergy and laity working together, so a contemporary diocese must seek a more mutual ministry which involves the bishop in coordination with clergy and laity. A parish where the rector is supposed to be the only one "doing ministry" will soon be ineffective and eventually moribund. It is just as certain that a diocese where the bishop is supposed to be the sole person in charge will become moribund. Recently attention has been more and more focused on what kinds of supports and continuing education programs the church can provide parish clergy to help them in their difficult task. Now the church is finally getting around to asking what its bishops need in the way of supports and, perhaps, educational offerings. **This study has been an attempt to find out how the church can be of greater assistance to those persons who enter the episcopate, those whose responsibilities are the heaviest as they fulfill essential and key leadership positions in all aspects of church life.**

One of the areas in which bishops need assistance, and this was frequently confirmed by diocesan council responses, is in the area of conflict resolution. In response to this the Office of Pastoral Development has organized various seminars on conflict resolution.

Care has also been taken recently in consultations with new bishops to include their wives in discussions of the new opportunities and the new stress which is attendant upon assuming responsibility as a bishop.

An even greater need voiced strongly by bishops and perhaps even more strongly by diocesan councils — is for a somewhat better way of delineating what the job of the bishop is expected to be. It is also seen of very great importance to delineate more clearly the attributes, the task emphasis, the leadership style, and other such factors that are desired by council members and valued by candidates prior to the election.

It needs to be acknowledged, however, that there are many expectations of diocesan leaders and newly consecrated bishops which will not be uncovered until a person has been in the office for several months or

even for several years. Further, some of the written job expectations on the part of the diocese electing a new bishop will be found to be inappropriate after some time, even though they may have seemed appropriate and were agreed to at the time of the election itself.

VI SUMMARY: WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

These next few paragraphs will address the existential reality surrounding the office of bishop. Here are some factors and issues in the episcopate which cannot be ignored. These are not theoretical observations nor comments based on one person's anxieties and apprehensions. The issues have arisen in the experience of active bishops. They are listed in the order in which reference is made to them in the foregoing study. Some are more important than others, but taken altogether they tell it as it generally is in the episcopate today. Some issues will be easier for some persons to handle than for others. The way in which an issue gets handled or resolved depends a great deal on a bishop's temperament, training, and experience. But whether difficult or easy — it will probably have to be handled one way or another.

1. **Maintaining a life of prayer and continuing spiritual development.**

The demands of the episcopate are such that practices, routines, rules of life, and regimens of prayer and meditation that were possible and deeply meaningful as a priest are threatened. In entering the episcopate one needs to know from the start that more effort will be required in order to sustain a vibrant and creative spiritual life.

2. **Relationship with Diocesan Council.**

What the diocesan council does, the way it behaves and the expectations that it has of itself and of the bishop is enormously important and influences the bishops effectiveness. Therefore, the life of this body, its mind-set, tradition, and political dynamics must be understood. New bishops must take the time and find the opportunity to build rapport with this group.

3. **Conflict.**

Throughout the diocese conflict will occur. Some of it will be focused in the diocesan council. It cannot be avoided. However, it can be resolved in many instances. Unresolved conflict will make life harder for the bishop. It will block his recommendations and will inhibit his efforts to provide dynamic leadership in the diocese.

4. **The Bishop's Job Description.**

While some efforts are being made to reduce the ambiguity surrounding the bishop's role and task, there still exists in many places confusion, mixed signals, vague expectations, and conflicting messages. One way — though not the only one — to help clear this up is through a constant effort to write, revise, evaluate, update, and restate the bishops position description. An initial effort to state expectations and accountabilities through a position description may be clumsy and unsatisfactory, but with time such a statement can be sharpened and improved. To leave it all vague and loose is a sure way to disaster.

5. **Authority and Identity.**

These are hard issues to deal with, but they are connected with such things as a leadership vacuum, lack of credibility, loss of confidence, and gross inconsistency. A bishop needs to know who he is as a person and to develop his own understanding and his own sense of authority. As bishops grow and improve in their ministries people respond. What people do not appreciate in religious leaders is fuzziness, a lack of self-knowledge, and an unwillingness to claim authority — which is often seen as a reluctance to accept responsibility.

6. **Acting as Chief Liturgical Officer.**

This is clearly a part of the job, and will be difficult. Whether one knows anything about liturgics or not, he will be called upon to make decisions and give leadership. A bishop needs to understand the prevailing liturgical climate of his diocese and if he is not interested in liturgical matters he will need to develop both interest and knowledge.

7. **Advocacy of Social Concerns**

This is one of the "hot" areas of life in the episcopate. Some bishops seem to be able to avoid it, but one can never be sure that the role will not be forced upon him suddenly by specific local events. Such advocacy is clearly not popular in the church today. Hardship in this area is increased by lack of communication skills. That is to say: When tensions arise it really helps the bishop if he is able to communicate clearly, rationally, and in language that does not further complicate an already intense situation.

8. **Theology.**

The current episcopate is seen as generally weak in this area. Time diaries show that bishops are too busy to read and study in any depth. Theological dialogue is left generally to the few bishops who are former professors or to theological experts who are invited in to provide the necessary theological background. The study of theology needs to become more a part of the episcopate and bishops need to ask themselves what they can do to improve their rating as theologians.