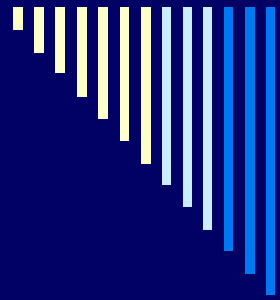


REPORT ON SURVEYS OF PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

**Prepared by
Structural Change Working Group
National Voice of the Faithful**

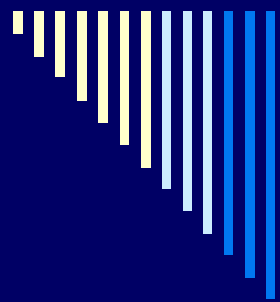




Background

- Why we developed survey
- Who we are
 - Versions
 - Critiqued and tested
 - Adaptations due to software (Kintera, Survey Monkey)
- Who participated
 - All on VOTF email list
 - Who responded VOTF and others
 - 1,000+ responded by January (although still open)
 - Inherent biases





Selection of Sample

- Base was 394 parishes
 - ▣ If duplicates
 - Eliminated those never on PPC
 - Chose current versus former member
 - If current then member who answered most questions
 - ▣ Clergy were removed from base
 - ▣ 55% are current members of a PPC
 - ▣ Urban 29%, Suburban 60% Rural 11%
 - ▣ Growing 39% Stable 42% Declining 19%
 - ▣ On a scale of rating PPCs from 1 to 5 average was 3
 - ▣ 163 persons added comments at the end of the survey
- Chuck Zech

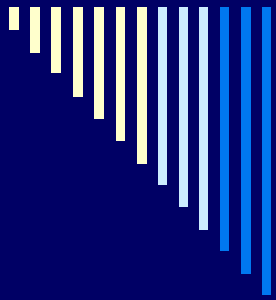




Selection of Sample con.

- Dioceses in United States
 - ▣ First thing to note that there is at least one parish in every diocese that does not have a parish council (USCCB survey)
 - ▣ In the original data of the VOTF survey 76% of the dioceses were represented
 - ▣ In the sample base selected from the VOTF survey 58% of the dioceses were represented





Size of Parish

- For entire survey

- 25 – 8,000 households

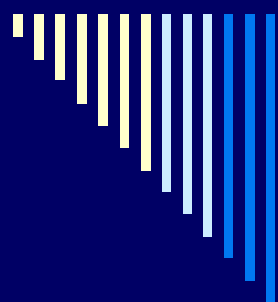
- Average size is 1540 households

- For sample survey

- 25 – 7,000 households

- Average size is 1312 households

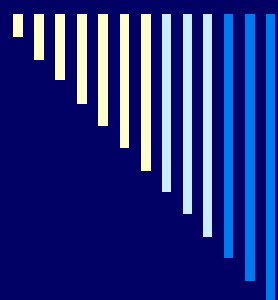




Characteristics Determined in VOTF Survey

- ❑ Membership Makeup
- ❑ Frequency of Meetings
- ❑ Existence of By-laws
- ❑ Agenda Setting
- ❑ Decision making Processes
- ❑ Likelihood of Implementation of Decisions

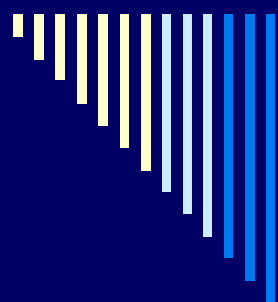




Main Functions of PPC's

- ☐ 65% Pastoral Sounding Board
 - ☐ 64.5% Planning
 - ☐ 60% Addresses pastoral concerns
 - ☐ 50% Problem Solving
 - ☐ 48% Coordinate parish Activities
 - ☐ 40% Policy Development
 - ☐ 39% Stewardship
 - ☐ 21% Other
-
- ☐ *People allowed more than one choice.



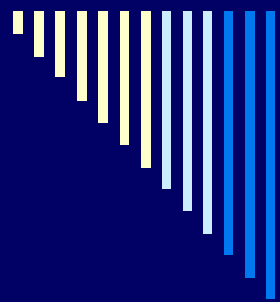


Membership Makeup

- On the average there are 14 members on a PPC. The size range is 4 to 32 people.

- The composition is:
 - 4.3 members elected at large
 - 3.4 appointed by pastor
 - 3.1 chosen by others
 - 2.3 ex officio
 - 0.9 appointed by others





Frequency of Meetings

68% meet monthly

9% meet bi-monthly

6% meet quarterly

1% meets annually

16% meet other (9 or 10 month schedule)

□ 69% hold open meetings at least once a year

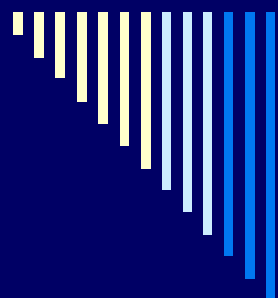




Associations- Meeting Frequency

PPC Meets	More Likely
Monthly	Agenda submitted by chair
	People are heard
	Fewer members appointed by pastor
Bi-monthly	Agenda set by pastor
	Parish not liturgical
Quarterly	Parish Post Vatican II
	Agenda not set by chair
Annually	PPC doesn't make decisions
	Parish clusters separate

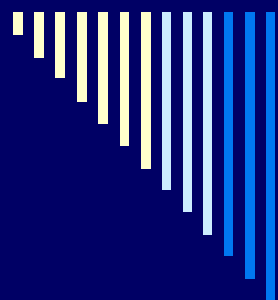




Existence of By-laws

55% have by laws	More likely
	Agenda submitted by chair
	PPC has open meetings
	Urban
	Not Pre Vatican II
	Decisions by voting
	Contains Ex officio members
	Fewer members appointed by pastors





Agenda Setting

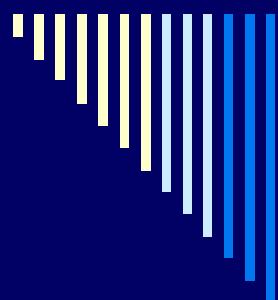
Agenda items submitted

- 72% by members
- 64% by chairperson
- 62% by parishioners
- 25% by others

Agenda is determined

- 60% by pastor
- 43% by a combination
- 34% by chairperson
- 26% by members

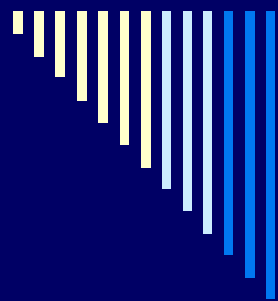




Agenda Associations

Determined by	More likely that
Chairperson	More elected at large members
	More appointed by other
	Parish not declining
Members	People heard
	Parish cluster separate
	Members appointed by others
Pastor	Recommendations not implemented
	Members appointed by pastor
	PPC meets bi-monthly





Decision making Process

63% by Consensus

34% by Voting

simple majority 24 %

2/3 majority 6%

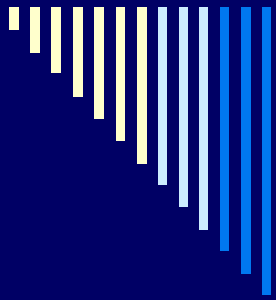
left blank 70%

32% Discernment

15% Other

10% Doesn't make decisions

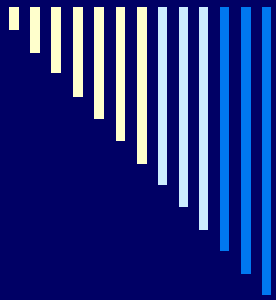




Decision Associations

Consensus	Work collaboratively	
	Members submit agenda items	
	Parish liturgical	
	Members names in newsletter	
	Rural	
	Number of members chosen by others	
	Members elected	
	Number of members chosen by pastor	

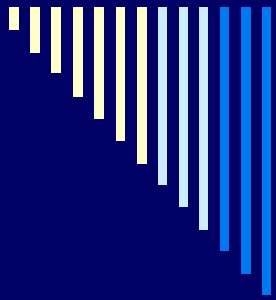




Decision Associations

Voting	More likely that
	Members elected
	PPC has by-laws
	Parish learns about council decisions through word of mouth
	Fewer families in parish
	Agenda items submitted by others
	Number of members chosen by others

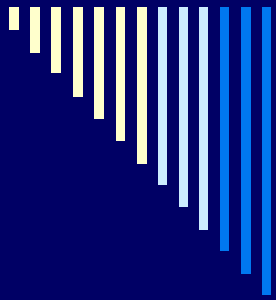




Decision Associations

Discernment	More Likely that
	Agenda items submitted by members
	Parish is involved in social action
	Parish is evangelizing
	Number of members chosen by others
	Pastor is supportive

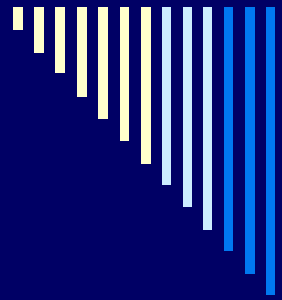




Decision Associations

Doesn't make decisions	More likely that
	PPC is overly controlled
	PPC meets annually
	Recommendations are not implemented
	Parish cluster is combined
	PPC does not meet monthly
	Fewer members are elected at large

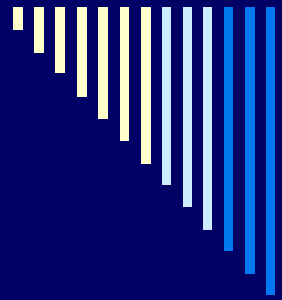




Likelihood of Implementation

- 32% always
- 66% sometimes
- 2% never

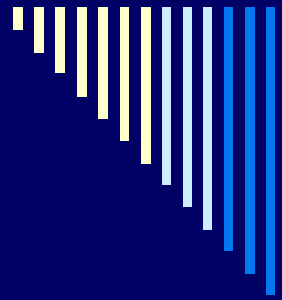




When Minutes of Meetings Are Published

- It is likely that
 - Decisions by Consensus
 - PPC Openness
 - PPC has by-laws
 - Results are achieved

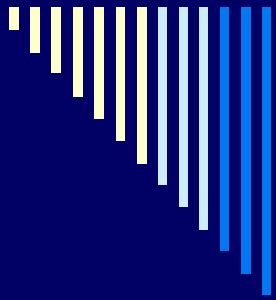




Survey Comments

- Predominately positive
- Willingness to share
- Insightful suggestions
- Requests for help
- Offers of help





Comparison with USCCB survey December, 2003

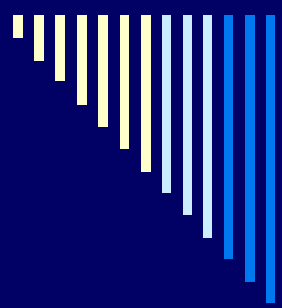
■ Parallels

- Unlike NCCB survey of 1997 which only asked about Diocesan Councils both VOTF and USCCB asked about Parish Pastoral councils

Divergences

- More interested in Diocesan Pastoral councils
- Different understanding of functions of PPCs

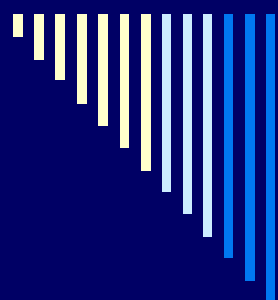




Main Functions of PPC's as determined by the 2003 survey by the USCCB

- ☐ Pastoral planning
- ☐ Broad consultation with parishioners to elicit hopes and concerns of community
- ☐ Empowering parishioners to carry out plan objectives
- ☐ Regular prayer and faith sharing
- ☐ Coordinating/ overseeing parish activities
- ☐ Reporting on parish activities
- ☐ Carrying out/ implementing parish activities

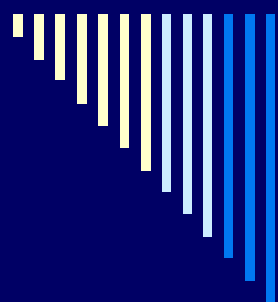




Main Functions of PPC's in VOTF SURVEY

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 - ☐ 48% Coordinate parish Activities
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-
- ☐ *People allowed more than one choice.





Functions of PPC's

□ Note that the following do not appear on the Bishops' list

- Problem solving
- Policy development

Note that the following do not appear on VOTF's list

Regular prayer and faith sharing

The emphasis on parish activities (3 of the 7 functions)





Conclusions

- ❑ PPCs where members are elected at large tend to see policy development as a main function of the council
- ❑ 50% of the PPCs in the VOTF survey saw one of their tasks as problem solving.
- ❑ This suggests that the consultative nature of the council need not inhibit its mutuality with the pastor.

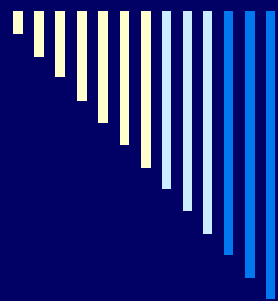




Conclusions con.

- Associations with decision making
- Where PPCs work it is because there is a mutuality among all the members which includes , of course, the pastor.

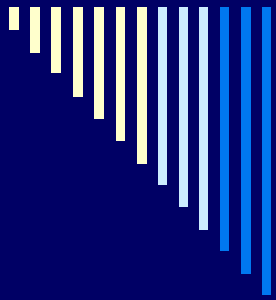




Future Plans

- ❑ Websites of Parishes with functioning PPCs
- ❑ Posting of By-Laws of such councils
- ❑ Listing of Best Practices
- ❑ Posting a self-evaluation that can be used by PPCs to improve themselves





- Survey prepared, administered and report written by Mary Freeman and Gaile Pohlhaus of the Structural Change Working Committee of National VOTF.

