

## LESSON 16: The Ideal Church



REFERENCE Page 489 [the IDEAL]



### WHAT YOU NEED

- (1) LSM: 'Community Serving Humanity'
- (2) Drawings (Lesson 1)
- (3) LSM: 'A Scripture Exercise'

### AIM

- To give the learners a vision of what the church or faith community could be like

### OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners understand that the Church is not static: it strives to become what it is called to be.
- DAP Learners realise that they have an important role to play in the Church's continuing growth.

### TEACHER'S NOTE

Lesson Outline (2) is a direct follow-on from Lesson Outline (3) of Lesson 1. Have the drawings available for comparison. If you use the scripture exercise as a reflection, encourage learners to keep the idea of the 'faith community' in the foreground as they listen to the readings.

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### 1 Community Serving Humanity

Distribute the Lesson Materials page 'Community Serving Humanity'. Give learners time to read and think about the statements. Invite a brief sharing and discussion.

#### 2 Vision of the Church

This continues the exercise began in Lesson 1. Hopefully you or the learners still have the drawings from that exercise. Proceed to points (d) to (f). The entire exercise is included for your convenience.

- (a) Ask people to divide into groups of 5. These can be groups from similar parishes or faith communities. This highlights the different perspective of different groups in the final sharing. If one group usually tends to be very quiet, this can ensure their voice is really heard. Or the groups can be as mixed as possible. This means the exchange between people takes place in the small groups. It is best for each group to sit around separate tables.
- (b) Give a few minutes for each person to think about the faith community or church as they have actually experienced it. They can jot down a few notes or draw a few images.
- (c) Ask each group to share their ideas and then make a drawing of the community as they have experienced it.
- (d) When they have done this, ask them to think individually for a short while, and then make a second communal drawing of the church (faith community) as they long for it to be.
- (e) When the drawings are completed, ask each group to stick their two pictures up side by

side on the wall and have a Gallery Walk, giving everyone an opportunity to see all the posters and ask questions of the other groups.

- (f) In the whole group, discuss the questions:
- i. What are the most striking similarities and the most striking differences in the posters?
  - ii. What are the implications of this for me? For us as a group?

Allow a short time of quiet silent reflection, perhaps an opportunity to walk outside, before sharing this last question.

(Anne Hope & Sally Timmel. 1995. *Training for Transformation III*. Gweru: Mambo Press, p 73)

### **3 A Scripture Exercise**

Distribute the Lesson Materials page 'A Scripture Exercise'. If time permits you could do it as outlined. However with less time it can be used as a good closing reflection as follows:

- i. Ask 9 learners to find the nine scripture readings.
- ii. Establish an environment for reflection: subdued light, candles, music etc.
- iii. Ask each reader to read their passage, leaving a few moments between each reading for the others to reflect upon the passage.
- iv. At the end encourage some quiet sharing.

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## **OTHER IDEAS**

### **4 Defining the Church**

This exercise is designed to help learners define the church.

- (A) Divide the class into six groups. Each group should select a spokesperson and a notetaker to record the group's findings.
- (B) In their small groups, they arrive at a consensus on these three questions:
1. How does our group define the Church?
  2. What does our group see as the major task of the Church?
  3. What are the three most pressing problems our parish(es) should be concerned about right now?
- (C) The spokespersons should then share the results with the class.
- (D) Discuss:
1. Is it possible or desirable to come up with only one definition of the Church? Why or why not?
  2. Consider what each of the six groups reported. Does each seem to prefer a particular image of the Church? Explain.
  3. Make a class list of pressing problems. Which of these are concerned with the Church itself? Which are concerned with the Church in relationship to the world? Should the Church today be more concerned with its own affairs or with what's going on in the world? Explain your response.
  4. Consider again the list of pressing issues. Is there anything you can do to help solve these problems? If so, what?

(Michael Pennock. 1984. *Your Church and You*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 24)

## **MATERIALS**

### **LEARNER**

- SACBC. 1988. *Community Serving Humanity*, p 5 & 7
- Michael Pennock. 1984. 'A Scripture Exercise' from *Your Church and You*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 28 – 29



## Lesson Materials

# Community Serving Humanity

It is Christ who tells us  
how his Church should live  
in these days.  
His plan is our plan.

We find our way of being the Church  
by listening deeply to the Gospel.  
In this way we shall be evangelised  
so that we in turn  
can evangelise others.

Our plan is to be a Church  
which is a true community,  
where all feel  
they are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Our plan is to be a Church  
which serves all people,  
helping them to a life which is truly human,  
truly formed in the image of God.

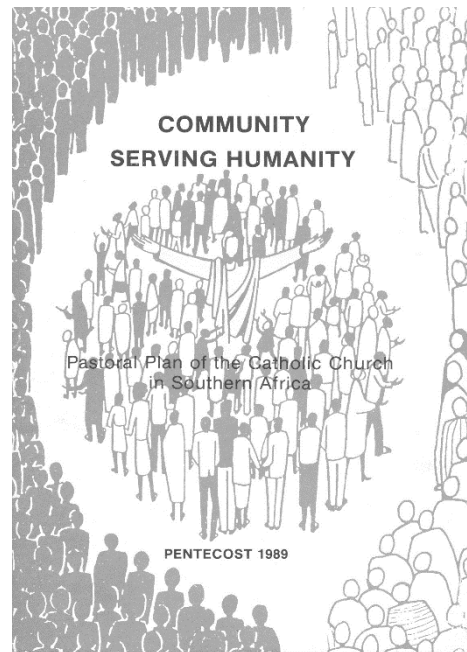
We believe that this is our humble share  
in God's universal plan.

May God help us to fulfil this plan,  
the plan God made  
before the world began.

### *An Overview of Our Pastoral Plan*

The motto COMMUNITY SERVING HUMANITY sums up the many steps we want to take during the coming years in order to improve our way of being the Church.

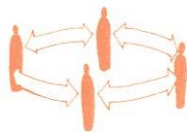
Over the ages the Church has remained the same and yet has taken on different images in different times. In our time we have asked ourselves what image the Church should assume in this part of the world. Our Pastoral Plan is the result of this reflection. We chose to sum it up in the motto COMMUNITY SERVING HUMANITY.



The first aim/...

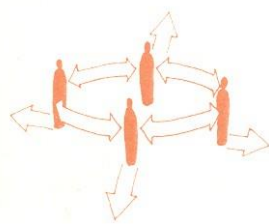
## Lesson Materials

### COMMUNITY SERVING HUMANITY (cont)



The first aim of our Pastoral Plan is building COMMUNITY. During the coming years we will try to transform our parishes and congregations in such a way that everybody can feel at home. To be at home in God's family means to relate as brothers and sisters to one another.

We want to overcome situations where people in the same congregation do not know one another, where they hardly meet personally, where they hardly ever plan and act together. We want especially to overcome all forms of discrimination.



The second aim of our Pastoral Plan is to become a Church SERVING HUMANITY. We will try to transform our parishes and congregations so that they resemble more closely Christ who healed those who were sick in body and mind.

Just as in Christ the ministry of preaching the Word of God and the care for human wellbeing and dignity was undivided, we wish our parishes and congregations to be like that. They should see where people are in need, they should discern where human dignity is lost, they should become aware where injustices destroy the lives of people.

We want to train our parishes and congregations to act in a Christian way to make life human where it has become inhuman.

We realise that in our parish life we were often concerned only with 'things spiritual' although there were inhuman situations on our doorsteps. We usually said we can do nothing about these situations or we considered these evils to be the concern of other institutions. We believe that Christ wants us to overcome such attitudes. Our Pastoral Plan aims at a parish life in which we work for the transformation of the whole of life, for a change of heart and a change of society.

We know that this second aim of our Pastoral Plan is more demanding, but we hope and pray that through the common effort of all we will achieve it.

# Lesson Materials



## A Scripture Exercise

*The New Testament and the Church.* Here are some New Testament references to the Church. Read each one. In the space provided below each statement briefly summarise what the passage or passages are saying. Then check off four of the descriptions which apply best to your own parish community.

-----1. A community which forgives the sinner. (Read Lk 19:1-10 and Mt 5:43-48)

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-----2. A community of love. (Read Mt 25:31-46 and Acts 2:42- 47.)

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-----3. A community founded by Jesus Christ on Peter and the apostles.  
(Read Mt 16: 15- 19.)

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-----4. A community which derives its life from the Eucharist.  
(Read 1Cor 11:23-29.)

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-----5. A community with a universal message. (Read Mt 28: 19- 20.)

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-----6. A community willing to suffer for Christ. (Read 1 Pt 2:19- 25.)

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-----7. A believing community united in one faith. (Read Rom 10: 9-13.)

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-----8. A community based on the resurrection of Jesus. (Read 1 Cor 15:12-19.)

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-----9. A community which prays. (Read Mt. 6:5-15 and Mt 18: 19-20.)

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*Sharing.* When you share the results of your reading with your classmates, be sure to point out how your parish lives up to the particular description. Offer examples.

## LESSON 17: Models of Church



REFERENCE Page 489 [the IDEAL]



### WHAT YOU NEED

- LSM: 'Pictures of the Church'
- LSM: 'Models of the Church'

### AIM

- To give the learners an opportunity to reflect on a variety of models of Church

### OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners are familiar with a range of models of Church.
- SKL Learners can apply these models to their own experience of Church.

### TEACHER'S NOTE

There are three stages to this lesson. Learners are first invited to draw their own pictures or models of Church as they see it. They are then presented with a variety of models that have been current in the Church in different places and at different times. Thirdly, they are offered an opportunity to reconsider their earlier pictures in the light of the models presented.

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### I Pictures of the Church

- Reproduce the pictures on the Lesson Materials page 'Pictures of the Church' (either on a page for distribution to all, or in large freehand drawings which may be pinned around the walls of the room).
- Ask learners to work in groups of four or five to try to interpret what each picture is saying about the role of the Church in our society, and to rank them in order of importance. (If using the wall pictures, rotate the small groups at four minute intervals until all have seen and discussed each picture. Allow a further five minutes at the end for ranking in order of importance.)
- Report back to the whole group, sharing ideas from the small groups.
- After discussion, invite learners either individually or in small groups to prepare two new pictures titled:
  - My picture of the Church as it is
  - My picture of the Church as I would like it to be(These new pictures may be shown and interpreted at the end of the lesson.)
- From the responses made throughout the group discussions, and from the final drawings, make some assessment of the attitudes of these particular young people to the role of the Church in society. This may give leads to ways in which they would like to be the Church in society or to change present emphases.

(Grierson, Denham, et al. 1977. *Discovering the Needs and Interests of Young People*, Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, p 73)

## 2 Model

Clarify the concept 'model'. It is sometimes difficult to explain something complex in words, so we use fairly simple pictures or models to convey an idea of the thing we are talking about. Take the atom, for instance. In the first place, it is too small to see. How, therefore, can we describe it? Scientists, who study its behaviour, propose a model of the atom to us of a large nucleus orbited by a certain number of electrons, much like the planets orbiting the Sun. This gives us some idea, though the reality is a lot more complicated. Much the same applies to the Church. A number of models have been used over the years to describe it.

## 3 Models of the Church

Using the Lesson Materials page 'Models of Church' present the different popular models. After your presentation, distribute the page for reading, questions, and comments. There is a useful summary of the models on the final page of the Lesson Materials.

## 4 Discussion

Learners in small groups discuss:

- i. What model or combination of models reflects your vision of an ideal Church?
- ii. What value is there in having several models of the Church?
- iii. What problems are involved in having several models of the Church among us at the same time?

If time allows, take some feedback from the groups. Return to the pictures the learners drew at the beginning of the lesson. Invite them to share in what ways their idea of the Church might now be different.

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## OTHER IDEAS

### 5 Scripture

Invite learners to read Acts 4: 32 – 37. Ask them to decide on which model of Church is most evident from the reading, and to compare this with their present experience of Church.

### MATERIALS

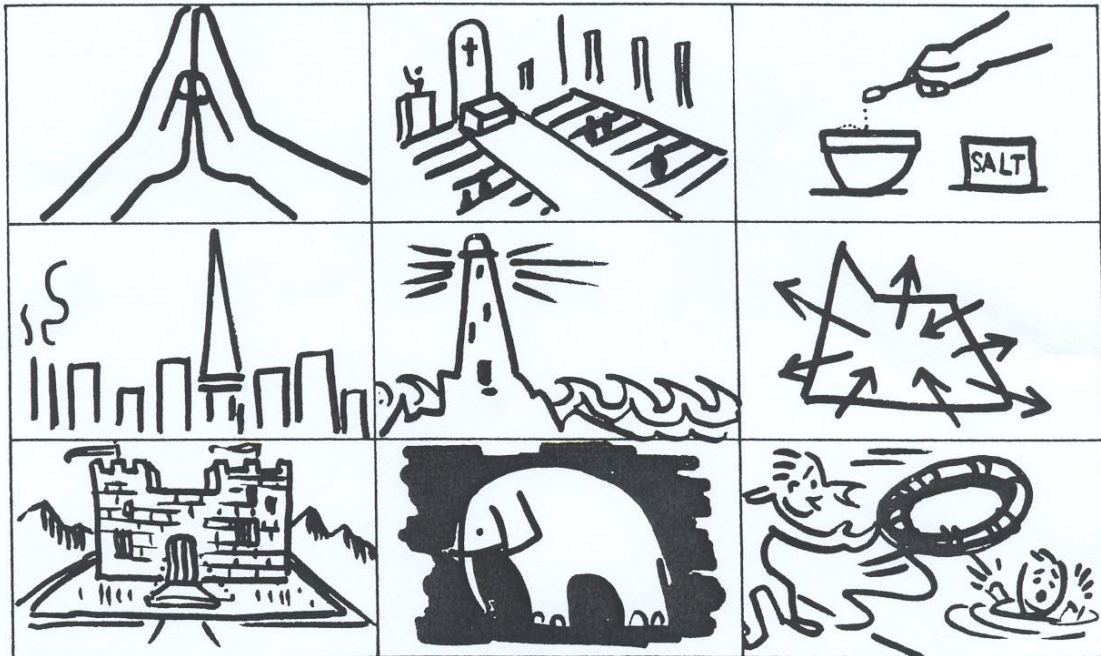
#### LEARNER

- Grierson, Denham, et al. 1977. 'Pictures of the Church' in *Discovering the Needs and Interests of Young People*. Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, p 73
- Patrick Barry & Henry Keane. 1981. 'Models of the Church' in *Word and Life*. Durban: Unity Press, p 294-295
- Michael Pennock. 1984. 'Church as Pilgrim' and "Images of the Church' in *Your Church and You*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 20, 23



## Lesson Materials

### Pictures of the Church



1. Work in groups of four or five to try to interpret what each picture is saying about the role of the Church in our society, and rank them in order of importance.
2. Report back to the whole group, sharing ideas from the small groups.
3. Prepare two new pictures titled:
  - (a) My picture of the Church as it is
  - (b) My picture of the Church as I would like it to be



## Lesson Materials



# Models of the Church

## MODEL 1: INSTITUTION

Leaders, according to this concept, would seek to foster in parishioners a sense of tradition, order, loyalty to the Holy Father and closeness to the bishop. Sending designated persons to the Chrism Mass so they can pick up the holy sacramental oils is one technique which will underscore the unity between parish and bishop. It also illustrates a congregation's oneness through him with the universal Church.

Do you see the Church as an Institution? Does your first thought about the parish turn to the physical plant, the church building, the school, the convent? Is your initial impulse to identify the Church with priests, bishops, pope? Would you see the parish's primary interest centering around rules to be observed, beliefs to be professed and worship services to be attended?

## MODEL II: COMMUNITY

An Administration fostering this model works to build a family or community spirit within the parish, to show each member how they form part of an intimately linked spiritual body. "I am the vine, you are the branches."

Occasional introductions at Sunday Liturgies, coffee hours after Mass and name tags during study sessions are a few steps which have proven helpful in this process.

Do you see the Church as a Mystical Community? Is the main effort in your parish to develop community? Are parishioners aware that, as the people of God and members of Christ's Mystical Body, they form a unique communion? Do they see themselves fundamentally as persons linked by an inner, visible bond, but one expressed in an external way by worship, a profession of faith and special fellowship?

## MODEL III: SACRAMENT

This model believes that the Risen Christ is present in our midst through signs and symbols. The Church thus becomes the visible sign of Jesus' invisible presence.

Attractive vestments, gestures made carefully, baptismal candles and contemporary reconciliation rooms are obvious consequences of this concept which sees Church as sacrament.

Do you see it as a sacrament? Are you conscious that the parish is a sign, a symbol of Jesus' present: in our midst? Is it clear that this external sacrament or sign of an invisible reality can always be improved and constantly needs to be renewed, reformed and updated? Would you say that the parish's main thrust involves the Sunday Eucharist and the liturgical celebrations for such events as Baptism, Marriage and Christian Burial?

MODEL IV/...

## Lesson Materials

### MODELS OF THE CHURCH (cont)

#### MODEL IV: HERALD

A biblical, scriptural, gospel preaching and teaching Church - those are notions we embrace according to the herald model.

Parish leaders who try to fulfill this ideal will encourage well-prepared homilies, comprehensive religious education programs for young and old, and bible-orientated prayer groups.

Do you see the Church as herald? Is your parish's great concern the proclamation of God's word to men? Would you say preaching during the liturgy and religious education programs outside of worship are given the highest priorities with regard to budget, personnel and time?

#### MODEL V: SERVANT

This model considers the Church as a group of people reaching out, trying to make the world a better place in which to live, working to overcome today's injustice and misery. Collecting food for the poor and a committee for Justice and Peace are two possibilities which flow from the servant Church model.

Do you see the Church as a servant? Is it the task of the parish to make the world a better place in which to live? Are activities which occur during the week and outside church the really important work of your worshiping community? Is loving others the entire Christian message? How critical to the nature of your parish and community is the support of boycotts, homilies on world hunger and a programme for the elderly?

© Patrick Barry & Henry Keane. 1981. 'Models of the Church' in *Word and Life*. Durban: Unity Press, p 294-295

#### MODEL VI: PILGRIM

Your life is not yet complete. In front of you, God willing, are exciting discoveries and adventures. You have much to learn. You have a career to undertake, friends to meet, perhaps a family to raise. In short, you are a traveller in this life. You are a pilgrim.

The church is also a pilgrim. Although it is the budding forth of God's kingdom on earth, its work is not yet complete. It is like a ship on a stormy sea which has not yet reached its final destination. Along the way individual members might sin and be tempted to give up the journey, but true pilgrims know that they have the strength of the Lord to guide them on their journey. It is the Lord who helps the members combat the temptations within and without the community as he leads the community to its destiny.

This image of the church underscores the truth that the church as pilgrim is going somewhere. It has the continuing work of remaining faithful to the Lord as it moves into an uncertain, even, at times, dangerous future. But it has the confidence that the Lord will help it keep steering in the right direction, correcting itself when it gets off course.

© Michael Pennock. 1984. 'Church as Pilgrim' in *Your Church and You*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 20

IMAGES OF THE CHURCH/...

*Lesson Materials*  
 MODELS OF THE CHURCH (cont)

IMAGES OF THE CHURCH			
Model/Image	Mission of the church	Major strength of this image	Major weakness of this image
<b>Community</b>	to seek union with God through the power of the Holy Spirit	unites all members by the Spirit of Jesus	lack of emphasis on formal structure can lead to confusion when there are disputes
<b>Herald</b>	to proclaim the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth	emphasizes the Bible and the Word of God	danger of thinking that the <i>only</i> task of the church is the proclamation of the gospel
<b>Institution</b>	to teach, to make holy, to rule	gives structure to the church and guidance to its members	danger of identifying the church only with the formal structure
<b>Pilgrim</b>	to be faithful to Christ on a journey through time to eternity	emphasizes that the church needs to be directed to the future	might neglect the responsibility of the church to take risks now in living the gospel
<b>Sacrament/ Sign</b>	to be a meaningful sign to all people, believers and non-believers	reminds the church to be what it is called to be	emphasizes a lot of theology; it is difficult to preach and to teach this model
<b>Servant</b>	to renew the face of the earth in the vision of Jesus Christ	emphasizes the social gospel	danger of doing good works yet neglecting the spiritual side of the church

© Michael Pennock. 1984. 'Images of the Church' in *Your Church and You*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 23

## LESSON 18: The Church in the Future



REFERENCE

Page 490-491 [From the REALITY towards the IDEAL]



### WHAT YOU NEED

- (1) LSM: 'Leadership in the Church'
- (2) LSM: 'Priorities'

### AIM

- To give the learners an idea of the future direction of the church and their role in it.

### OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners have some insight into a desired future direction for the Church.
- DAP Learners appreciate that they have a role to play within their own faith community.

### TEACHER'S NOTE

The beginning of this lesson calls for quiet individual reflection. However, arrange the class in small groups before you begin so that the lesson's flow is not interrupted.

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### 1 Leadership

- i. Distribute the Lesson Materials page. 'Leadership in the Church'. Allow the learners time to do the exercise individually. They may, however, find it difficult to 'evaluate' themselves. Pose this question for private reflection: If I want to church to change, grow, what must I as leader do?
- ii. Invite some sharing of ideas.

#### 2 Priorities

- i. Distribute the Lesson Materials page 'Priorities'. This exercise is done in small groups.
- ii. Again call for some feedback once the groups have had time to discuss, to make their choices, and respond to the questions.

#### 3 Responding to the Future

Invite some ideas about what and how the Church should be prioritizing for the future. List a few on the board. Hold a general and fairly brief discussion about the usefulness of some of these ideas. You may find the following 'Decalogue based on the Signs of the Times' from Walbert Bühlmann. 1992. *With Eyes to See*. Bangalore: Claretian Publications useful for guiding the discussion.

#### THE "NEW" TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD: A DECALOGUE BASED ON THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

- I. *You will allow common sense to prevail.* (Autonomy of the Sciences – Science and Religion must work hand in hand.)
- II. *You will take yourselves seriously as People of God.* (The Laity in the Church – Leadership in the Church is not restricted to ordained ministers.)
- III. *You will extend your hand to your fellow Christians.* (Ecumenism – Christian unity is essential for the Church's future relevance.)

- IV. *You will take sides with the poor.* (Justice – Working to overcome oppressive structures is constitutive of the Gospel.)
  - V. *You will wonder at the breadth of the Creator.* (Inculturation – ‘In essentials, unity: in non-essentials, diversity.’)
  - VI. *You will acknowledge that the “I Am Here” is present among all peoples.* (Dialogue with other Religions – The Spirit of God is at work in every quest for the truth.)
  - VII. *You will accompany religious nomads.* (Secularisation – Religion is the answer to a journey, not the starting point for modern human beings.)
  - VIII. *You will swell the ranks of the peacemakers.* (Justice and Peace – Prepare for peace, not war.)
  - IX. *You will make the Earth a Paradise.* (Ecology and Eschatology – We are co-creators with God of a new Heaven and a new Earth.)
  - X. *You will encounter the God of History.* (Spirituality and Politics – The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of humankind are the concerns of the Church.)
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## **OTHER IDEAS**

### **4 Different Views**

One of the most serious problems in the post-Vatican II church, especially during the late 1960s and most of the 1970s, was polarisation in the Church. Polarisation refers to the camps which formed and argued over how much and how fast change should take place in the church. In a community as broad as Roman Catholicism it is not surprising to find Catholics holding any of the following four views (greatly simplified here):

- **RADICAL** -advocates fast change; wants some things destroyed; questions almost everything and advocates for the sake of change
- **LIBERAL** -wants change in the spirit of Vatican II in order to move into the modern world; does not desire the destruction of the good things from the past, but does want steady progress
- **CONSERVATIVE** -desires extreme caution and does not want change for the sake of change; wants to preserve the best from the past; questions the need for change
- **REACTIONARY** -desires things the way they were after the Council of Trent; thinks that Vatican II was not needed; wants to reverse many of the concessions made in the Church to accommodate itself to modern developments.

Ask learners to discuss these four views, and to formulate arguments in favour of each:

- Should one view be favoured above the others? If so, which one?
- Is it possible for these views to work together? If so, how?

(Michael Pennock. 1984. *Your Church and You*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 268)

## **MATERIALS**

### **LEARNER**

- Michael Pennock. 1984. ‘Priorities’ & ‘Reflection’ from *Your Church and You*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 116 & 159



# Lesson Materials



## Leadership in the Church

The institutional church is always in need of good leaders. Do you qualify? Here is a leadership grid which lists three leaders and a list of leadership qualities. Add to the list of qualities suggested here.

- 1 patient
- 2 self-confident
- 3 courageous
- 4 willing to stand alone
- 5 warm personality
- 6 person of conviction

Check off those which you think each of the leaders exhibits. Then check off those you think a potential leader – you – exhibit. Share your grid with your classmates.

QUALITIES \ LEADERS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Jesus										
The Pope										
A respected Christian										
----- (add name)										
You										

## Lesson Materials



### Priorities

One of the major problems of any institution is how it will use its resources to meet human needs. The Church has the ongoing mandate of Jesus to respond to all people, especially the outcast. Unfortunately the institutional Church has only limited resources to meet the many human demands made on it.

How should the institutional Church distribute its resources? Role play the following: You are a member of your parish budget committee. Your parish council has limited funds and can undertake only three of these projects in the next fiscal year. Which would you vote for and why?

- The church basement leaks. Without repairs there is a good chance that there will be structural damage to the building.
- There is a crisis hunger centre located in the parish. It needs volunteer support and money to feed the poor in the neighborhood.
- The church organ is broken and beyond repair. Without music parish liturgies will be much less meaningful.
- Teachers in the parish elementary school have not received a salary increase in three years. Many of them are having a difficult time making ends meet.
- The bishop has asked for a large contribution to open a drop-in centre for runaway and abused young people.
- The parish does not yet have a youth group. To start one the parish must hire a youth minister and rent a hall.

In your group

1. Share your choices and your reasons for them.
2. List at least four criteria the Church as institution should employ in the distribution of its resources (for example, people are more important than things). Discuss these and apply them to the six choices above.
3. Recall the models of Church from Lesson 4. Which model is most favoured in your choices?