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Pastor-Principal Relationship in the Parish School

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PASTOR-PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIP IN THE PARISH SCHOOL

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The traditional parish plant—church, rectory, convent, and school—all conveniently located next to each other on a parcel of land, is a fast vanishing model. While some argue that the parish-sponsored elementary school is a vestige of immigrant Catholicism, this article calls for a strengthening of the relationship between the pastor and the principal. By using frames of reference from human resource management and organizational theory, this essay challenges pastors and principals to work through differences, find common ground and ways to collaborate, and resolve or set aside differences for the sake of the higher good.

INTRODUCTION

We are born, raised, and educated in organizations. They are complex, because they are populated by people. They are surprising, because it is difficult to predict the outcomes or initiatives of an organization. They are deceptive, because communication is rarely candid, open, or timely. They are ambiguous, because information can be incomplete, vague, or interpreted in different ways by different people. They are created to achieve certain goals, and they will have wise leaders who can act decisively amidst confusion and chaos, for this is the heart of leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

To be an effective leader in any organization will require the flexibility to look at the organization from more than one vantage point. Bolman and Deal (2003) describe this flexibility as a leader's willingness to use multiple lenses to reframe experiences. Organizational life is complicated, ambiguous, and unpredictable; therefore, the leader's ability to reframe is vital to effective leadership and management.

Reframing is a central theme in this organizational theory: an organization's success or failure may depend upon it. Whenever an issue in the organization arises, effective leaders will need to develop skills that will help them to recognize what they are up against and what they can do about it. In *Reframing Organizations*, Bolman and Deal (2003) have designed four frames to assist leaders in this skill development.

The first frame, the structural frame, is based on rationale and logic and emphasizes the importance of roles and relationships within the organization. Problems arise when the structure does not fit the situation. Leadership will need to analyze and evaluate the situation. Some form of reorganization may be needed to remedy any mismatch (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The human resource frame, the second frame, states that individuals who have needs, feelings, and prejudices inhabit organizations. The key to effective leadership is to tailor the organization to the people—to find a form that enables people to get the job done while feeling good about what they are doing. Problems arise within an organization when an individual does not feel respected. In this situation, leadership may need to align the organization with human needs (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The third frame, the political frame, views organizations as arenas in which different interest groups compete for power and scarce resources. Conflict is everywhere. Problems arise because power is concentrated in the wrong places or because it is so broadly dispersed that nothing gets done. Solutions for these problems are through leaders who have developed power bases and agendas to accomplish their goals (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Finally, the fourth frame described is the symbolic or cultural frame. Rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes, and myths are all important to the organization's culture. Problems arise when the participants play their parts badly, when symbols lose their meaning, and when ceremonies and rituals lose their potency. The role of leadership then becomes one of developing the culture once again (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The theoretical perspective which Bolman and Deal (2003) have processed into organizational thought has been described in these four frames. With the use of the frames, effective leaders will learn to reframe experience, sorting through the complexity of organizational life by finding solutions to problems. It is Bolman and Deal's belief that leaders will need to use these different frames of analysis in order to articulate and communicate to others a new shift in perspective.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Basic to any organization is the design of the roles and relationships within its structure. The Catholic Church, as an organization, has its own structure and governance. Defined by the *Code of Canon Law* (Canon Law Society of America, 1983), the Church has the innate duty and right to preach the Gospel to all nations and to exercise her teaching office as it relates to Catholic education. As a part of this teaching mission, the Catholic school is an evangelizing, educational community (Ciriello, 1996). To administrate the Church's schools, effective leadership is needed from the pastor and the prin-

cipal in guiding the parish school toward academic excellence and faith development.

The shared leadership between these two key players, the parish pastor and school principal, is essential for the life and future of Catholic education. The basic assumption in this critical relationship is that the pastor and the principal work as a collaborative team for the effective operation of the school. This assumption should be challenged. As an employee in Catholic education for 28 years, it is this researcher's observation that this is not always the case; sometimes, the pastor and the principal do not work together in an atmosphere of shared respect and mutual trust. In fact, there may be enough tension present to temporarily interrupt the Church's teaching mission. This is detrimental to the proclamation that the school be an evangelizing, educational community (Ciriello, 1996).

Aspiring Catholic school administrators need to examine some of the underlying issues that may evolve from the tension between the pastor and the principal in the parish school. Each of these leaders brings to the school his or her own expertise: the pastor as spiritual leader and the principal as educational leader. Ideally, they are to share this expertise and leadership for the efficient operation of the school. However, tension arises in their relationship if the principal cannot accept the authority and power that the pastor ultimately has in making the final decisions for the school's governance. As a credentialed and well-prepared educational professional, the principal possesses the knowledge and skill to make these types of decisions. But the Church clearly mandates that the final authority for the operation of a school, which is an extension of the parish, resides with the pastor. By applying the four frames of Bolman and Deal (2003) with other theories of organizational behavior, it is hoped that the reader may gain insight into the rationale as to why the Church and the school benefit when the relationship between the parish pastor and the school principal is collaborative and cooperative.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

STRUCTURAL PERSPECTIVE

All organizations have goals, boundaries, levels of authority, communication systems, coordinating mechanisms, and distinctive procedures (Bolman & Deal, 2003). From a structural perspective, the design of roles and the integration of the roles within the structure become especially important in the organization's life. Educational administration research continues to address how organizational norms and values within these roles shape leadership behavior (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). How to structure itself is one of the central issues facing any organization; it can enhance or constrain what an

organization is able to accomplish (Bolman & Deal).

At the turn of the 20th century, Weber (1947) observed organizations in reference to how they worked. Weber explained their behavior as rational and controlled, leaving nothing to chance. Organizational quality was maintained because there was a bureaucracy, a hierarchy, whose objectives and mission were clearly understood by the written word. The hierarchy had the expertise to make decisions and ensure quality. Consistency, efficiency, and stability were the mainstay of Weber's theory.

Mintzberg's (1979) theoretical description of the machine bureaucracy also emphasized the importance of quality control. Continuing with this structural explanation, Mintzberg (1979) developed five possible configurations that evolve when organizations encounter different circumstances. The strategic apex (central office administration) manages conflict between the other divisions of labor, including the techno structure (research specialists), the middle line (principals), the support staff (cafeteria and maintenance workers), and the operational core (faculty) in order to ensure organizational stability and efficiency.

The structural perspective of organizational behavior would be incomplete without the work of Taylor (1911). One of the most prominent researchers in the field of industrial psychology, Taylor studied organizations constructed for maximum efficiency. In this research, Taylor observed that people will work at the lowest level of expectation. To increase productivity and efficiency, management must find the worker who is practicing the best, align and train the other workers toward this best, and reward workers individually. Considered the father of time-and-motion studies, Taylor's approach to scientific management was a forerunner to the modern theories of standardization and alignment, minimum competency, and matching the person with the job.

HUMAN RESOURCE PERSPECTIVE

While the structural perspective focuses on the way that structure develops in response to an organization's tasks and environment, people are at the heart of any organization. This human element adds another dimension to organizational behavior: the interplay between the organization and its people. People's skills, insights, ideas, energy, and commitment are an organization's most critical resource. At the very best, organizations can be energizing, exciting, productive, and rewarding for the individual, as well as for the system (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

From a human resource perspective, the concept of need is important. Theorists argue that leaders must understand and respond to the needs that human beings bring with them to work because organizations exist to serve

human needs. When the fit between an individual and an organization is good, feelings of happiness, contentment, joy, and love become fulfilled. But in situations where the fit is poor, negative emotions of anger, fear, depression, and boredom result. Therefore, a good fit between the individual and organization benefits both (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Central to the issue of a good fit and meeting human needs is Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation. Grouping needs into five basic categories, Maslow arranged a hierarchy from the lower needs (physiological and safety) to the higher needs (belongingness, love, esteem, and self-actualization). In an attempt to answer the question, "What motivates people to do the things they do?" Maslow's theory became one of the most influential views of motivation in organizational behavior (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Using Maslow's theory of motivation as a foundation, McGregor (1960) added another dimension: the perspective from which managers view other people determines how they respond. Thus, Theory X and Theory Y were born. In Theory X, managers direct and control the work of subordinates who are passive and lazy, have little ambition, prefer to be led, and resist change. In "hard" Theory X, the emphasis is on tight coercion and control, which results in low productivity. "Soft" Theory X emphasizes a permissive style, which tries to avoid conflict and satisfy everyone's needs. Harmony may be created, but it is superficial, causing people to expect more and more while giving less and less (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

In contrast, Theory Y contends that people are not passive or indifferent by nature; sometimes they become this way as a result of their experience in organizations. Whereas Theory X relies too much on external control and treats people like children, Theory Y relies on self-control and self-direction, treating people like adults. In both theories, however, the self-fulfilling prophecy is apparent: if leaders treat people "this way," they will become "that way" (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Providing still another explanation of organizational behavior in human resource theory are the writings of Argyris (1958) who discovered a basic conflict between the human personality and the ways that organizations are structured and managed. Like McGregor (1960), Argyris observed that organizations treat their people like children. If the leader is over controlling, excessively competitive, uncomfortable with feelings, and closed to others' ideas, employees will find ways to resist or adapt to the frustration that this treatment creates. Because management practices are inconsistent with employee needs, feelings of indifference, apathy, and passivity are produced (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The fit between the person and the role, as described previously in Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation, is a critical element of administration.

The expectation that the role is complementary and interdependent with other related roles within the organization will result in a coherent, interactive unit. However, if there is not an integration of role expectation with the personality and needs of the employee, institutional conflict will occur (Getzels & Guba, 1957).

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

A review of the structural perspective reveals that organizations are guided by goals and politics set from the top. The primacy of authority is seen as a mechanism for implementing these organizational goals. In the human resource frame, the emphasis is on the malfunction that results when the needs of the organization and the needs of the individual are mismatched. In the political frame, authority in organizational management is viewed as only one of a number of other forms of power (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Power and politics are inherent in any organization; the question is not whether or not the organization will have politics, but what kind of politics (Bolman & Deal, 2003). If viewed positively, politics can be a vehicle to achieve noble purposes. Burns (1978) states that positive politics evolve when individuals choose actions that appeal to higher motives and higher stages of moral judgment. To reach these higher stages, political leaders become the taskmasters and the goal setters who motivate their followers with a shared set of values.

Mintzberg (1985) also felt that politics could serve an organizational good. The deficiencies and dysfunctions in a political arena are sometimes corrected when all points of view can be fully debated. Strong leadership will emerge in this arena because only the strongest and fittest have survived to help the organization move beyond the status quo.

The concepts of conflict and power are important propositions for any organization. Coalitions, bargaining, negotiating, jockeying for position—all of these are tied to individuals and groups with different values, preferences, beliefs, and perceptions. From a political perspective, conflict is not necessarily a problem or a sign that something is amiss in an organization; it is natural and inevitable. Therefore, power and conflict in the political frame are central to organizational behavior and cannot be ignored (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

SYMBOLIC PERSPECTIVE

What culture is and what role it plays in organizations are questions that the effective leader will need to define (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Schein (1992) defines culture as:

> A pattern of basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 12)

Regardless of the definition that one adapts, the concept of culture is a powerful one. The symbolic frame centers on the ideas of meaning, belief, and faith within an organization's culture and assumes that organizations are full of questions that cannot be answered, understood, or even managed. However, even amidst this chaos, confusion, and unpredictability, humans will create and use symbols to bring meaning. How these symbols are interpreted becomes one of the basic assumptions in this frame and includes other assumptions about the nature of organizations and human behavior (Bolman & Deal, 2003):

- What is most important about any event is what it means.
- The same events can have very different meanings for different people because of their own experience that they use to interpret the events.
- Many of the most significant events in organizations are ambiguous and uncertain, making the events more difficult to process rationally.
- Amidst ambiguity and uncertainty, humans will create symbols to increase predictability and provide direction.

From a symbolic perspective, meaning becomes the most basic human need. Thus, the effective leader is one who takes the time to understand these symbolic forms and activities and discovers how they are used to define the organization itself.

THE CHURCH: A STRUCTURAL SYNTHESIS

As previously examined, how to structure itself is one of the central issues facing any organization. The structuralist would insist that organizations are most effective when the goals and policies are clear, jobs are well defined, control systems are in place, and employees behave like reasonable and prudent people. Bolman and Deal (2003) emphasize the importance of formal roles and relationships in any organization. In their definition of the structural frame, the wise leader is one who reframes perspective and reorganizes the structure when it does not fit the situation.

To define the structure of the Church, one can begin with a discussion of the *Code of Canon Law* (Canon Law Society of America, 1983). The *Code* stipulates how the Catholic Church functions in its structure, organization,

and governance. Simply stated, the Church functions as a hierarchy and is organized into a system of dioceses each headed by a bishop in whom legislative, judicial, and executive authority resides. The bishop is the sole legislator and final decision maker on all issues pertaining to his diocese. The *Code of Canon Law* (Canon Law Society of America) states that the bishop's intent shapes the structure of the diocese. Relying on others' expertise in governing the diocese, the bishop may delegate some executive authority; for example, a superintendent may be hired to oversee the diocesan schools and pastors are installed to run the parishes, but all such leaders and ministers are delegates of the bishop. The bishop also employs boards and commissions, but they are, typically by virtue of the *Code*, consultative and advisory. They may recommend and propose legislation, but not enact it (Thomas, 1996).

Entrusted by Christ with the deposit of faith and assisted by the Holy Spirit, the Church has the innate duty and right to preach the Gospel to all nations (Canon Law Society of America, 1983, §747), and to exercise a teaching office as it relates to Catholic education (§794). The Church has the right to establish and supervise schools of any discipline, type, and grade whatsoever (§800). The diocesan bishop must also see that "schools imparting an education imbued with the Christian spirit" are made available (§802) for "all men [sic] of whatever race, condition or age, in virtue of their dignity as human persons" (Vatican Council II, 1987, §1). The Church's role is especially evident in Catholic schools.

Most bishops have no reason to manage parish schools directly, but to see them as part of the parish structure. The focus is then on the parish pastor who has a direct line of accountability to and authority from the bishop. Canon 519 states that, "the pastor is the proper shepherd of the parish entrusted to him....He carries out for his community the duties of teaching, sanctifying, and governing." Therefore, when the school is seen as part of the parish, the pastor has the responsibility for the school.

While pastors are fundamental in the design and governance of the parish school, they have always needed the support of the laity, who serves an important function in the Catholic Church's mission of evangelization (Ciriello, 1996). The term laity refers to "all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the Church" (Catholic Church, 1994, §897). The laity can be called

> to cooperate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for the sake of its growth and life. This can be done through the exercise of different kinds of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord has been pleased to bestow on them. (Catholic Church, 1994, §910)

As an extension of the ministry of the laity in parish life, the school principal serves in a unique role as an educational and spiritual administrator of the school.

As educational leader, the principal is instrumental in "setting goals, organizing the work, outlining performance standards, assigning people to work, directing and monitoring the work, and evaluating" (Sergiovanni, 2000, p. 272). As spiritual leader, the principal promotes the mission of the school through principles of good leadership (Ciriello, 1996) and by reviewing the religious and educational formation of the students, thereby ensuring that all coursework reflects and teaches an understanding of the world that builds on Catholic heritage and faith (Myers, 1992). The school principal must also be able to articulate the mission and purpose of Catholic education and be unafraid to make the necessary decisive choices called for in today's society (Ciriello, 1996). Therefore, the principal's leadership is crucial, as he or she is in the role of being "the head learner, experiencing, displaying, modeling, and celebrating what is hoped and expected that the teachers and pupils will do" (Sergiovanni, p. 274).

In cooperation with the principal of the Catholic school, the parish pastor is also instrumental in many areas of school life. He has the responsibility to ensure the competence of those who teach religion, to maintain Catholic identity, and to celebrate the sacraments with the entire school community. Collaboration and compatibility between the pastor and principal are essential for the effective operation of the school and all involved in the educational process. The pastor's commitment to the school and its mission and the principal's knowledge of Church organization is critical (Ciriello, 1996). There is no stronger team than the pastor and principal who work cooperatively.

THE CHURCH: A HUMAN RESOURCE SYNTHESIS

If the basic structure of an organization is well defined and communicated, the organization is said to be efficient. The design of the roles and their integration within the structure become especially important in the organization's life (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The parish pastor, acting on behalf of the diocesan bishop, and the school principal, acting as an extension of the laity, both have important leadership roles as they cooperate to serve the Church in her divine mission to educate (Canon Law Society of America, 1983, §794).

Education is fundamentally relational (Shields, 2003), and as organizations, schools serve a human element. Human resource theorists say this element is an added dimension because the interplay between organizations and people is essential to the organization's behavior. If organizations exist to

serve human needs (Bolman & Deal, 2003), then the Church must look at the fit between the needs of the organization and the roles of her workers. In Catholic education, this fit is examined in the context of the relationship of the parish pastor and the school principal. Is there a relationship founded on mutual trust and respect, or is there an underlying tension or poor fit in the organization and in her mission?

From the human resource perspective, it would be wise for the pastor and principal to examine their relationship in the context of how they view each other within the organization. McGregor (1960) posited that our perception of others determines how we will treat and respond to them. In Theory X, McGregor believed that workers were perceived as basically lazy, passive, not very bright, and unambitious. There existed an aura of suspicion and blame between the management and the workers. In Theory Y, people are naturally motivated, possess potential for responsibility and have the readiness to direct their behavior toward the organization's goals. Mutual respect and trust were shared by management and workers.

The Catholic Church appears to promote belief in Theory Y: people are basically good. "Each of the various creatures, willed in its own being, reflects in its own way a ray of God's infinite wisdom and goodness. Man must respect the particular goodness of every creature" (Catholic Church, 1994, §339). Therefore, it would be the obligation of the pastor and principal in the parish school to move their relationship toward the view of Theory Y; in other words, to perceive each other as inherently good with the potential for self-motivation and responsibility. There would be an incongruence of fit in their relationship and role if they believe Theory Y, but practice Theory X.

THE CHURCH: A POLITICAL SYNTHESIS

Although the Catholic Church is a divine institution with sound structure and governance, she is served by a human element. With a worldwide population of approximately 700 million people, it is appropriate to say that the Church is a significant organization, and as Bolman and Deal (2003) point out, significant organizations have significant power.

Whenever the concept of power is brought into focus, the question of conflict arises as varying groups compete to acquire this power. In the political arena, conflict is natural and inevitable (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Since conflict is not going to go away, the question is how individuals and groups can make the best of it. Argyris (1958) proposed two models that are designed to confront the truth in any conflict. In Model One, the more prevalent of the two, Argyris argues situations when talk is unrelated to action; in other words, the espoused theory of the organization and the theory in use

are two different things. The wicked issues, or the times when workers express a conflicting view, become opportunities for management to view the workers suspiciously. If the workers do not change their view after management's attempts to persuade and manipulate, then the workers are written off (Bolman & Deal).

Model Two approaches the situation with an emphasis on common goals. Whenever conflict arises, management's task is always to return to these common goals and stay focused. This differs from Model One, where the wicked issues are undisclosed and not brought forward out of fear. Argyris (1958) offers the explanation that people are not very good at being direct when issues arise; they try to go around them and avoid the conflict. A more harmonious work place would result if leaders followed a more direct approach and practiced Model Two on a consistent basis.

Considering the issue of conflict and the potential for tension that it may cause between the school principal and the parish pastor, the best political response may well be offered in Model Two: a direct confrontation and discussion of the tension. Tension is often increased because the pastor and the principal are unwilling to submit to each other's authority or the authority of the Church. This lack of adherence to Church authority and teaching is a major disruption in their role definition and relationship. The authority given to the parish pastor by the diocesan bishop is clearly outlined in the *Code of Canon Law* (Canon Law Society of America, 1983). As educational leader, the school principal is responsible for maintaining academic excellence and faith development in the school as defined by the teachings of the Church. The authority of the Church itself is indisputable; it comes from Christ. "Henceforward the Church, endowed with the gifts of her founder and faithfully observing his precepts...receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all the peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God" (Catholic Church, 1994, §768). If the underlying issue of tension between the pastor and the principal is discovered to be an opposition to Church teaching, then as an organization, the Church would need to move in to correct and address this disobedience. In his *Pastoral Letter on Religious Education*, Most Reverend John J. Myers, then Bishop of Peoria, wrote:

> Public dissent and public disobedience—dissent from magisterial teaching in the areas of faith and morals and disobedience of the norms, laws, and regulations of the Church—undermine the effectiveness of any and all teaching authority in the Church. It is completely unacceptable for public persons in the church to dissent openly from magisterial teaching—especially in a catechetical context....Furthermore, though less problematic than public dissent, the private withholding of assent from received teaching also poses difficulties. This withholding of assent...may be damaging to students. (1992, §15)

The Catholic school affords no place for tension to exist between the pastor and the principal if it is centered on a lack of adherence to Church teaching by either or both parties. A refocusing on the common goals and the espoused theory of the Church must be initiated to serve the higher good.

THE CHURCH: A SYMBOLIC SYNTHESIS

Traditional views of organizational behavior as mentioned in the previous three frames—structural, human resource, and political—emphasize their rational and objective nature. The symbolic frame focuses on the complexity and ambiguity present within the organization itself, as well as the ways in which symbols are created to give meaning to organizational events and activities. Stories, rituals, and ceremonies give clarity, direction, and meaning, particularly in dealing with issues or problems that are too complex, ambiguous, and unpredictable within the organization's culture (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

We live in a world that is fundamentally uncertain. For this reason, we develop stories and rituals that provide order and predictability. As symbols, our stories help to buffer and protect our core beliefs, as these define who we are. Bolman and Deal (2003) add that stories also help to perpetuate our values and serve as a medium to communicate these values and traditions to the outside world. They legitimate our existing practices.

The Catholic Church has a story to tell. In a world that is full of complexities and unpredictability, the Church stands tall as an institution, divinely created, with the innate duty and right to preach the Gospel to all nations (Canon Law Society of America, 1983, §747). It is this salvific mission that gives hope and meaning to a chaotic world. This saving message never changes throughout the centuries: "God our Savior desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved than the name of Jesus" (Catholic Church, 1994, "Prologue"). Throughout history, humans "have given expression to their quest for God in their religious beliefs and behavior: in their prayers, sacrifices, and rituals" (Catholic Church, 1994, §28). These forms of religious expression bring meaning to belief.

Coupled with this expression of belief lies the duty of the Church to proclaim the Good News. The Church is directed by the Creator to pass on this missionary mandate from generation to generation: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Catholic Church, 1994, §849). To assist with this teaching mission, the Church has established schools (Canon Law Society of America, 1983, §800). The pastor and the principal are called forth in the parish community to direct and supervise the faith development and the educational formation of the

children entrusted to them. Together they have important leadership roles as they cooperate to serve the Church in the divine mission to educate (§794).

If the pastor and the principal are not working as a collaborative team, their leadership is ineffective. A tension may be created which does not serve to advance the teaching mission of the Church. The Church's ability to bring meaning out of chaos, clarity out of confusion, and predictability amidst complexity, may be temporarily halted. The pastor-principal relationship is critical to the furtherance of the Church's mission. Blaming each other in times of tension will only result in suboptimization, or an emphasis on achieving individual goals rather than overall mission (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The pastor and the principal must refocus on the meaning of their individual roles within the organization, reconnecting them to the Church's core beliefs and values. They must recommit to the question of this meaning by asking themselves, "Why do we do the things we do?" If the school is to be effective as "an evangelizing and educational community" (Ciriello, 1996), then the pastor and principal must work as a team by sharing the responsibility to pass on the traditions and beliefs upon which the school stands. The tension that may exist between them must be addressed and corrected in order to protect and preserve the higher good—the story that the Church proclaims to the world.

CONCLUSION

The role and relationship of the parish priest and the school principal is critical to the effective operation of the Catholic school. Together, they share in the Church's dignity to "preach the gospel to all nations" (Canon Law Society of America, 1983, §747). It is assumed that this is a collaborative effort, with both pastor and principal committing to the Church's teaching mission as they guide the school toward academic excellence and faith development (Ciriello, 1996). Each of these leaders brings a particular expertise to the relationship: the principal possessing the professional knowledge and skill as educational leader, and the pastor possessing the authority and knowledge of the Church as spiritual leader. However, the ultimate governance and decision making for the school resides with the parish pastor. When leadership is collaborative and shared by the pastor and principal, the most efficient operation of the school results. If, however, there is a tension in their relationship, an examination and application of organizational theory may be helpful to reframe this issue and suggest a possible solution.

To assist with this reframing, Bolman and Deal (2003) have developed a theory of organizational behavior centered on four different frames: the structural, the human perspective, the political, and the symbolic frame. It is their contention that effective leadership lies in the leader's ability to reframe

and use multiple lenses or frames to look at the organization from more than one vantage point. With these frames as a reference, the following conclusions are proffered.

STRUCTURAL FRAME

The issue of tension between the pastor and the principal cannot be centered on their individual roles. The *Code of Canon Law* (Canon Law Society of America, 1983) clearly stipulates that the diocesan bishop is the sole legislator and decision maker in the diocese. As a part of the diocesan structure, the Catholic school is under his governance. The pastor is the bishop's representative and is therefore given direct authority to administrate the parish entrusted to him (§519). This authority does extend to any Catholic school within parish boundaries.

The school principal is the educational administrator of the school. As a representative of the lay community, the principal is called to cooperate with the pastor "in the service of the ecclesial community, for the sake of its growth and life" (Catholic Church, 1994, §910). In this context, the principal exercises knowledge of leadership and administration for the effective operation of the school. It is critical to the school's mission that the pastor-principal relationship be collaborative (Ciriello, 1996). Without an accurate understanding of Canon law regarding the pastor's and the principal's role in the administration of the school, individual tensions may continue, in lieu of the cooperation which each is asked to establish for the furtherance of the Church's teaching mission.

HUMAN RESOURCE FRAME

How the pastor and the principal view each other is very important as we look at the "fit" in their relationship. According to organizational theory, both the organization and the individual benefit when the fit is good (Bolman & Deal, 2003). If the parish pastor and the school principal view each other as basically lazy, indifferent, and child-like in behavior—McGregor's (1960) Theory X—then control and suspicion become underlying issues in the tension. If they tend to view each other as motivated, responsible, and adult-like in behavior—McGregor's Theory Y—then mutual respect and trust will be helpful in the dissipation of any tension in their relationship. As McGregor argued, people are motivated by others' perceptions and will respond accordingly. The expectation that both pastor and principal commit to viewing their relationship in the context of mutual respect and trust will greatly enhance their ability to act as a coherent, interactive unit, complementary to their roles (Getzels & Guba, 1957).

POLITICAL FRAME

Power and politics naturally create conflict; it is inherent and inevitable in all organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Wherever there is conflict, there will be tension. However, conflict and tension may be used to achieve a more noble purpose, especially if allowed to appeal to higher motives and higher stages of moral development (Burns, 1978). If the discovery of tension in the pastor-principal relationship can be refocused on the common goals and espoused theory of the Church, then it can serve a political good. The Church's schools were created to assist in the mission to impart the fullness of Christ's message. The tension and conflict in the pastor-principal relationship should not be ignored (Bolman & Deal), but rather discussed directly and spoken about openly between the two parties involved (Argyris, 1958). If the ultimate goal is for resolution of conflict and tension in the relationship, the lack of adherence to Church teaching by either the pastor or the principal must not be an underlying issue in the tension. The Church is very clear about dissent from magisterial teaching in the areas of faith and morals. Pastor and principal must be willing to assent, both publicly and personally, regarding the laws and regulations of the Church (Myers, 1992). This is vital if tension and conflict are to be openly discussed in the pastor-principal relationship.

SYMBOLIC FRAME

We live in a world that is fundamentally uncertain. For this reason, symbols are created to give meaning in an organization's culture. These symbols may be in the form of stories and rituals that help us to define who we are (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

In a world that is full of complexities and ambiguity, the Church, as an organization, provides meaning, predictability, and tradition in a chaotic world. The story, designed to proclaim to the world that the salvation found is Jesus Christ (Catholic Church, 1994), is directly associated with the teaching mission of schools. As the pastor-principal relationship is critical to the advancement of this teaching mission, tension between these two important school leaders must be addressed and corrected. The achievement of individual goals may have to be sacrificed for the "good of the whole" (suboptimization), if the tension becomes an interruption in the effective operation of the school. Suboptimization must be minimized in order to reconnect them, once again, to the core beliefs and traditions embedded in the overall mission of the Church. Grounded with a thorough understanding of the importance of their cooperative relationship, the issue of tension should be managed for the sake of preserving the school's culture.

The ability of a successful leader to reframe is a tenet of wise leadership. It requires wise leaders who can find simplicity and order amidst organizational confusion and chaos. It requires wise leaders who love their work and their organizations enough to care deeply about the people whom they serve. It requires wise leaders to combine a deep commitment to values and purposes larger than themselves (Bolman & Deal, 2003). And in the Catholic school it requires pastors and principals willing to resolve tension and conflict in their own relationships in order to serve the higher good.

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