



Leadership Key Issues and Key Questions

Cultural Realities

- With 78 million Catholics in America, the average is 1 priest for every 1,925 people
- Despite some progress in priestly vocations, we are facing an acute priest shortage
- Paid lay positions have declined in number and there is a systemic low pay structure
- Too few young people under 30 are pursuing lay or ordained leadership roles

Reflection Question: How can we increase those pursuing ordained and lay leadership, especially for those under 30, while generating the financial resources to support them?

Theological Foundations

- “There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God” (I Cor. 12)
- The call and commission of the disciples is the Gospel foundation for the priesthood
- The diaconate is rooted in the deacons of the New Testament and the call to serve
- Lay leadership stems from baptismal rebirth into Christ as priest, prophet, and king

Reflection Question: How do we educate Catholics on the different charisms of leadership in the Church and foster a sense of ownership and co-responsibility for leadership in the parish?

Other Issues and Challenges

- Ethnic groups are significantly underrepresented among the ordained
- Church leaders must better understand the worldview of Catholics in their 20s and 30s
- Catholics are grossly underutilizing the many formation resources available to them
- We need to more consciously invite others to consider leadership in the Church

Reflection Question: How do we change the landscape such that those in their 20s and 30s and those in the various ethnic groups are more likely to consider lay or ordained leadership in the Church?

Small Group Task: Key Initiatives, Quick Hits, Innovative Ideas

In light of the key issues and questions articulated above, identify how to strengthen the mission of the Church in the area of **The Call to Leadership** through:

- **2-3 Key Initiatives**
- **1-2 Quick Hits**
- **2-3 Innovative Ideas**