

Introduction to Ministry
Collaborative Ministry Make-Up Presentation
April 21, 2020

Opening Prayer: Eternal Father, we praise you for sending your Son to be one of us and save us. Look upon your people with mercy, for we are divided in so many ways, and give us the Spirit of Jesus to make us one in love. We come before you to magnify and glorify your name. We, as the body of Christ, give you all the praise and honor you deserve. Help us all to unite and pray together as a congregation, for we know where two or more are gathered in your name, you are with us, O Lord. Amen.

I. Introduction:

Hello All, I am sad that Kathy and I (Deacon Ed Formosa) could not be with you to discuss the importance of Collaborative Ministry in our Church. On its face, it might seem to be a topic that is straight forward. However, it is always interesting to study the connections of subjects to our faith history including scripture, tradition, and Church teachings. Unfortunately, this topic is very conducive to class interaction and the exchange of ideas and experiences. Given our present situation, this will not be possible. I can only hope that you are able to gain some incites into this topic from my outline that follows.

I have included five activity breaks in this outline. This is where we would normally be doing Table exercises with group discussion. I am asking that you respond briefly to each, with the exception of #5 which is a private reflection. Include your responses with your reflection. Thank you.

Session Goals:

- To present the roots of collaborative ministry within the New Testament, Canon Law, and Vatican II sources.
- To introduce an understanding of and rational for collaborative ministry based on the gifts received by all at Baptism and Confirmation.
- To present principles and skills for effective collaboration and conflict management.

Session Objectives:

- Defend collaboration as an ideal model for ministry;*
- Identify attitudes and expectations necessary for successful collaboration;*

Your reflection needs to cover one of the above objectives.

Activity #1:

I normally begin the session by asking the participants to take a minute or two and list at least three words that come to mind when you hear the word "Collaboration." Please do that now. We will see how these words might come into play during our review of this subject.

Introduction Skit: Working together is God's Plan.

Scripture: Romans 8:28-29; We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son. 1 Corinthians 12:27; All of you together are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it.

Church Tradition and Canon Law: *Liberia Editrice Vaticana* (1997); "On Certain Question Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priest." Can 1112 - ...Among the various aspects of the participation of the non-ordained faithful in the Church's mission considered by the conciliar documents, that of their direct collaboration with the ministry of the Church's pastors is considered. Indeed, "when necessity and expediency in the Church require it, the Pastors, according to established norms from universal law, can entrust to the lay faithful certain offices and roles that are connected to their pastoral ministry but do not require the character of Orders." In this way, it is not one merely of assistance but of mutual enrichment of the common Christian vocation. This collaboration was regulated by successive post-conciliar legislation and particularly by the *Codex Inris Canonici*.

Try to imagine if you can (this for all the visual people in the class) that I am presenting a large sack and I am inviting you share a snack. I pull the following items from the sack:

Two cups of flour.

Pinch of salt.

Two raw eggs.

One cup of sugar.

Small amount of vegetable oil.

Small amount of baking soda and baking powder.

No one seems to be very interested in snacking on what I brought. These are all good things but eaten individually some taste bland, disgusting, or unpleasant. Do you know what happens when a good cook blends these ingredients together? All these distasteful ingredients make a scrumptious, delicious, delectable, mouthwatering cake. The cake needs each one of those ingredients working for it to be fabulous. Each one of the ingredients has a purpose in forming this cake.

Take anyone of these ingredients out – even the smallest, like the baking soda or baking powder, and the cake will flop.

People are like these ingredients. The verse in 1 Corinthians says we are all separate and necessary. Even though all those ingredients are good things, there is very little you can do with them alone. But when you mix them with other ingredients you can make many wonderful things. We are like this too. When we work together it brings out our greatest potential. God wants us to work together for him. Like the verse in Romans says, “God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” God Blends all of us in this church together to be fabulous!

Sometimes we may feel like we are only a small part of this church of people and don't make much of a difference. I need you to remember the baking soda in the cake and how that small ingredient makes such a huge difference. On the other hand, maybe sometimes you fail to appreciate others and think they are bland or unpleasant like the flour, or oil or raw eggs. Think of the cake without those ingredients. We are all key ingredients!

In the words of Pope (St) John Paul II – “the ability to co-ordinate all the gifts and charisms of the community, to discern them and put them to good use for the upbuilding of the Church in constant union with the Bishops. ... Collaborative ministry is not only the focus for growth or renewal in the Church today, rather, it is one way of expressing how the church renews itself.”

II. Meaning Of Collaborative Ministry:

Collaborative ministry is a way of relating and working together in the life of the Church which expresses the communion which the Church is given and to which it is called. (*Review words that you listed in the first table activity.*)

A. Central to Collaboration is Partnership:

- Means ministering in service of communion.
- Interdependence; it stands for the conviction that “we need each other.”
- Quality of relationships; They are valued as significant in relationship to the task being done.
- Extends to every member of the parish; across age, culture, and gender.

B. Rooted in Christian Initiation:

- CM is grounded in the Centrality of baptism and of the Church as communion.
- We all share through baptism in the Unity of God the Father, Son, and Spirit (*Lumen Gentium*).
- By Baptism we are charged with the Mission of evangelization and sanctifying the world; because we share in the priesthood of Christ.

1. Jesus Christ did not minister alone.

- His followers both men and women ministered with him.
- Jesus taught us to “put on the mind and heart of God.”
- St. Paul’s theme “put on the mind of Christ”; image of the body of Christ to show interdependence of all in the community.

2. If Church in its innermost mystery is communion, then those who minister in it are called to minister collaboratively.

- Co-responsibility is at the heart of the church because it is at the heart of the church’s mission.
- This has Important implications for our understanding of baptism, of ministry, of the role of laity, and of the service of priests and bishops of our Church. (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*)

C. Mutuality of Roles: Laity/Ordained – One of the most striking emphases in what the Vatican II Council said about the church is the recovery of laypeople’s full share in the life, holiness, and mission of the church. Each has their roles. (*Lumen Gentium*)

- Laity – We are living our baptismal call to spread the Good News of the Gospel; work for the transformation of the secular world
- Lay Ministry – involves consultation and decision making. (*ccc 910 & 911*) Lay people can be called to cooperate with their pastors in service of the church for the sake of its growth and life.
- Lay Ecclesial Ministers – exercise a stable, public, and recognized ministry as professionally trained or otherwise properly qualified women and men. They dedicate their gifts and talents to serve the Church in roles of significant pastoral ministry. (*Coworkers of the Vineyard*)
- Pastors – it is their office to recognize the laity’s contributions and charisms for the task they share in common.
- Priests – primary task is to enable communion to grow, the relationships he develops are central to his ministry.

Collaborative ministry brings together in partnership people who, through Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, have different vocations and gifts, but who work together to express the communion which the church is given and to which it is called. In such work, the identity of each vocation is “seen and expressed more fully.” (Bishops Conference of England and Wales)

D. Commitment to Mission:

- CM is Service to the transformation of the world as a place of communion, love, and unity. “When people of faith learn values of communion, solidarity and mutual cooperation, they carry these values into their daily lives in the family, at work and in the wider society.” (*Christifideles Laici*; Pope JP II)
- The context for collaborative ministry is a church in mission and such mission is in service of mission.

E. First, in the Heart:

- Partnership in ministry is a stance of the heart, before it is a way of acting.
- It Springs from the desire for servant leadership, not for dominative power.
- It Recognizes that servant leadership thrives not in patriarchal relationships but in relationships of sharing, welcoming, and hospitality rooted in discipleship.
- If we are faithful to our tradition, ministry is a community enterprise. Before it is expressed in action, CM is born in the heart.

F. Questions/Comments/Discussion. (Review words on poster board; check off those that were covered. Are there words we can add?)

Activity #2; Discussion of Homework - “Spiritual Value of Collaboration”: Review and list two key points that struck you in this article. The following are some helpful hints:

- It is about the journey and how we treat each other; build and strengthen our relationship with God by behaving as in His example.
- It requires virtues; patience, prudence, courage.
- One develops spiritual life through interdependence and co-responsibility.

Summary – Collaborative ministry is a way of relating and working together in the life of the Church that expresses the communion our Church is given and to which by baptism we are all called. It commits us to partnership in ministry rooted in Christian Initiation. It honors the

mutuality of the roles of priests and lay persons, invites all to mission, and exists first of all as a stance of the heart. (Collaborative Ministry Today, 2006)

Now that we have provided some description of the term Collaborative Ministry, let's look at a few of the more common key aspects:

- I. **Key Aspects** (Handout #3; 30 Minutes) – There are many aspects of collaborative ministry. When ministers choose to relate and work together, the following elements are significant:
 - A. Collaborative ministry evolves gradually:
 - It involves a gradual, mutual evolution of New patterns of communicating and ministering.
 - Its Pace is influenced by resources for formation, personnel and a parish's history and culture.
 - Partnership in ministry grows slowly and sometimes painfully, and even when established Remains open to further change. Newness is a constant element in the working of God's Spirit.
 1. Stages of Development: Most parishes move through a ladder of development. Many can be defined in one of the four stages.
 - Co-existence – Ministries operate separately or independently.
 - Communication – Ministries share information and calendars.
 - Cooperation – More awareness of how each ministry impacts other ministries. Some effort to support each other and coordinate resources; higher level of awareness.
 - Collaboration – Share and acknowledge a common vision. No competition. Gifts of everyone are put to best use.

Activity #3 - It is not uncommon to become stuck on one level or even regress due to resistance of parish members, and changes in the environment or leadership of a parish. Where do you see your parish in the above stages? Where do you see your ministry?

In order for Collaborative Ministry to develop and exist, the following must occur:

- B. Mutual Trust and Relational Skills:
 - Shared vision implies a Sense of mutual accountability within the team and parish.
 - CM also Honors personal development such as relational skills, evaluation, self-appraisal, listening, consulting, and decision-making, as well as ongoing team formation.

- Collaboration grows when conflict is dealt with openly and honestly.
1. More challenging is the process of consensus decision-making, in which the whole group or community works towards a consensus that becomes the decision.
 2. A collaboration culture is created in parish settings through discussions of beliefs and values, sharing of faith, reflection on the Scriptures, sensitivity, inclusivity and collaborative language beginning with pastor and staff.
- C. There is no one pattern; differing Shapes and Styles:
- It is important to recognize that there is No single model defines collaborative ministry or says what this ministry looks like.
 - When all involved take ownership for the life and mission of their community, collaborative ministry happens.
 - Collaborative ministry cannot be forced. If people don't want it, policy and directives will not make it happen. In such situations, conversion of heart needs to happen where people embrace the value of collaboration before they set out.
- D. Difference between Authority and Authoritarianism:
- CM Affirms leadership that exercises genuine authority in a context of shared responsibility, not the rejection of authority.
 - Aspects like Accountability, leadership as service to people for the common good, and the value of listening to one another are common behaviors in collaborative relationships.
 - Genuine authority works only in a context of co-responsibility.
- E. Empowerment of Parishioners:
- Empowering, encouraging, welcoming, and listening are considered the most effective forms of building vibrant faith communities. CM is committed to these values and strategies.
 - Partnership in ministry becomes visible when parishioners participate widely in parish ministries.
 - In order for this to happen, Two conditions must exist: leadership which invites participation, and lay people grounded in their baptismal call choosing to be involved.

- F. Discernment of Gifts for Leadership: A critical aspect of effective collaboration is the discernment for leadership.
- In inviting a parishioner to a leadership role, A successful match requires the discernment of gifts the individual brings to that role.
 - Sometimes people come to ministry based on their own needs rather than on the needs of the community.
 - **Ministry candidates need a readiness to engage in communication which enhances collaboration.**
 - An ongoing challenge in supporting CM is to begin with the needs of the community and the skills required to serve those needs, instead of the desire and good will of a minister who is available, but perhaps not adequately equipped for the ministry in question.
- G. Challenges to Growth in Collaboration – We need to be realistic; conflicts, misunderstandings, and tensions exist and need to be resolved.
- Fear of either lay or priests that role will be undermined.
 - Financial pressures.
 - Lack of continuity.
 - Stereotypes that trap people in unhealthy attitudes.
 - Rigid behavior or narrow attitudes.
 - Competition among members.
 - Adversarial attitudes; winning rather than finding common ground.
 - Little or no training to sensitize members.

Activity #4 - In the homework reading, “Seven ways to keep conflict from dividing your church,” there was a section entitled “Two paths of conflict”; review the 10 conflicts that divide a community. What examples have you seen within your parish? What positive responses have there been as well? List one of each.

So, let’s talk a little about conflict:

- H. Conflict – Conflict is an inevitable situation when people are involved. It is usually a result of an element of change. It can be a positive or negative condition depending on how it is addressed. Conflict is a necessary condition to allow growth and exchange of ideas. In Collaborative Ministry, conflict must be addressed for the process to be successful. Conflict resolution is a skill which requires training by professionals; we are not going to cover that in this session but it is covered in the Theology for Ministry course. However some basic elements of conflict are:

Causes of Negative Conflict (Sofield)

- Threat to a basic need, i.e. self-esteem.
- Poor communication; information deficit or absence.
- Unfinished, unconscious personal development issues; transference of previous conflict issues.
- Loss; of identity due to changes.

Stages of Addressing Conflict

1. Prepare for Conflict
 - A. Clarify beliefs
 - B. Think about the other person
 - C. Consider practical factors
 - D. Seek consultation or help
2. Deal with the Conflict
 - A. Acknowledge the conflict
 - B. Define the cause
 - a. Needs
 - b. Communication
 - c. Development issues
 - d. Loss
 - C. Make decisions about the conflict; is it real; can we resolve; do we have the tools or do we need help; do we have a historical perspective?
 - D. Defuse the emotional level; use neutral scenario or reasonable person viewpoint.
3. Attempt Reconciliation; can not be forced; goal is forgiveness and seeking communion; usually will require help of trained profess.

III. Practical Issues: There are many practical issues to face when trying to establish collaborative ministry relationships; some of the more common ones follow. As you review each issue try to consider from the perspective of the questions listed below:

1. What are some barriers that one must be aware of in the situation?
2. What would be the ideal outcome that you would want?
3. What would be the first step to begin movement?

- A. Discipleship of Equals: The Church is communion and as such a radical and true equality exists among all those who share in that relationship. It is important that a sense of being on equal terms and held in equal regard is enhanced.
- B. Women in Ministry: Collaborative ministry challenges us to open ministerial and leadership roles more widely to women, not just to strengthen our own communion, but to communicate the gospel more effectively in today's world. It challenges us to value women as respected colleagues in ministry.
- C. Recognizing and including Ethnic and Racial Diversity: One of the greatest challenges we face in church life today is cultural diversity. We are not a uniform church ethnically. We are a communion of races and cultures. In cross-cultural encounters, differences need to be informed by understanding the roots of people's cultural attitudes and respecting their right to find their own way within the one gospel.
- D. Transitions in Parish Staffing: Transitions in parish staffing pose a great challenge for collaborative ministry. A parish that, over a number of years, has opted for collaboration and whose culture, history, and style of pastoral activity is rooted in servant leadership, can be decimated when a new pastor arrives holding a very different model of presbyteral service.
- E. Vocation of the Laity:
- CM Invites lay persons to live their faith in secular life and activity.
 - A community that has opted to work collaboratively encourages its parishioners to be more than disciples of Jesus Christ. It encourages them to be apostles for the transformation of the world.
- F. Parish Worship which Leads to Transformation:
- Collaborative ministry needs to be made visible and celebrated in sacramental and liturgical life.
 - This happens when full and inclusive use of all liturgical ministers take place.
 - It happens when, as a matter of course, Congregational response is robust.

- It happens when occasional Celebrations recognizing those who serve in parish ministries and lead activities.
- It happens when Important events in the life of the parish and of the collaborative team are celebrated.

1. Meaningful liturgy is served by a commitment to collaboration both in preparation and celebration.
2. Collaborative worship planning will be, and often is, messy, for it requires listening and a willingness to negotiate.
3. Liturgy is a communal undertaking, requiring readiness to yield the floor to others, learning by heart the structures of worship, honoring the primacy of the assembly, recognizing the need for preparation, and embracing the urgency of concern for who sits at the Lord's table.

G. Commissioning of Lay Ministers:

- Today's theology of lay ministry acknowledges the primacy of baptism as the foundation for this ministry.
- Centered on the building up of the Body of Christ for the mission of the church, namely the transformation of the world and the service of God's reign.
- This principle Calls for the recognition of lay ministers in church practice through a ritual celebration of installation and commissioning.

Activity #5: – Private Reflection Question: Can you think of at least one need, situation, call to mission, in your parish which might be better met by greater collaboration? Write brief description. (Do not include in your other activity questions and reflection)

IV. Closing

- A. If you have any questions on the material presented or comments, please feel free to include them with your activity responses and reflection. I will do my best to respond with the review of your reflection.
- B. Evaluations.
- C. Reflection.

