

# EMERGING MODELS OF PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

*A Joint Project, Funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.*

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## Landmark Study of U.S. Catholic Parishes Underway

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – The *Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project* has commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to conduct a comprehensive study of Roman Catholic parish life in the United States. This research is the most detailed and in-depth investigation of its kind in more than 30 years and promises to be a landmark study.

The first phase of the research will include a series of surveys in representative samples of Catholic parishes in the United States. This survey of U.S. parishes is now underway; it will be followed by an in-depth study of parish leaders and parishioners at approximately 60 parishes, including a sample of 35 parishes that reflects the diversity of geographic region, demography, and size of U.S. parishes. There will also be a focus on Canon 517.2 parishes, multi-cultural parishes, and parishes using multiple-parish ministry.

"This research will provide the U.S. Church with the most comprehensive and accurate picture of parish life since the landmark Notre Dame Study of the early 1980s," said Sister Mary Bendyna, RSM, Executive Director and Senior Research Associate at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). "Among other things, it will examine the new models and new structures for parish ministry that are emerging as parishes are reorganized and the people they serve are more diverse."

The research will provide pastoral leaders with a comprehensive overview of Catholic parishes and a detailed picture of emerging trends in areas such as:

- Opportunities and challenges in multicultural parishes
- Engagement of young adults in parish life and pastoral leadership
- Changing patterns in parish staffing and compensation
- Ministry in parishes that share a pastor and/or staff
- The roles of business managers and finance councils
- Experiences of parishioners in parishes administered by Parish Life Coordinators

The Emerging Models of Pastoral Ministry Project, funded by the Lilly Endowment, is a collaboration between the National Association for Lay Ministry, the Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development, the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, the National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association and the National Federation of Priests Councils. The project's vision is for a more fully collaborative, competent, and mission-focused pastoral leadership for the Church. Prior research has included uncovering the "marks of excellence" in vibrant parishes. Findings have been published in four books and multiple reports and news releases. For more information, visit [emergingmodels.org](http://emergingmodels.org) or contact project director Trish Vanni at [tvanni@nalm.org](mailto:tvanni@nalm.org).

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