

MultiParish Cluster Models

By Mark Mogilka

Overview

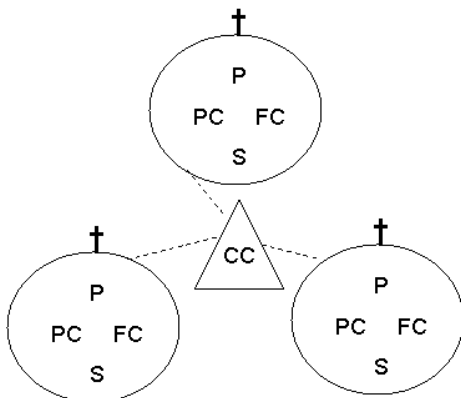
As the number of priests declines, pastors are being asked to assume responsibility for several parishes at the same time. While terminology differs from diocese to diocese, this phenomena is often referred to as parish clustering. Outlined here are six basic multiparish cluster models. While these are focused on for discussion purposes, in reality there are countless variations on each of these six models.

Each model outlined here is shown with three parishes. In reality each model could apply to anything from a two parish cluster to a six or more parish cluster. At the present time in the Diocese of Green Bay all six models are operative.

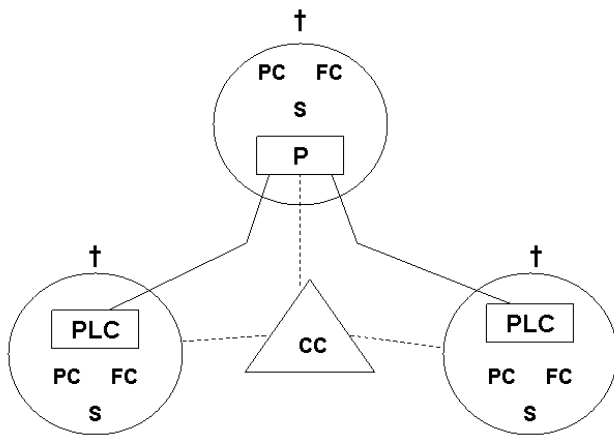
Each model has advantages and disadvantages. There is no “one size fits all” model of clustering. Determining which model will work in a given situation is dependent on such variables as, relative size of parishes involved, distance between parishes, culture and ethnic identities, economic and spiritual vitality, parish histories and traditions, leadership skills, styles and presence of pastor(s), presence and support for Catholic school(s), etc.

Ideally the determination of which model should be utilized in a given situation should emerge from a prayerful collaborative planning process that involves, parishioners, staff, Pastoral Councils, pastors or parish life coordinators, and the diocese.

Model I – Separate Parishes - Coordinated

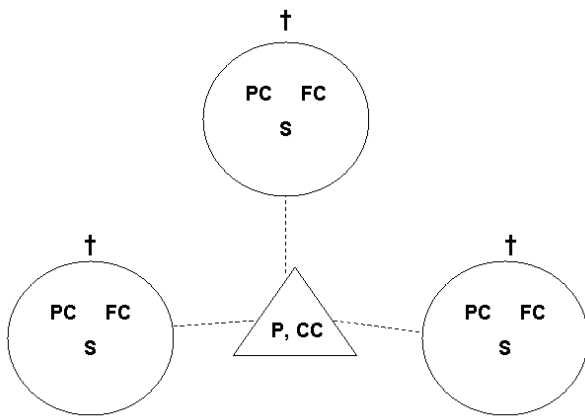


- Each parish has a Pastor (P), Pastoral Council (PC), Finance Council (FC) and Staff (S)
- Cooperation between parishes is facilitated through a Coordinating Council (CC)
- Programs, staff, resources, are shared and planning done through cooperation of pastors and representatives on the CC with the support of respective parish leadership i.e. PC, FC and S



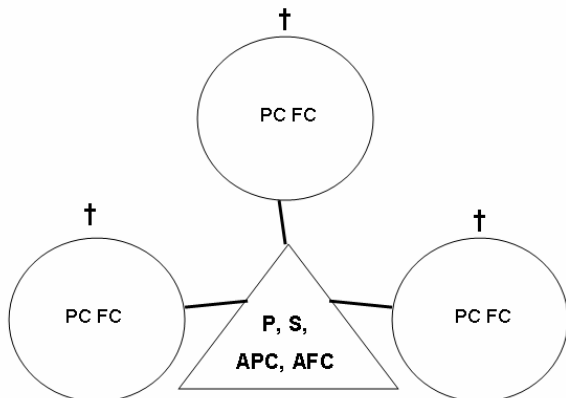
Model II – Separate Parishes – One Pastor & Parish Life Coordinators

- There is one canonical P for all three parishes
- Each parish maintains separate lay leadership structures i.e. PC & FC & S
- The canonical P serves primarily in one parish, while Parish Life Coordinators (PLC) lead the other two parishes providing pastoral care in all areas except sacramental ministry (See Canon Law 517.2)
- Cooperation between parishes is facilitated through a Coordinating Council (CC)



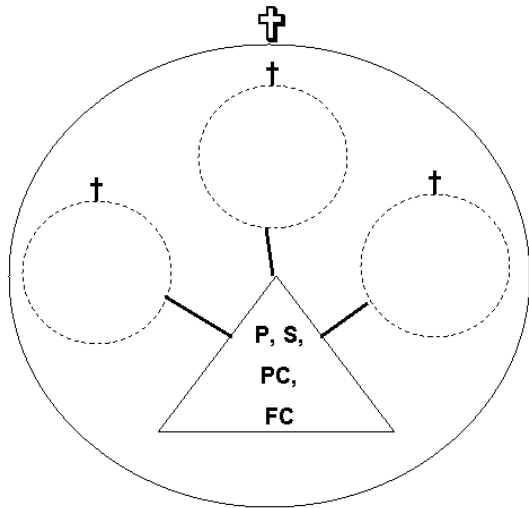
Model III - Separate Parishes – One Pastor

- There is one pastor (P) who provides leadership, sacramental and pastoral care for all three parishes
- Each parish maintains separate leadership structures i.e. PC, FC and S
- A greater degree of cooperation between parishes is facilitated through the CC



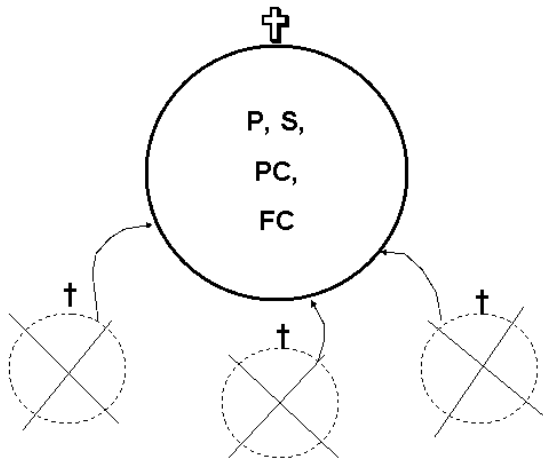
Model IV – One Pastor – Centralized Team & Council

- One P who works with one S – who may work out of one location in service to all three parishes
- Individual parishes may have minimal support staff
- Area Pastoral Council (APC) is primary consultative body for P and has greater decision making influence over P than individual parish PC's and FC's
- APC works closely with an Area Finance Council (AFC) which has a budget and pays salaries of P, S, inter-parish programs and services
- A variation on this model has a team of priests serving several parishes “in solidum” (See Canon Law 517.1)



Model V – Merged Parish

- All councils, committees, finances, sacramental records, are merged together to create a new canonical parish
- There is a new canonical parish name. However name of individual churches remain
- There is one P, S, PC, FC, who serve three worship sites or churches



Model VI – Build & Close

- All three parishes are merged
- Together they build a new larger church
- Existing churches are closed and properties sold to provide funding for building new church
- New parish has one P, S and traditional leadership structure with PC and FC

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