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A STUDY OF ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATES
AND PATTERNS OF PARTICIPATIVE STYLE
IN SEVEN PARISH COUNCILS

A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in Psychology at Massey University.

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SUMMARY

An exploratory case study was carried out on 7 parish councils in one Catholic deanery. Parish councils are organisations of priests, religious and laity in which the parish priest acts as an appointed leader, and the council chairman as an elected leader. Councils consist usually of 15 members and their task is to share pastoral responsibility in some way so that the christian commitment of the parish community will be strengthened. They have been established in most Catholic parishes over the last 6 to 8 years as part of recent attempts at renewal in the Catholic Church.

This research assessed the strengths and weaknesses of 7 parish councils and specified some of the educational needs of parish priests in the matter of working with parish councils. It examined the relationship between the organisational climate of the parish council, the priest's attitude to shared responsibility and the priest's leadership or participative style in council meetings.

Measuring instruments included:

- a structured interview with each parish priest.
- standardised observation of council meetings by 2 observers.
- collation of comments from parish council members.
- the organisational climate instrument of Kolb, Rubin and McIntyre based on the work of Litwin and Stringer.
- the measurement of the priest's participative style by Fiedler's A.S.O. score and an observed rating on Schein's friendly helper,

tough battler, logical thinker scale.

Results showed that in these 7 parish councils there is a high level of good-will, in general a satisfactory level of warmth and trust and some efficiency especially in practical and administrative matters. The parish priests have a considerable degree of openness and are likely to accept assistance. They have a particular need to reflect on the meaning of leadership in the context of parish councils and to consider fully the implications of shared responsibility.

The weaknesses of the parish councils centre round lack of clarity in regard to pastoral goals and areas of responsibility. There is a need to strengthen the sub-committee structure, to improve communication with the parish, to increase procedural efficiency and to understand and agree on the meaning of consultation and decision-making.

In this research, "climate discrepancy" was chosen as a criterion variable i.e. the discrepancy between the perceived actual and ideal situation on 7 organisational climate items within each council. A high discrepancy score indicated a high level of dissatisfaction with the actual climate.

Results showed that if the priest is hesitant towards change and shared responsibility there is evidence of a higher climate discrepancy score, and in particular any manipulative tendency on the part of the priest is related to dissatisfaction with the actual climate. A high rating for the priest on the tough battler scale is significantly related to a high discrepancy score for that parish council, a high rating on the logical thinker scale is related to a low discrepancy score and a friendly

helper style is not significant.

Suggestions are made for further research on a wider scale and practical recommendations have been offered to the deanery in question.

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CHAPTER ONEINTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF AIM

Even to the casual observer, there is evidence that, in the last ten to twelve years, the Catholic Church has undergone and is undergoing a process of rapid and considerable change. While there is clearly a basis of continuing belief and unchanged "essentials", the Catholic Church now experiences new forms of theology, new attitudes, new expressions of authority, new styles of worship, new teaching methods; and among the fruits of this change has been the growth of new forms of shared responsibility. In a society accustomed to a vigorous and vertical rule of law, the emergence or re-emergence of such bodies as the College of Bishops, Diocesan Councils, Priests Senates and the Parish Pastoral Councils has produced new possibilities - and naturally enough, new problems. It would be misleading to suggest that the existence of these bodies amounts to a total democratisation of the Church, but the change from single to shared responsibility in many fields is a significant reality and one which provides a fascinating field of research for the social scientist.

It is the purpose of this thesis, therefore, to examine one of these new bodies, the Parish Pastoral Council, to assess, through objective research, some of its possibilities and some of its problems.

The establishment of Parish Councils was encouraged in the early 1960s by the 2nd Vatican Council, a gathering of 2000 bishops in union with the Pope, which became the authoritative agent and focus of so much subsequent change. Parish Councils were not given legal or constitutional definition but were envisaged in general terms to be representative bodies within each parish, made up of clergy, religious

and laity who would together share responsibility for the pastoral good of the parish community.

Many issues could be considered in dealing with these councils, and for a complete picture all of these would need to be studied; their organisational structure, real and ideal; the measured effect of training sessions for parish council members and clergy; the network of communication between parish and parish council; the effectiveness of different voting procedures and so on. But after working with parish councils, in session and on training efforts, and after informal interviews with 30 - 40 parish council members (who took no further part in the study) it was decided to make this research an exploratory case study on 7 of the 9 parishes in the Manawatu Deanery of the Wellington diocese, a case study with the following precise aims:

- (a) to assess, by interview, by observation and by written report, the strengths and weakness of parish councils in the Manawatu Deanery, and in particular to assess the educational needs of parish priests in the matter of working with parish councils.
- (b) to test the hypothesis that the satisfactoriness of the organisational climate of parish councils will be affected by
 - (i) the parish priest's theological understanding of and attitude towards shared responsibility.
 - (ii) the parish priest's style of functioning within a group.

In a complex area of study these two issues do allow for some objective measures and statements and they do seem to form an integral and important part of the whole picture. Both have been the subject of comment and decision-making within the last few years, but as yet neither of them has been the object of any scientific research, certainly not in this country. Comments and arguments have been based on personal opinion, common sense and subjective impressions.

It may well be that these opinions and impressions have been both perceptive and accurate and it is readily admitted that they have contributed greatly to the choice of subject matter and the preconceptions involved in this present study; but it is hoped that this research, despite its limited aims and scope, will shed some objective light on the situation, to the benefit of future diocesan or at least deanery decisions.

CHAPTER TWOREVIEW OF THE LITERATURESECTION ONEPARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS(A) VATICAN II AND THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

The 2nd Vatican Council, which met from 1961-1965 was both an agent and a product of change in the Church. It was an agent of change in that it initiated many new directions and new attitudes, and it was a product of change in that it was responding to new needs and new situations. Our relevant example here is that the Council laid an equally strong emphasis on the need for authority and for freedom in the life of the Church community. It did not make any direct effort to solve the age-old question of how these work together in practice, but it spoke emphatically about the need for dialogue, for mutual listening, for respect for the dignity of the person, and for a sense of common responsibility. (Wellington Guidelines, 1967). In doing so, it responded to new aspirations in the modern world, and it initiated new ways of acting to "proclaim Christ's presence."

So the Council spoke of the Church and therefore of the parish as a community of persons, each with his God-given dignity, freedom, competence and responsibility "established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity and truth."

And as a logical consequence the Council laid down the pastoral principle of "shared responsibility" as fundamental for renewal.

"The laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in close union with the priest, bringing to the Christian community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which should be examined and resolved by common deliberation. As far as possible the laity ought to collaborate energetically in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish." (Decree on the Laity n.10).

Authority and leadership in the parish, therefore, is to be exercised in such a way as to promote the dignity, responsibility and initiative of laymen. Full authority rests with the bishop and is shared autonomously by priests but:

"Pastors are to recognise and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the layman in the Church. Let pastors willingly make use of the layman's advice. Let them confidently assign duties to him in the service of the Church, allowing him freedom and room for action. Further, let them encourage the layman so that he may undertake tasks on his own initiative. Attentively in Christ, let them consider with fatherly love the projects, desires and suggestions proposed by the laity. And let pastors respectfully acknowledge that just freedom which belongs to everyone in this earthly city." (Decree on the Church, n.37).

In this respect, priests are spoken of as "brothers among brothers with all those who have been reborn at the font of Baptism." (Decree on Priests n.9). Laymen are urged to Christian obedience as disciples of Christ, but also to a sharing of responsibility;

"Every layman should openly reveal to pastors his needs and desires with that freedom and confidence which befits a son of God and a brother in Christ. An individual layman, by reason of the knowledge, competence or outstanding ability which he may enjoy, is permitted and sometimes even obliged to express his opinion on things which concern the good of the Church. When occasions arise, let this be done through the agencies set up by the Church for this purpose. Let it always be done in truth, in courage and in prudence, with reverence and charity towards those who by reason of their sacred office represent the person of Christ." (Decree on the Church n.37).

These are theological phrases, carefully, and in places, cautiously worded. But their implications have relevance for the historian and the social scientist, as well as the theologian and the believer, because they point the way towards profound social and historical change. Karl Rahner (1968) puts it in theological perspective:

"The Church is not a finished, solidly built and furnished house, in which all that changes is the successive generations who live in it. The Church is a living reality which has had a history of its own and still has one... The Church is always in the flux of history, not on the motionless bank, but in this movement, God's eternity is present

with it, his life, his truth and his fidelity.... The most important thing about Vatican II is not the letter of the decrees (which in any case have to be translated by us all into life and action). It is the spirit, the deepest tendencies, perspectives and meaning of what happened that really matter and which will remain operative. They may perhaps be submerged again for the time being by a contrary wave of caution, fear of one's own courage... But the real seeds of a new outlook and strength to understand and endure the imminent future in a Christian way have been sown in the field of the Church." (p35, p100).

The historian, commenting on this will seek patterns of historical change, cultural and causative determinants. Bishop Mackey (1971), for example, points out that in the last 400 years, the Catholic Church in reaction particularly to the Reformation, the Revolution and Modernism "laid heavy, sometimes exclusive emphasis on its own authority, stressed that true freedom exists only within a recognition of the sovereignty of God, and invoked authority to impose a moratorium on discussion until ecclesiastical disciplines had time to assess the relevance of new knowledge to the traditions of faith. Whatever might have been the subtleties of doctrine, the practical application of these reactions was to/ canonise a simple vertical relationship within which the ruled are merely subjects, whose single duty is obedience to authority..... Vatican II stresses those qualities of the Church which were formerly overshadowed. The Church is not merely a divinely instituted

monarchical society, but it is equally the People of God and a communion of interpersonal love with a service to perform towards all humanity. The service it has to perform is one of liberation so that all may enjoy the freedom that belongs to the children of God." (p44).

Erich Fromm (1960 p.143) perhaps, would see this as a move from external towards internalised authority but for the social scientist the main concerns will be with some of the more immediate and practical applications of these wide-ranging principles and that is precisely the purpose of this study, to consider one practical consequence of Vatican II's pastoral reflections, the emergence of parish pastoral councils.

We now move towards a definition of these bodies.

(B) THE PARISH COUNCIL

Vatican II did not provide a working structure or legal status for parish councils, but it did provide the basic ideas. In the Decree on Bishops, a pastoral council at the diocesan level was described as follows:

"It is highly desirable that in each diocese a pastoral council be established over which the diocesan bishop himself will preside and in which specially chosen clergy, religious and laity will participate. The function of this council will be to investigate and to weigh matters which bear on pastoral activity and to formulate practical conclusions regarding them." (n27).

Then, in the Decree on the Laity (n.26) this theme was expanded to all levels in the Church, including the parish, and these Councils are spoken of as "assisting the apostolic work of the Church, either in the field of making the Gospel known and men holy, or in charitable, social or other spheres."

There followed, eventually, in each Diocese throughout the world (or rather, in each Diocese where action was taken) local guidelines and suggestions. In Wellington, in 1967, the "basic ideas" on parish councils were communicated to all parishes in the following terms:

"Parish councils should express in their structure and working:

- (i) Authority and leadership rests with bishops as authentic preachers of the Word - those to whom the "care of the churches" has been given in a special way.
- (ii) Priests make the bishop present in a local congregation of the faithful, share his concern and his function of leadership and authority. (Priests are recommended to "preside at" rather than chair council meetings.)
- (iii) Lay people are to be given a wide communal responsibility in union with priests and religious. There must be emphasis on their mature freedom, initiative and dignity.
- (iv) These aims are to be achieved in dialogue, mutual listening and in a sense of shared responsibility and care.

- (v) Parish councils are not to be seen in isolation, but are part of an inter-dependent and interlocking system of community councils working at all levels in the Church." (Wellington Guidelines 1967 p.7).

In specifying these objectives, the 1967 Guidelines therefore emphasise the importance of dialogue, shared responsibility, and active partnership. "These concepts are not new in the Church, but are the modern expression of the traditional New Testament ideal of brotherhood and common care. The Church of today is trying to express this ideal at every level - bishops with the Pope, religious with their superiors, priests with their bishop, and lay people with their priests." (ibid. p.4).

There is recognition of the ideal that within each parish council there should be a sharing of hopes, plans and decisions in a spirit of open discussion, so that a parish council is to be "not merely a way of conducting community affairs, (but is to be) itself a sharing and caring community of Christians." (ibid. p.5). At the same time there is a suggested method for dealing with serious conflict. These suggestions include:

- (a) extended discussion; so that a minority on the council should feel free to call for further consideration of any important decision and "before any appeal to outside help is made... the majority on the council should make every effort to understand the root of the difficulty and to settle the matter in a spirit of mutual understanding."

- (b) conciliation; if the minority feels the matter is of sufficient importance, the suggestion is made here that they should be able to call for the help of arbitrators or conciliators from outside the parish. Finally, allowance should be made for
- (c) appeal to authority; so that after discussion and conciliation any member who "still feels conscientiously that a wrong decision is being made, may appeal to the final authority of the archbishop, or of any diocesan official whom the archbishop has appointed to deal with such matters."

The point is made that these provisions, even though they may be used rarely, "set an atmosphere of confidence in argument and vigour in discussion; members have a feeling of knowing where they stand and how far they can go. They provide a safeguard against hasty majority decisions... and also have the advantage of applying equally to everyone on the council, laymen, religious and priests." (ibid. p. 6-7).

Part III of these Wellington Guidelines goes on to suggest ways of forming a parish council and stresses the importance of having a planning group, a set of working rules, and a satisfactory method of election either through neighbourhood meetings, postal ballot, or parish meeting.

In 1972, the Auckland Diocese also produced "Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils." In the statement of aims and objectives, these show an expected similarity to the Wellington document:

"Generally, the aim of a parish pastoral council is to provide the opportunity for

dialogue, shared responsibility and active partnership between priest, religious and people.

This general aim, or responsibility, can be described more explicitly as follows:-

- (i) to advise and join in decision-making with the parish priest in all matters relating to parish life.
- (ii) to provide a means of communication between all members, sectors and organisations of the parish.
- (iii) to foster and co-ordinate parish pastoral works.
- (iv) to promote the whole life and worship of the parish.
- (v) to discover and fulfil in a practical way the needs of the parish, parishioners, and others living within the parish area.
- (vi) To stimulate a Christian response to social issues and the problems confronting mankind."

(Auckland Guidelines 1972 p. 3-4).

In matters of detail, however, the Auckland Guidelines are more specific and directive than the Wellington ones. In 1971, interim suggestions had been produced in Auckland, and in the introduction to the 1972 Document, the Bishop of Auckland stated:

"In the light of subsequent experience and experimentation, I have reviewed the matter with the members of the Commission on the Laity, and I am now in a position to issue definitive guidelines making parish pastoral councils obligatory in every parish as of June 30th, 1972. Each parish will go about setting up its council in its own

way, provided always that the basic principles of these Guidelines are respected and observed. No parish pastoral council will be recognised unless it does so conform." (ibid. p.2).

And so, whereas in Wellington, the number and functions of any sub-committees, for example, was, and still is, left to the discretion of local parishes, the Auckland document states:

"Mandatory standing committees for the time being in the Diocese are: finance, works and maintenance, school (where school exists), religious education, liturgy, missions and overseas aid." (ibid. p.16).

Similar precise directives are given with regard to the composition of parish councils, meetings, the settlement of disputes, and method of election. On elections, for example, the Guidelines state that: "in Auckland, under normal circumstances, elected representatives will be elected at a general meeting of the parish from a list of nominees previously canvassed in the whole parish. The parish general meeting will normally be held in the month of June. (Members of the council should resign by rotation...) The parish meeting will be the occasion for the council to report in full to parishioners on its activities. All parishioners, 16 years of age and over, shall have voting rights... A quorum for the parish general meeting shall consist of 50 parishioners, 16 years of age and over. In the case of a parish of less than 250 parishioners, the quorum shall be one fifth of the total number on the parish roll.....Any alternative method

of election must have the prior approval of the bishop." (ibid. p.6).

(c) WHAT IS SHARED RESPONSIBILITY?

Both of these diocesan guidelines, therefore, are attempts to embody the decisions of Vatican II in the hope that they will be translated to the local parish setting. Aims and objectives, and, in some respects, methods and styles are specified as ideals. For the purpose of this thesis we must now attempt to clarify the meaning of "shared responsibility", since this would seem to be one of the fundamental concepts on which parish councils rest. Two issues are involved, firstly, the pastoral role of parish councils, and secondly, what authority do they exercise.

1. The Pastoral Role of Parish Councils.

In 1967 a large scale study programme on Vatican II's understanding of the Church was undertaken in the Diocese of Lansing, Michigan. A series of modified Phillips 66 discussion sessions was conducted among a total of 4,000 adults, and 2308 suggestion cards came from these discussions. In the section on parish councils we find this statement:

"The main focus of the council will be on the financial and business affairs of the parish so that the pastor will be free to fulfil his spiritual duties more effectively." (Lansing Diocese 1967).

This sort of statement would seem to be a product of an older theology that was inclined to see the laity as dealing with the things of the world and the clergy as dealing with the things of God. (Niermann 1975). It does not take into account

the insistent call of Vatican II that the Church as a whole is in the world, that the right and duty to exercise the apostolate is common to all the faithful, both clergy and laity, that in the words of Pope Paul (1966) "It is the function of the

pastoral council to investigate everything pertaining to pastoral activities, to weigh them carefully and set forth practical conclusions concerning them, so as to promote conformity of life and actions of the People of God with the Gospel." The theological notion behind

this is the new awareness in the Catholic Church of the "common priesthood" of all the faithful, a unity prior to all distinctions in the Church, and founded on the common Baptism, Confirmation and call of all the members. The "Council of the Laity", an officially established Roman Commission, puts it in these terms:

"One of the basic features of Vatican II renewal is the stress laid on the special contribution which lay people can make to the fulfilment of the common mission - each one in accordance with his or her own vocation and all in communion with the pastors who bear responsibility within the Church. It is not a matter of granting privileges to the laity, but of recognising rights and appealing to duties which are based on the common priesthood of all the baptised." (Council of the Laity, 1974).

In the interviews, observations and discussions which form part of this research, an attempt will be made to assess the level of awareness and acceptance of this theological principle of "shared responsibility."

2. What Authority Do Parish Councils Exercise?

Here we consider the practical applications of shared responsibility in terms of how decisions are reached. Guidelines, Constitutions, Parish Council Handbooks and commentaries of all kinds deal with this question in one way or another. At one end of the scale would be the comment that "the parish council is a church adaptation of the democratic process (with) however, the distinct and unique quality that it is a non-political service group." (Broderick 1968 p.64). On the other end of the scale would be the situation in one American parish where the council is recognised as completely advisory; the agenda is fully determined by the pastor, there are no formalised procedures for motions and voting, and it is clearly recognised that the pastor is not bound by any advice given by the council. (Deegan 1969, p. 123). The proposal in a 1970 Irish pamphlet would lie between these two positions. It suggests that the parish council should have decision-making powers in certain specified areas and that some decisions must be left to the parish clergy. "These would be agreed upon initially by clergy and laity from their own knowledge and experience, but mutual trust and appreciation must be exercised... What is required is that clergy and laity should enter sincerely into co-operation, each aware of the role of the other and fully concerned with the Christian message of unity." (Buckmaster 1970, pp11-17).

Most commentators, therefore, dealing with this issue state the question by asking whether the parish council is advisory or decision-making, although one respected writer in this field questions the phrasing and intent of such a

statement. "(Such a question) reflects only one aspect of the Church, namely, its vertical, legal dimension. A question phrased in legal terms will yield a legal answer. A question phrased in either/or terms will yield an either/or answer. Such a question may work in a computerised survey. But surely it is a disastrous oversimplification of the complex reality that is the brotherhood of faith reflected in a good parish council... However, even a poor question can sometimes perform some minimum service in clarifying an issue." (Rademacher 1974 p.17).

So we use this question in the humble hope of clarifying the issue. The Guidelines for the Wellington Diocese did this too and answered the question in this way.

"Final legal authority, both canonical and civil, remains with the bishop. The parish priest shares in this authority and normally exercises it at the local level subject to the bishop's guidance and power of final decision. Parish councils have as yet no legal status of themselves; they simply share responsibility and function with those to whom authority legally belongs.

Some have therefore described parish councils as merely advisory or consultative bodies. While this may well describe their legal status, it is an inadequate description for any but legal purposes. It gives an impression that they can give advice, but that there is no responsibility on the priest or bishop to allow them a share in the making of decisions. The Vatican Council suggested rather a situation in which decisions

would be made together expressing the common care that all have for the concerns of the whole community." (Wellington Guidelines p.4).

The Auckland Guidelines, after stating that the chain of authority and shared responsibility is from bishop to parish priest to parish council, says that "the parish council is not solely advisory, nor is it a decision-making body autonomous from the parish priest. It is a mixture of both, with the task of sharing the pastoral responsibility of the parish priest within and beyond the parish by common deliberation." (Auckland Guidelines p.3).

Another New Zealand statement on the issue comes in a 1969 pamphlet written in Christchurch "To say a parish council is only an advisory body is inadequate and misleading... Decisions will be made together as an expression of the common care that all have for the community. The priest does exercise leadership and he works with the parish council in such a way that community sharing and mutual responsibility come alive. The parish council is based on dialogue in human equality." (Curnow 1969 p.5).

In New York, the Archdiocesan Commission on parish councils speaks of the pastor as "the archbishop's representative in the parish" and states "the parish council should be a decision-making body whose decisions are binding when ratified by the pastor. In practice the withholding of such ratification should be rare." (New York Guidelines 1968).

These ideals are broadly expressed, even in the Auckland Guidelines. It is evident that where a parish council is agreed to be decision-making it is clearly sharing in the responsibility of pastoral care. But it needs to be understood, too, that true consultation can indeed be a share in that responsibility. Any decision-making process includes among its preliminary steps the gathering of information and this can be a clear function of a "consultative" council. It can provide some of the facts needed as a basis for a decision; it can furnish some of the implications of those facts; it can shed light on how a variety of people interpret the facts; it can provide alternatives for consideration and in particular it can indicate how a representative group within a community views the entire matter. These are crucial preliminaries and those who share in them fully are sharing in the decision-making process. (Deegan 1969 pp.121-124 cf Maier 1963). It will be one of the conclusions of this research, however, that greater understanding and greater clarity on this issue is vital.

One local parish council has recently grappled with this issue and in the process of drawing up a new proposed constitution makes a possibly useful distinction between "responsibility" (which is shared by all) and "accountability" (which may devolve upon one or other member of the council.) In the first draft of this document, the aims and responsibilities of the council were stated as follows:

"The parish council is... an organisation of clergy and religious and laity which shares the responsibilities and problems of the whole parish and indeed the whole community. The parish aims to be a community of the People of God within a diocese. It exists to

tell people about God and the Gospel, to strengthen the faith of believers, to praise and worship God, to be an example of God's love in the community and to offer a Christian lead and a Christian response in regard to the needs of others.

The parish council, then, exists to lead, guide and serve the parish in the fulfilment of these aims... The parish council has decision-making responsibility except in areas covered by Church law, or Diocesan regulations, or in matters where the bishop has made the parish priest alone accountable. In these fields, the parish council will have an advisory and consultative function. It further has the responsibility of informing the bishop of its activities and its thoughts." (St. Patrick's Parish, 1975).

This attempt to clarify the "decision-making", versus "advisory" question in terms of accountability (cf Schaller (1971) p.115) may eventually be one way of specifying the possibilities proposed in the Irish Guidelines quoted earlier, but on reflection this parish council decided that the responsibility of the parish priest is not sufficiently recognised in the above wording and is considering a change to make the first part of the second paragraph read:

"The parish council is to be a decision-making body and its decisions are to be made always for the pastoral good of the parish. The parish priest who presides at council meetings, has ultimate responsibilities and will at times ask that other council members act in a purely advisory capacity. If, in a particular case of this kind, the council considers that its role should be other than advisory, then there shall be a process of extended discussion, conciliation

and final arbitration by the archbishop""
(St. Patrick's Parish, 1975).

This still implies that the parish council is a decision-making body - on particular issues where it is to be advisory it must be shown to be just that.

(D) SOME RELEVANT STUDIES

In New Zealand, the Auckland Diocesan Pastoral Council recently surveyed the parish council situation in the Auckland Diocese. Its preliminary report states that while most parishes in that Diocese do have parish councils, "slightly more than one-third have well-constituted councils." The criteria for this judgment are not fully stated in the preliminary report, but one factor seen to emerge is "the impression that 'some' parish priests are either excessively authoritarian, uninterested or obstructive." The survey suggests that the pastoral role of a parish council will not develop without the positive guidance and spiritual leadership of the clergy. "It is by no means established that this guidance and leadership has been forthcoming in all parishes." Furthermore, it seems that council meetings in three-quarters of the parishes "devote little or no time to considering spiritual matters.... Instead the committees which are generally most active and best organised are those of finance, and works and maintenance... This indicates a pre-occupation with the managerial functions of the council and a lesser regard for the pastoral need of the parishes".

The report recognises that in the past, the laity have not generally been accustomed to active involvement in pastoral matters, since this responsibility "has been considered that of the priest, not the parishioners. But... it is realistic to expect that people should grow in their understanding and that sufficient time has now elapsed for the laity's awareness of their role to have developed... The question to be answered is the extent of such development." (Zealandia Newspaper June 15, 1975).

In 1965 a survey was carried out in one diocese of the United States, where, of the 900 priests queried, 90% responded. The survey was to determine what channels of communication could be opened in the diocese among bishop, priests and laity, but one question dealt with letting others share in responsibilities. The summary report on this point states:

"some suggested that the laity be given real responsibility, which includes accepting the possibility of their making mistakes, just as this possibility exists for the priest in charge. Many reactions on this point in the survey indicated that a pastor who has an attitude of sharing responsibility will be able to avoid an overly paternalistic attitude that tends to regard the laity as children who cannot think for themselves." (Deegan 1969 p.121).

This finding was in agreement with an earlier "business management" study conducted in 18 big city parishes in the United States which sought to test the hypothesis that "there is a positive relationship between the efficient

operation of a parish and the use by the pastor of competent lay advisers or assistant pastors in a subordinate line or staff capacity." In this study, "delegation of authority" was defined to mean a "pattern of behaviour whereby a pastor would give assistant pastors or qualified lay persons actual decision-making powers in certain areas," and the term "efficiency" was meant to embody "both the idea of getting results and also the most economical use of all available resources." Ten practices were chosen to measure the extent of delegation by the parish priest; some had to do with more easily demonstrable activities, while others were more related to his philosophy of working with others, but in each case, evaluations were made by considering in some way the parish priest's behaviour. Among the norms were: commitment to policy of using laity to share in administration; practice of assigning areas of responsibility; practice of managing by objectives; practice of giving decision-making powers to committees. The major conclusion of this study was that in the area of church administration "there is reason to expect a close correlation between a pastor's executive efficiency and the extent to which he practices certain habits of delegation." It was also concluded that "managerial concepts and principles are not understood, that parish priests reflect the delegation they perceive in their own superiors, and that there is a lack of performance criteria." (Deegan 1963).

There is a dearth of objective studies dealing specifically with parish councils, although in the next section brief mention will be made of some relevant research in the general field of leadership styles and principles. There are however, a number of books relating in one way or another to parish

councils and these range across several disciplines.

Coriden (1968) in a book entitled We the People of God examines the present structures of the Church and analyses them from a sociological and historical point of view. Suggestions on constitutional government for the Church are outlined and emphasis is given to those which would lead to Church renewal.

Bridstow (1969) is a sociologist who is also a Lutheran ecclesiologist. In a work entitled Church Politics he provides a sociological analysis of various churches and how decisions are made in them. He describes the interplay of human factors of influence and persuasion which are involved in the governing of the Church as an institution.

Curran and Dyer (1970) have edited seven essays which relate to shared responsibility in the local Church, and which are intended, in the editors' words, to "provide the reader with the data and theological reflection which must undergird the principle of shared responsibility."

In similar vein is another work edited by Coriden (1971) entitled Who Decides in the Church: Studies in Responsibility. Here the author describes decision-making and policy-forming processes in the Church. There are historical precedents, ecumenical analogies, and sociological critiques.

Granfield (1973), in a well researched, if somewhat pedestrian book called Ecclesial Cybernetics also covers historical details. His is a systems approach, an analysis of authority and decision-making in the Church, with a reminder that an open communication system, interacting with its environment,

is more effective than a closed, one-way system. He makes the plea that the Church needs "cybernetic reform through democratization." (p.211).

Among the more theological works is Cardinal Suenens' (1968) Co-Responsibility in the Church, a practical and spiritual book. The National Advisory Council of the United States Episcopal Conference says that Cardinal Suenens "treats the role of the laity in a way that shows personal understanding along with profound insights into the needs of the modern world."

Two other books propose new pastoral structures, in particular the building up of small responsible communities. Michael Winter (1973), in Mission or Maintenance calls for a programme that would make the Church, in small responsible groups, a community of worship, charity, witness and apostolate: and he concludes that in the industrialised countries of the English speaking world, an authentic Christian community "could hardly be sustained among more than 20 or 30 people." (p.23). Stephen Clark (1972) in Building Christian Communities also makes a plea for small groups and in reaching towards this conclusion, makes a three-fold distinction in pastoral planning and leadership:

- (a) an activities-oriented approach, where the concern is to see that the right activities occur.
- (b) a problem-oriented approach, where the focus is primarily on the goal or the ideal and in this case, the goal would be "in forming the Church as a whole, or some unit of the Church into what it should become." This approach, says Clark, becomes most important in times of rapid social change. (pp.12 ff).

A number of books offer practical suggestions for parish councils. Apart from Diocesan Guidelines and ecclesiastical decrees, mention has already been made in this respect of works by Curnow, Rademacher, Buckmaster, Broderick and Schaller. Apart from these, Bernard Lyons has dealt with this area in three essential books whose titles are self-explanatory: Parish Councils, Reviewing the Christian Community (1969); Programmes for Parish Councils (1970) and Leaders for Parish Councils (1971). A Protestant viewpoint is provided by Kean (1953) in The Christian Gospel and the Parish Church which discusses ways of involvement for parishioners, and also by Lindgren (1965) in Foundations for Purposeful Church Administration. The leadership experience of the U.S. National Council of Catholic Laity is summarised by Tewey (1972) in Recycling the Parish. This deals with the training of council members and includes organisational suggestions. Howes and Quin (1971) write particularly for Diocesan council members, but their recommendations in Diocesan Pastoral Planning would have some significance at the parish level. Fecher (1970) in a pamphlet entitled Parish Council Committee Guide offers ideas for committees on education, parish life, administration, family life and social action. Ryan (1968) provides a step-by-step programme for setting up parish councils in a 50-page pamphlet entitled How to Establish a Parish Council, and O'Neill (1968) in The Sharing Community, Parish Councils and Their Meaning discusses the matter from a New Zealand viewpoint, which gives his work particular value for the local scene.

SECTION TWOLEADERSHIP STYLES AND PRINCIPLES(A) THEORY

Within the field of group dynamics the nature of leadership is perhaps the most persistently studied topic. In a sample of the research literature prior to 1949, 130 definitions of leadership were discovered (Lassey 1971 p.255) and Paul Hare in Sociometry (1972) deals with 2021 references to research on small groups, leadership, and inter-personal processes from 1959 to 1969. As the facts have accumulated, it has become evident that simple formulae are inadequate, and perhaps for this reason psychologists have sometimes taken refuge in what Bennis (1969) calls "abstract and majestically useless formulations" but research has shown that the nature of a group's leadership clearly makes a difference to many aspects of the group's functioning and it has been able to specify some of the factors involved in this common sense observation. (Cartwright and Zander 1968 p.301).

Spotts (1964) points out that there have been different ways of looking at leadership and he defines these ways as

- (i) the Trait-Oriented approach, which is now largely abandoned since only 5% agreement could be shown in over 100 studies. (Stogdill 1948).
- (ii) The situational approach, concentrating on the group's environment.

- (iii) The functional approach which saw a shift of emphasis from the study of the leader as a person to a study of the group e.g. in the work of White and Lippitt (1956).
- (iv) The interactionist approach, especially in field research, seeing leadership as an interactive process e.g. in the studies by Likert (1961).

This thesis is concerned with a small section of this broad field, in particular the question of leadership style, but it is still necessary to provide a brief overview of theories of leadership in order to provide some perspective. There is no universal construct which describes what leadership is and theorists are still defining the issues, but there are "several conceptual frameworks that provide useful insight into the complexity of leadership research." (Hines 1972 pp 139f).

McGregor (1960, 1967) speaks of Theory X and Theory Y. In the traditional organisation, says McGregor, leadership or management was characterised by the following assumptions about the nature of man:

- (i) The average man works as little as possible.
- (ii) The normal worker lacks ambition and avoids responsibility.
- (iii) Employees are resistant to change.
- (iv) Man is basically egocentric and self-centred and oblivious to the goals of the firm.
- (v) Man is basically unintelligent and highly gullible.

This underlies what McGregor calls Theory X which he compares with a preferred Theory Y where the characteristics of the employee are seen in different terms:

- (i) Man is not by nature resistant to change or passive about organisational needs.
- (ii) Man is inherently motivated, has potential for development and basically desires to assume responsibility.
- (iii) The essential objective of leadership, especially management, is to organise the environment in such a way that people can best achieve personal goals by working towards organisational goals.

There has been considerable research related to the Theory X - Theory Y concept in recent years, both in laboratory studies and the actual work environment (cf Miner 1963) and the theory has been shown to have practical application, although of course if Theory Y is carried to the extreme it can be counterproductive. "The participative leader who provides inadequate structure or who allows subordinates to develop goals that are in opposition to organisational objectives has carried things too far. The good leader is one who provides support for his subordinates, but directs them towards positive goals without relinquishing responsibility for results." (Hines 1972 p.143).

McGregor himself makes the point that Theory Y emphasises the possibility of human growth and the necessity for selective adaptation rather than a single absolute form of control. "Limits on human collaboration are not limits of human nature but of management's ingenuity in discovering how to realise the potential represented by its human resources." (1960 p.45). And McGregor makes the further point that leadership is not so much a property of the individual as a complex relationship between:

- (a) characteristics of the leader:
- (b) attitudes, needs and characteristics of the followers:
- (c) characteristics of the organisation, structure, goals, tasks etc.:
- (d) the social, economic and political milieu.

Argyris (1957) borrows from Maslow's hierarchy of needs and argues that the best leadership is that which allows the worker, for example, to "self-actualise" in the work situation. The task of the leader is basically to enhance human interaction so as to align individual and organisational goals towards a common purpose.

Bass (1960) defines leadership as "the observed effort of one member to change another member's behaviour by altering the motivation of the other members or by changing their habits." In this carefully behaviourist approach the effectiveness of the leader can be measured by observing the change in the behaviour of the sub-ordinates produced especially by classical reinforcement methods.

Fiedler (1964, 1969, 1972). For the last ten years, Fiedler's contingency model has generated considerable research. According to this model, the leadership environment is a function of:

- (i) The leader-follower relationship.
- (ii) The task structure.
- (iii) The degree to which the leader has formally defined organisational power.

Each of these factors can be classified along a "favourability" dimension so that the

more pleasant the relations, the more structured the task and the more power there is, the more "favourable" the environment is said to be. Leadership behaviour can then vary along the following continuum, dependent upon the environment:

Permissiveness	Strong Control
Passiveness	Activeness.

Fiedler states that if the "favourability" of the environment is either very high or very low, the optimal leader behaviour is strong control and high activeness. Where the environment is moderately "favourable", the best leader behaviour is permissiveness, and passiveness. Some researchers hold strong reservations (cf Korman 1969) but at the very least, Fiedler's research has identified three highly relevant variables in any leadership situation.

This thesis too, deals in part with leadership variables and in the formulation of hypotheses, Fiedler's model provided the basic theoretical considerations. In the outline of relevant research, therefore, some emphasis is given to studies relating to the contingency model.

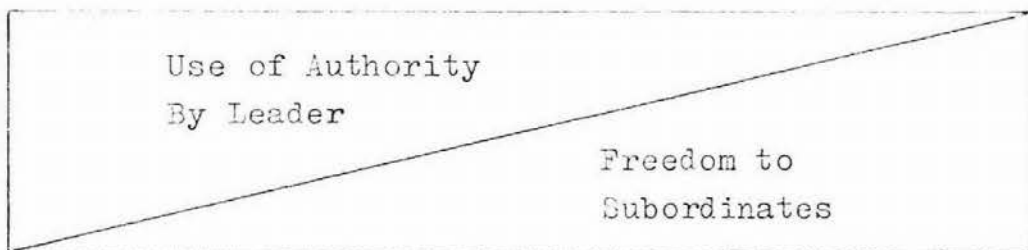
Additional theoretical considerations, however, must be considered, although none would lay claim to the title of a "theory of leadership" as would Fiedler and McGregor etc.

Kemp (1971) provides a neat description of authoritarian, democratic and group centred leaders:

- (i) The authoritarian leader is one who plans, informs, directs and motivates the group to accept suggestions:

- (ii) The democratic style is to engage in co-operative planning and functioning, to help members clarify their goals and to develop and respect the abilities of members:
- (iii) The style of the group-centred leader stems from his belief in self-theory. He aims to release each member's capabilities and to develop their self-responsibility.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) produced a much quoted article on "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern" and make a fundamental distinction between the use of authority by the leader and the freedom given to subordinates to produce a continuum of leadership behaviour.



Leader decides.	Announces	Presents	Gives group
Announces	decision.	problem.	as much
decision.	Permits	Asks for	freedom as
	questions.	ideas.	he has to
		Decides.	define
			problem and
			decide.

Forrester (1965) suggested that in order to depart from the authoritarian hierarchy as the central organisational structure, one should replace the superior-subordinate pair as the fundamental building block in the organisation. "In the new organisation an individual would not be assigned to a superior. Instead he would negotiate as a free individual, a

continually changing structure of relationships with those with whom he exchanges goods and services. He would accept specific obligations as agreements of limited duration. As these are discharged, he would establish a new pattern of relationships."

In like manner, Bennis (1969) called for new concepts of leadership and spoke of an "agricultural model" which would aim at building a climate where growth and development are culturally induced. He speaks of the breakdown of bureaucratic leadership because of change, growth in size, complexity of technology and change in managerial values towards humanistic and democratic ideals; and he outlines the tasks of modern leadership as distributing power, control of conflict, responding to a turbulent environment, seeking clarity, commitment and consensus, and dealing with growth and decay.

Maier (1963) distinguished the quality element of a decision and its acceptance level on the part of those who must carry it out. He points out that the wisest decision may have to be put aside because of its "low acceptability rating." (p.5).

Gibb (1965 and 1969) speaks of defensive versus participative leadership. The defensive style is usually characterised by high fear and low trust but it is appropriate to some viable aspects of the culture in which we live e.g. a vertical hierarchy or a situation of delegated authority.

The concept of the Managerial Grid was introduced by Blake and Mouton (1969) following the work of Fleishman (1953). On the vertical axis of a 9 point scale is represented the leader or manager's concern for people and on the horizontal axis his concern for production. A 9.9 score

is "the soundest way to achieve excellence."

Some recent New Zealand research, however, suggests that the 9.9 score may not be the optimal position, but it is agreed that the Grid provides a useful schematic construct.

Also seeing the leadership process as an interpersonal transaction Harris (1969) provides a framework for understanding such encounters which he calls Transactional Analysis (cf James and Jorgewood (1971) and Snyder (1972)). This begins from the premise that within each personality there are elements of the Parent, the Child and the Adult. In terms of the way in which power is exercised, the Parent in us is likely to use threats and to resolve conflict by forcing; the Child in us is likely to be dependent, competitive (as in sibling rivalry) and to resolve conflict through avoidance; the Adult in us concentrates on data collecting, data processing, and problem solving so that it is almost synonymous with the effective manager. Interpersonal transactions can therefore be analysed in terms of whether the communication between two people is congruent (e.g. adult "hooking" adult) or incongruent (adult "hooking" child).

Apart from the works mentioned, a valuable collection of readings is provided by Deci, Gilmer and Karn (1972) in Readings in Industrial and Organisational Psychology covering leadership, patterns of organisational change and related topics.

(B) RESEARCH

Hunt (1967) sought an empirical validation of the contingency model in industrial organisations. Co-acting and inter-acting groups were studied and the theory was found to predict performance successfully in both kinds of groups, although almost as much variance appeared to be explained by leader-member relationships alone as was explained by interaction between relationships and the task structure. The conclusion was that "the contingency model seems to be applicable to an ongoing organisation, but a simpler model may be almost as good."

Jones and Johnson (1972) used Fiedler's model of leadership effectiveness and his Least Preferred Co-worker Questionnaire to study the relationship between 41 first line supervisors, 7 departmental managers, 3 staff managers, 1 assistant district manager and 1 district manager. The Least Preferred Co-worker Questionnaire asks the subject to think of the person with whom he has least preferred to work and to rate that person on a series of 7 or 8 point adjectival scales where the high end poles refer to more desirable qualities than the low end poles. Results indicated

- (a) High L.P.C. leaders were more human-relations oriented than low L.P.C. leaders.
- (b) Job satisfaction was higher under high L.P.C. leaders.
- (c) Performance ratings varied according to the level of similarity of L.P.C. orientation of the leader and follower.

Additional data suggested that follower L.P.C. scores may be a significant variable affecting the quality of leader-follower relations.

Duncan (1971) reviewed the literature which postulated a contingent relationship between leadership performance and a score on leadership style denoting esteem for the least preferred co-worker. Findings indicated that task orientated low L.P.C. leaders did perform better in very favourable and relatively unfavourable situations, while relation-oriented high L.P.C. leaders performed better in intermediate situations. These results would be postulated by the contingency model although mention has already been made of the work of Korman (1969) which would indicate caution.

Early research in this area includes that of Goldhammer and Shils (1939) who studied types of power and its relation to status, and in 1949 Preston and Heintz produced one of the earliest studies on the effects of participatory versus supervisory leadership when they examined the effect of these two styles on group judgment. Spotts (1964) has produced a well-researched article on "The Problem of Leadership: A Look at Some Recent Findings of Behavioural Science Research." And perhaps the most useful collections of research in this area are those by Lassey (1971) on Leadership and Social Change and by Cartwright and Zander (1970) on Group Dynamics.

SECTION THREE

ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

The concept of organisational climate comes within the broad field of the study of human

motivation and has theoretical roots especially in the work of McClelland (1961) and Atkinson (1958, 1964, 1966). It is defined by Atkinson as "the total pattern of expectancies and incentive values that exist in a given organisational setting", and by Litwin (1968) as "the quality or property of the organisational environment that (a) is perceived or experienced by organisation members and (b) influences their behaviour.... (In some studies) the term refers specifically to the motivational properties of the organisational environment."

In the present research the climate discrepancy score is taken to be a measure of the perceived discrepancy between the actual and ideal situation on seven items. It uses a simplified form of the Litwin-Stringer questionnaire, as outlined by Kolb, Rubin and McIntyre, (1974 b.ch.3).

It was in 1966 that Litwin and Stringer devised their original climate measurement instrument for business organisations through a series of theoretical analyses and empirical studies. The instrument, which is shown to have reasonable reliability and validity, is a 31 item questionnaire which provides scores on six dimensions:

- (a) Structure: the feeling that workers have about the constraints in their work situation; how many rules, regulations and procedures there are.
- (b) Responsibility; the feeling of being your own boss; not having to double-check all your decisions.
- (c) Risk; the sense of riskiness and challenge in the job and in the work situation.
- (d) Reward; the feeling of being rewarded for a job well done; the emphasis on reward vs

- criticism and punishment.
- (e) Warmth and Support; the feeling of general "good fellowship" and helpfulness that prevails in the organisation.
 - (f) Conflict; the feeling that management isn't afraid of different opinions or conflict; the emphasis placed on settling differences here and now.

These key variables of organisational climate were tested in a laboratory situation. Three simulated business organisations were established for a two week period, to be engaged in similar production and development work. Each organisation had 15 members plus a "president" who was instructed on leadership style to be followed, either authoritarian (emphasising the need for power), democratic (emphasising the need for affiliation) or group centred (emphasising the need for achievement). Other factors were controlled. Litwin and Stringer were looking for:

- (i) A relationship between leadership style and organisational climate.
- (ii) The effects of organisational climate on individual motivation, (measured through content analysis of imaginative thought.)
- (iii) The effects of organisational climate on personal satisfaction and organisational performance.

A major conclusion was that distinct and stable organisational climates can be created in a short time by varying leadership styles and that, once created, the organisational climates do have a significant effect on motivation, performance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was high in the achieving (group centred) and democratic climates, low in the authoritarian group; in terms

of profit the achieving group outstripped the other two as it did in terms of number of new products developed and accepted. It did so probably because it encouraged people to satisfy their achievement needs in the work situation, structuring the situation to stimulate that motive. (Litwin and Stringer, 1968).

Following the work of Litwin and Stringer, a number of studies have recently used the concept of organisational climate in research on management behaviour, job satisfaction etc.

Barth (1971) examined "the factors which affect the utilisation and interchange of information and work output" and discovered that among the more important variables here were "factors related to the social-psychological state of the inter-group climate and the perceived quality of the more global organisational climate." Karasick (1971) in a study of Managerial Behaviour used the organisational climate instrument devised by Fritchard and Campbell - this has 106 Likert-type items combined into 22 separate dimensions. Karasick concluded that the climate was affected by the local work environment, by organisational policies and practices and by managerial satisfaction, but found no strong correlation between climate and performance. Johannessen, (1971), studied whether perceptually measured organisational climate overlapped substantially with common measures of job satisfaction. He used the S.A.A. Employee Inventory, 90 organisational climate items and the Job Description Index for 499 employees of one company in two locations and his results suggested that perceptual measurement of organisational climate might be inappropriate - clusters of perceptually measured climate were not substantially different from reliably identified satisfaction clusters.

Lair (1972) used the E.P.P.S. and Litwin and Stringer's organisational climate questionnaire to examine the relationship between the needs or motives of managerial workers and the motivational climate in which they work. Her findings "support the need to build an organisational climate which is congruent with one's dominant need pattern". Kekky (1974) examined organisational climate as a moderating variable in the job satisfaction - job performance relationship and concluded that that relationship is indeed "more meaningful when studied within the context of the organisation's own climate." Hall (1972) and Batlis (1975) have examined some of the theoretical issues involved in the measurement of organisational climate and Taylor and Brown (1972) produced a standardised questionnaire for the assessment of organisational leadership, environment and group satisfaction and process.

Clearly, there are still difficulties connected with the measurement of organisational climate, but it has proved a valid and useful tool in the social research of institutions. Apart from the business world it has also been applied recently to the study of schools and other educational institutions. Hinojosa (1974) for example, in a study of independent elementary schools, found a definite relationship between an open climate and high self-esteem and between a closed climate and low self-esteem.

Sewell (1975) found a significant relationship between certain socio-economic factors and the organisational climate of a school, but she found no correlation between organisational climate and parent attitudes towards educational practices. Cassell (1972), Peoples (1973) and Evans (1973) have been involved in related educational studies and

Duffee (1974) has studied organisational climate in a minimum security prison.

More general works on the concept of organisational climate include chapters in the two works edited by Kolb, Rubin and McIntyre (1974) and, for its early development, the collection of papers entitled Organisational Climate: Explanation of a Concept edited by Tagiuri and Litwin, (1968).

CHAPTER THREEOUTLINE OF RESEARCH METHODSSECTION ONEAIM OF RESEARCH

The aim of this thesis, as stated in the introduction, is:

- (a) to assess the strengths and weaknesses of parish councils in the Manawatu Deanery, and in particular to assess the educational needs of parish priests in the matter of working with parish councils.
- (b) to test the hypothesis that the satisfactoriness of the organisational climate of parish councils will be affected by:
 - (i) the parish priest's theological understanding of and attitude towards shared responsibility.
 - (ii) the parish priest's style of acting within the group.

To achieve this aim, the following procedure was adopted.

SECTION TWOMETHOD(A) THE SAMPLE

In the Manawatu Deanery, there are 9 Catholic parishes. The writer is personally involved in one parish council, and for the sake of objectivity, it was thought best not to include that in the final sample; one other parish has no council at present. The remaining 7 were all studied. All the parish priests were known personally by the interviewer and numbers on each parish council ranged from 6 to 14, with an average number of 9. It was felt that for an exploratory case study of one Deanery this sample was satisfactory.

(B) THE MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

With the stated aim clearly in mind it was considered necessary:

- (i) To allow the 7 parish priests the opportunity to express their understanding of parish councils, their attitude towards them and their ideas about them. Therefore the research method included a $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hour interview with each priest, with a subsequent content analysis of the extensive notes.
- (ii) To obtain some standardised measure of organisational climate in each parish council and to allow parish council members the opportunity to express their thoughts about parish councils. Therefore a recognised organisational climate questionnaire was distributed to each parish council member to

be returned anonymously within five days, and apart from informal talking with members after most meetings, all parish council members were invited to send in any comments and ideas along with their structured questionnaire.

- (iii) To obtain some measures, preferably self-rated and observed, of the priest's style of acting within a group. Therefore two measures of the priest's participation style were made. The first of these was a leadership style rating obtained from Fiedlers A.S.O. score using modified semantic differential scales on which the priest rated his "least" and "most" preferred co-workers. The second was an "observer rating" based on Schein's (1969) 3 dimensions of participation style.
- (iv) To assess, as objectively as possible, the working procedures of each parish council. Therefore two observers used a system problems observation form at each meeting. These instruments are now explained and specified in greater detail.

1. Interview with Parish Priests

The interview was seen, in the words of Bingham and Moore (1959 p.45) "as a conversation with a purpose" and some simple guidelines were kept in mind during the planning and conducting of the interview, namely:

"Get the interviewee to talk, then let him talk, listen, but listen intelligently and critically. Lead the talk to particular topics as specified by critical requirements. Interpret what is said as throwing light on the interviewee's nature or personality." (Shouksmith 1968 pp.24 f)

The interview therefore was designed to elicit facts, opinions, attitudes and understanding and it covered the following areas.

- (i) Name, age, parish and date of appointment to this parish.
- (ii) What are some of the special features of this parish with regard to:
 - (a) Size (number of families)
 - (b) Is this parish a geographical unit, or do you serve more than one recognisably distinct area?
 - (c) Is the population stable in terms of residents or is it rapidly changing?
 - (d) What percentage of this parish would be called urban and what percentage rural?
 - (e) How long has there been a parish council here?
 - (f) How long has the present parish council been together?
 - (g) What is the present structure of the parish council in terms of constitution, officers, sub-committees etc?

So far, the questions have concentrated on facts and statistics about the existing situation. The next two questions moved into the area of understanding of aims, objectives and shared responsibility:

- (iii) What do you consider to be the aim of parish councils?
- (iv) In your opinion why did the Church introduce this structure into parish life?

Understanding of and attitudes towards change were the objects of the next two questions:

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- (v) What, if anything, do you consider to be new in this structure?
- (vi) What do you consider to be the values involved in the previous system?

A desire to move from the ideal to opinions about the actual situation prompted the next questions:

- (vii) What are your comments about the effectiveness of the new system in practice?
- (viii) What difficulties have you encountered with regard to parish councils?
 - your own difficulties.
 - other priests' difficulties.

Opportunity was then given where necessary, for further clarification on attitudes to changes and shared responsibility.

- (ix) (if not already stated) How do you see the parish council in terms of authority: decision-making, consultative, advisory or what? (Note: in many interviews, this question came in earlier, wherever it seemed relevant).
- (x) Has your pattern of contact with the laity changed over the last 5 - 10 years?

The final question simply sought to elicit some specific felt needs in this whole area.

- (xi) What precise assistance would you like from diocesan authorities or from your fellow priests in this matter of parish councils?

In the assessment of these interviews, a form of Content Analysis was undertaken. This is generally defined as "any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within a text". (Stone et al 1966 p. 5). In this case, the analysis sought to isolate understanding of and attitude towards change and the theology of shared responsibility. For the latter, key phrases were sought; "the pastoral role of the laity", "shared responsibility", "the People of God", "the Mystical Body of Christ", "the priesthood shared by all the members of the Church". These theological phrases indicate awareness of the theology of shared responsibility. In assessing attitudes towards the implications of this concept, particular attention was paid to the following words or phrases; "purely consultative role", "relieve the priest of administrative duties", "advisory responsibilities only", and these were contrasted with such phrases as "true share in decision-making", "genuine decision-making in specified areas", "pastoral responsibility or accountability". The second group of phrases is classified as indicating a "positive attitude", the first group as indicating a "hesitant attitude", towards shared responsibility.

With regard to the understanding of and attitudes towards change, no key phrases were chosen, but 2 aspects in particular were analysed; (a) the level of awareness, especially historical awareness, of the fact of change in this area, and (b) the strength of acceptance or rejection of the perceived change.

2. (a) Measure of Organisational Climate

The measure chosen was the Climate Questionnaire

of Kolb, Ruben and McIntyre (1974) based on Litwin and Stringer (1968) which includes items on conformity, responsibility, standards, rewards, organisational clarity, warmth and support and leadership. No attempt was made to restructure this questionnaire with other items relevant to the parish council situation, because previous studies (c.f. Ch. 2) have shown it to be applicable to a wide range of group behaviour and pre-testing comments indicated that it would elicit relevant information as well as provide an adequately objective measure. Pre-testing also indicated that the questionnaire needs to be verbally explained and demonstrated to subjects and this was done in all parish councils.

THE CLIMATE QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Note: Your name is not required on these sheets.

This study is aimed at getting an objective picture of parish councils throughout the Manawatu Deanery, so that successful ideas may be shared, difficulties may be clarified, and priests and people may make even more effective use of the parish council structure.

On the following questionnaire, we would appreciate your assessment for each item. Please place an (A) above the number that indicates your assessment of the council's current actual position on each item, and an (I) above the number that indicates your choice of where the council should ideally be on each item. Therefore on each scale you should have an (A) and an (I).

Please return, in the envelope provided, within five days.

1) Conformity: The feeling that there are many externally imposed constraints in the council; the degree to which members feel that there are many rules, procedures, policies and practices to which they have to conform rather than being able to perform their function as parish councillors as they see fit.

Conformity is not characteristic of this council.	: : : : : : : : : :	Conformity is very characteristic of this council.
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

2) Responsibility: Members of the parish council are given personal responsibility to achieve their part of the organisation's goals; the degree to which members feel that they can make decisions and solve problems without checking with superiors each step of the way.

No responsibility is given in the organisation.	: : : : : : : : : :	There is a great emphasis on personal responsibility.
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

3) Standards: The emphasis the council places on quality performance and outstanding contribution, including the degree to which the member feels the organisation is setting challenging goals for itself, and communicating these goal commitments to members.

Standards are very low or non-existent in the council.	: : : : : : : : : :	High challenging standards are set in the council.
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

4) Rewards: The degree to which members feel that they are being recognised and rewarded for good work rather than being ignored, criticised, or punished when something goes wrong.

Members are ignored, criticised or punished.	: : : : : : : : : :	Members are recognised and rewarded positively.
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

5) Organisational Clarity: The feeling among members that things are well organised and that goals are clearly defined rather than being disorderly, confused or chaotic.

The council is disorderly, confused and chaotic.	: : : : : : : : : : 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	The council is well organised, with clearly defined goals.
--------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------

6) Warmth and Support: The feeling that friendliness is a valued norm in the council; that members trust one another and offer support to one another. The feeling that good relationships prevail within the council.

There is no warmth and support within the council.	: : : : : : : : : : 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Warmth and support are very characteristic of the council.
----------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------

7) Leadership: The willingness of council members to accept leadership and direction from qualified others. As needs for leadership arise, members feel free to take leadership roles and are rewarded for successful leadership. Leadership is based on expertise. The council is not dominated by, or dependent on, one or two individuals.

Leadership is not rewarded; members are dominated or dependent and resist leadership attempts.	: : : : : : : : : : 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Members accept and reward leadership based on expertise.
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2. (b) Comments from Parish Council Members

At the end of the Climate Questionnaire, comments were invited in the following terms.

Please use additional sheets of paper now to write down any comments or suggestions about the parish council situation that you feel may be of assistance to your own council, to other parish councils, or to priests in the Manawatu Deanery. The final report will not be drafted until the end of this year but your co-operation is gratefully acknowledged.

3. Measures of Priest's Style of Participation in Group

(a) A.S.O. Score (Assumed Similarity of Opposites)

Following the work of Fiedler (1967) and Osgood et al (1957) the semantic differential on most and least preferred co-worker was to be filled in by each priest at the end of his interview. This measure involves asking the subject to think of all the people he has worked with, and then to describe the one whom he considers to be his best co-worker and the one with whom he found it most difficult to work. Description of these 2 persons are made on 7 or 8 point adjectival scales. In this study the score is taken to be the A.S.O. score, which is assessed by comparing the subject's description of his most and least preferred co-worker. It is a rating of the degree to which the subject assumes similarity between opposites, and the difference measure used by Fiedler and adopted here is the D statistic outlined by Osgood et al (1957). This statistic contains certain simple assumptions:

- (i) that equal unit scales are being used.
- (ii) that all measures in the profile are weighted equally, and
- (iii) that the profile involves only independent variables.

Leaving aside the theoretical difficulties connected with Fiedler's linear distinction between autocratic and democratic leadership styles (cf Shouksmith 1970), it is also doubtful if the semantic differential meets the above three statistical requirements. But there is still justification for using the technique since in practice it has been found to fit within reasonably

close limits and it was hoped that for this research, the measure would provide a reasonably objective, self-rated measure on style of acting within a group. A low score (A.S.O. score) indicates that the subject, makes few distinctions between workers or members in a group, regarding them all in a similar and usually favourable light, while a high difference score indicates that the leader or participant perceives clearly the differences between members in a group.

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: PARISH:

Concepts to 1) Least preferred co-worker
be judged 2) Most preferred co-worker

(please do not mention either your least or most preferred co-worker by name).

(1) FRIENDLY	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	UNFRIENDLY
(2) UNHELPFUL	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	HELPFUL
(3) NOT CONTENTED	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	VERY CONTENTED
(4) UNSELFISH	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	SELFISH
(5) DYNAMIC	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	STATIC
(6) LAZY	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	INDUSTRIOUS
(7) NOT ENTERPRISING	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	VERY ENTERPRISING
(8) RELIABLE	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	UNRELIABLE
(9) USEFUL	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	USELESS
(10) DISLOYAL	_:_:_:_:_:_:_:_:	LOYAL

Please mark your rating for least preferred co-worker with figure "1", and for most preferred co-worker with figure "2".

(b) Assessment Sheet

Apart from the A.S.O. score, it was considered necessary to have an observed measure of the priest's style. Two observers therefore attended a council

meeting in each parish, lasting on the average, about 2 hours. One of the purposes of their attendance was to rate independently the parish priest and, for comparison, the council chairman, on three theoretically "pure styles" of participating in groups. This particular purpose was not explained before or after the meeting but no difficulties were encountered. The Assessment Sheet and explanation were as follows: On each scale, the two observers marked P for parish priest and C for council chairman.

Tough Battler: : : : : : : : : : : :
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Friendly Helper: : : : : : : : : : : :
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Logical Thinker: : : : : : : : : : : :
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

These scales derive from Schein and describe those pure participative types whose high end poles may be defined in terms of the following scheme adopted from Kolb, Rubin and McIntyre (1974 b).

- a) The "tough battler" orientation; acceptance of tough emotions and denial of tender emotions. "Let's fight it out": can deal with hostility, but not with love, support, affiliation.
- b) The "friendly helper" orientation; "Let's not fight, let's help each other". Can give and receive affection, but cannot tolerate hostility and fight.
- c) The "logical thinker" orientation. Denial of emotion, "Let's reason this thing out". Cannot deal with tender or tough emotions, hence, shuts eyes and ears to much going on.

Three Pure Participative TypesFRIENDLY HELPER

A world of mutual liking, love, affection, tenderness, sympathy.

TOUGH BATTLER

A world of conflict, fight, power, assertiveness.

LOGICAL THINKER

A world of understanding, logic, systems, knowledge.

Preferred Form of Group

Harmonizing, compromising, gate-keeping by concern.

Initiating, co-ordinating, pressing for results, for consensus exploring differences gatekeeping by command.

Gathering information. Clarifying ideas. Systematising procedures. Evaluating the logic of proposals.

Constructs Used in Evaluating Others

Who is warm and who is hostile? Who helps, and who hurts others?

Who is strong and who is weak? Who is winning and who is losing?

Who is bright and who is stupid? Who is accurate/inaccurate? Who thinks clearly, and who is fuzzy?

Preferred Methods of Influencing Others

Appeasing. Appealing to pity.

Giving orders. Offering challenge. Threatening.

Appealing to rules and regulations, to logic. Referring to "facts" and overwhelming knowledge.

Sees as Personal Threats

That he will not be liked or loved. That he will be overwhelmed by feeling of hostility.

That he will lose his ability to fight (power). That he will become "soft" and "sentimental."

That his world is not ordered. That he will be overwhelmed by emotion.

4. System Problems Observation Form

A second purpose of the observers' attendance at the council meetings was to assess the working procedures of each council. A standardised observation form was therefore used by the two observers dealing with a number of factors recognised as important in the efficient functioning of groups. (Shouksmith 1972).

- (a) Problem Identification: How is the problem focussed by the group? Who helps to define the issues?
- (b) Data Generation: How are points of view brought out? Whose opinions are not included?
- (c) Data Processing: How are various positions discussed in relation to each other? Who is influential in exploring alternatives?
- (d) Decision Making: How is the problem resolved? Who influences the final decision?
- (e) Planning: How are next steps established? Who takes responsibility for follow-through?

(c) PROCEDURE

The research procedure, in order of operation, involved:

- (i) An interview of 1½ - 2 hours with each parish priest. Appointments were made at least a week in advance. At the end of the interview, each priest was asked to complete the semantic differential questionnaire. The method of filling this in was carefully explained, but its precise purpose was not explicitly mentioned.

- (ii) Two observers, the same two throughout, attended one parish council meeting in each parish to assess its working procedures with the help of the system problems observation form, and to rate the priest and council chairman on the tough battler, friendly helper, logical thinker styles of acting. The presence of two observers at council meetings was expected to cause problems of distraction and possible artificiality. In attempting to offset this, emphasis was given at the start of the meeting to the fact that this study hoped to discover some of the effective methods of acting in parish councils and to clarify some of the difficulties they faced so that priests and other council members throughout the Manawatu might be helped by an interchange of information. An agreement was undertaken to provide a summary of conclusions and recommendations for all the sample parishes. It was agreed too, that parishes would not be mentioned by name in the final report and the observers offered to leave the meeting during the discussion of any confidential matters.
- (iii) At the end of each meeting, the Organisational Climate Questionnaire was explained and distributed, stamped addressed envelopes were provided, and the council secretary was asked to check that all had been posted within 5 days. After most meetings, there was some informal conversation with council members, and notes were taken later of relevant comments. These notes were subsequently added to the sum of written comments made by council members on their climate questionnaire.

(D) STATISTICAL TREATMENT

The statistics employed in this research are essentially descriptive, since it is to be an exploratory case study, (cf Selltiz et al 1959). They involve, therefore, the obtaining of means and standard deviations on questionnaire answers, graphical portrayal of relevant information, rank order correlations on pertinent aspects and the comparison of scores to establish trends and clarify possibilities.

CHAPTER FOURPRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The presentation of results will be in three sections. The first will be an examination of the data gained from each of the five measures and will concentrate on looking for similarities and differences between each parish within each of those measures. The aim in this section will be to assess strengths and weaknesses in the parish council situation. The second section will involve an overall view of the data gained from the five measures. It will look for general trends and, where relevant, for correlations in keeping with the stated hypothesis. The third section will take climate discrepancy score as a criterion variable and will examine in some detail the parishes with the highest and lowest scores on this measure.

SECTION ONETHE FIVE MEASURESA INTERVIEWS WITH PARISH PRIESTS1. Parish Data

The age of the parish priests ranged from 39 to 63 with two others in the early 40's and three in the mid-50's. Length of appointment to the parish varied from one year to 23 years. Six parishes served more than one recognisably distinct community and the size of parishes ranged from 180 or 200 families to about 700 families. One parish was predominantly rural and three others had a 40% rural population. In all 7 parishes, a pastoral council had been established for at least six years and in one parish, elections had been

held recently to make at least half the council new. Four parishes have one priest, the others had two priests and in one of these the assistant priest attended the council meeting.

This sample, therefore, provided a considerable variation in parish data and was not ideal for the adequate control of variables. With a larger group of parishes, more accurate assessment and prediction could be made on specific issues. For the purposes of an exploratory case study, however, the present sample is satisfactory.

2. Parish Council Structure

Six parishes have produced Constitutions or Guidelines which attempt to put flesh on the bones of the 1967 Diocesan directives, but in matters of detail there is wide variation. All parishes have three or more sub-committees and four co-opt sub-committee members from outside the council, but only three parishes seem to use the sub-committees to any large extent. Guidance in this matter would probably add to efficiency. Two parishes "endeavour to keep finance and maintenance apart from the Parish Council."

Election procedures also differ and include area representation, election by parishioners at an annual meeting, voting at Sunday Mass and allowance for postal ballot. In two parishes, elections have not been required recently because insufficient nominations have been received and in most parishes, priests expressed dissatisfaction with "voter turnout."

Terms of office seem to be either two or three years with provision made, in most parishes, for half the council to change at each election. With regard to membership four parishes allow for representation from various organisations, where relevant all have representation from religious groups in the parish and most make allowance for the co-opting of members, either

by the parish priest (who, in the words of one constitution "will no doubt consult all concerned") or by the parish council itself. Two parishes have youth representatives.

It is worth noting, perhaps, that in 2 parishes the requirements of their constitution are not being fulfilled, although it should be remembered that these constitutions are regarded as guidelines and not as legal documents.

3. Shared Responsibility: Understanding and Attitudes

Most of the priests seemed to have at least an intellectual understanding of shared responsibility and in particular there was a general awareness that it meant some involvement in pastoral activities. "Parish Councils and the collegiality of bishops etc., develop from the understanding that the Church has of itself, of its mystery and its essence." "The parish council should basically have an apostolic function. Its fundamental aim is to assist in the proclamation of the good news, not only by assisting the priest, but also by enabling the fulfillment of the pastoral role belonging to the laity themselves." "The parish council exists to advise, to assist, and to accept co-responsibility so that the reality of the People of God idea may be put into effect."

One comment, however, indicated some uncertainty about this shared pastoral responsibility - "parish councils were introduced mainly because of a realisation that the priest was being over-burdened with non-spiritual matters." And in practical terms, one priest put it this way; "I can now see something of what is behind the mind of the church in the matter of parish councils - as a first result, to free the priest from material concerns, but also, and very importantly, to lead to genuine wider parish involvement."

Attitudes towards the practical implications of shared responsibility are more difficult to define. There is some vagueness and perhaps some hesitation about what it means to share in decision-making. "They should have some power in decision-making and some responsible authority." "The parish council should be prepared to assist and co-operate with the parish priest in the making of decisions." Perhaps the clearest statement is the following - "Parish council members are to make themselves informed of what the Church is and what the Church is doing, and through discussion they are to formulate policy and perhaps decisions. They determine guidelines at least and this is a basic part of the decision-making process. The parish council is to be consultative, therefore, but more than that, especially in the area of policy."

There is however, an attitude of frustration evident in at least four replies in that a concept clearly understood by the priest is not fully appreciated by the laity. "Lay people are still not aware of what pastoral really means." "We are willing to accept them as responsible people., but perhaps they have yet to get the message; the common cry is still 'what is expected of us?'"

In three replies an attitude of paternalism can be discerned e.g. "Patience is required, as in the training of a child, because we cannot immediately expect the people to appreciate the full impact of what can be done. We can expect too much too soon." On the other hand, perhaps a laissez-faire attitude could be detected in the following remark: "co-responsibility as a group thing is new. The priest did consult before but.... now I am happy to fit in with what they decide, as long as all are present."

On the question of leadership, one reply indicated some tendency towards manipulation. "With regard to decision-making, I find it necessary to let them talk, and even though the parish priest may not like what they say, they usually come round to a balanced view. If you gave them that view at the start, it would often not be accepted. They need to feel they made it.... My leadership could be called a leading from the shadows."

In general however, there seems to be a genuine and positive grappling with the concept of shared responsibility and an attempt to understand its implications. At the level of attitudes, there is more variation and more difficulty, but there, too, the overall tendency is towards positive appreciation.

4. Change: Understanding and Attitudes

On the broad level there is explicit awareness in at least four replies of an historical perspective. "200 years ago and less, the priest was often the only educated person in the area, and naturally became leader in all ways. Now with an educated laity, it is different." "The Church reflects the society in which it lives - the Constantinian era, feudal times, straight-line authority etc. - and this has changed. But more than this - just as the presbyterium of the priests and the bishop is an unfolding of the mystery of the Church, so too is the parish council set-up."

On a more specific level, various changes were seen to have been emphasised by the introduction of parish councils. All agreed that the awareness of shared pastoral responsibility was new although some felt that this was in degree and in expression rather than intrinsically "By Baptism and Confirmation

all members of the Church have, and always have had responsibility to be informed about and to undertake pastoral responsibility. This was there in the recent past through C.Y.M. and Catholic Action etc., but now the understanding and expressing of it is broadening." "We are really trying through this set-up to have all parishioners aware that their faith entails more than going to Mass on Sunday or providing money.... There has always been an implicit understanding of this, but now we are aiming for a new and wider awareness."

The representative nature of parish councils is also regarded as new - "different from the old parish committees who were hand-picked, liable to be yes-men and often a front organisation for the parish priest who remained the hub of the wheel." And "this democracy in action produces not a ruling elite, but leaders whom you would never have considered."

The new educative possibilities are also mentioned, not only for lay members to learn about and be involved in parish affairs, but also for the priest, who will at least be given constructive criticism more frankly than in the "pedestal days" of the past. On the other hand, there is the isolated comment that "where there is a good parish council, there is a greater chance than ever before for the priest to be understood, because the people are making the decisions themselves. One's image is improved..."

Six of the seven priests stated that the old system was more efficient in that decisions were made more quickly and that "it provided a greater sense of security for all hands because of the centralised structure and the well-recognised plan for the establishing and building up of a parish." But despite the ironic comment that "I sometimes think parish councils were set up to make more work for the parish priest" there is clear evidence of a favourable

and positive attitude towards change and a reasonable understanding of some of its implications. "Some of us had the wrong idea that parish councils were about to take over the parish priest's position but they are not. I can see now something of what is behind the mind of the Church."

5. The Effectiveness of Parish Councils

There is general agreement that parish councils have not achieved their full potential. Reasons mentioned include lack of leadership, lack of understanding among the laity and priests and lack of clarity about the whole situation. Four priests felt that the most effective thing about parish councils at the moment is their "formative function" in developing awareness and generosity in those who take part" so that "small communities may eventually have 'formed' leaders." There was recognition too, that it is already involving more people, that "it cuts down grizzling because it is more democratic," "that it emphasises the 'servant' image of priestly ministry", and that "it allows for a deeper, if slower, process of decision-making."

The overall tone is optimistic. "The parish council structure has worked and is working in those parishes where the laity is sufficiently mature, sufficiently used to making decisions and where the priests have enough foresight to allow responsible action... so we allow another five years before things really function. With perseverance and the right encouragement, the potential is there. We must allow mistakes to be made and responsibility to be exercised. We should not limit learning."

6. Requests and Suggestions

The last question in the interview was aimed at eliciting felt needs about the parish council situation;

"what precise assistance would you like from diocesan authorities or from your fellow priests in this matter of parish councils?". The main answers were as follows:-

Directed to diocesan authorities:

- (a) the establishment of a Diocesan Pastoral Council "seen to be a policy making body so that general credibility is given to the whole thing throughout the diocese."
- (b) more explicit guidelines for priests, other council members and parishioners on the meaning and functions of parish councils and on "the missionary role of the laity."
- (c) new life for Deanery Pastoral Councils "so that communication can be broadened."
- (d) suggestions for council sub-committees from Diocesan commissions on e.g. Liturgy, Finance, Social Welfare.
- (e) the establishment of visiting teams to research and instruct throughout the diocese. "We spend \$3000 on getting money in - we spend nothing on getting people in."
- (f) regional courses for parish councils "to bring more harmony throughout the diocese and to broaden minds."

It was felt too that priests could help each other, especially by:

- (a) attendance at priests' deanery meetings.
- (b) more communication between neighbouring parishes through circulation of minutes and simultaneous planning of various events.
- (c) local priests making themselves available to give parish council days of retreat and recollection.
- (d) attendance at other parish council meetings to learn, observe and comment.

(B) COMMENTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

31 parish council members provided written comments along with their organisational climate questionnaire and this represents 52% of those who replied fully to the questionnaire. Other comments were noted down from informal discussion subsequent to parish council meetings. The main themes of these ideas can be summarised under three headings.

1. The Priest and the Parish Council

In the first place, some positive comments are made about the style of leadership that priests generally demonstrate. Priests are said to be approachable, dedicated to the Gospel and kindly. There is, too, a recognition of the importance of the priesthood in the life of the Church and a nostalgic desire, in two comments, for the more efficient days when the priest made all the decisions. Apart from the nostalgia, this line of thought is summed up in the comment that "when parishioners know they have an enthusiastic priest leading them, they do get moving and work with him and for him."

On the other hand, over half the comments on the priestly role are critical. The bulk of the critical comments came from 3 parishes, especially from the one with the highest climate discrepancy score, but they are scattered through replies from most of the 7 parishes. "To take a cynical view, councillors cannot be too sure of just how much and to what extent they are being manipulated by the parish priest." "Parishioners are frustrated when the priest is dictatorial and uses his power of veto on financial and administrative policies" and this apparently has happened in some cases. "Some members of council have given up doing things because their own ideas have been turned down." And from another parish,

"we have had occasions when the Finance Committee has passed a resolution and it has been vetoed by the parish priest without sufficient explanation." And there is in particular a strong disapproval of the fact that, apart from any veto, council decisions are sometimes "ignored or circumvented" by the parish priest. There is, however, a recognition of faults on both sides. "Members tend to look too much to the priest for leadership in areas where they could show initiative." And on the question of a clash of ideas: "Too often we as individual members, and sometimes collectively, wish to do what we think needs doing..." "We must help the priest, not hinder him" - followed by the wry comment "this sounds like a confession".

In many remarks, there is an awareness of the need for change - in attitudes and policies - along with some of the difficulties that can be expected. "In a rural parish it is going to take a long time before the 'old Irish' thinking (that the priest is always right and must never be opposed) is changed." "In the past, the parish was run by the priest (I am talking generally). Now it is very necessary - probably unfortunately so - to run the parish to meet late 20th century thinking." One comment takes this back to the training of priests. "Priests' training needs a rethink. He sees his position challenged and a we/them situation can quickly develop....Someone should demonstrate that 'position' does not create a leader, but willingness to work (at anything) will." This may be an over-simplified view of leadership and its tasks but it does indicate some awareness of the group interaction role of leadership and it does relate to another statement that calls for enthusiastic and willing guidance, particularly in the field of pastoral activities "where we need the guidance of the parish priest - and I feel it is towards this side of the parish

council that the parish priest should lean."

And finally, there are the requests that all priests in the parish should attend parish council meetings - in order that the parish council will be seen to have importance and so that the priests may be seen to be working as a team within the parish.

In general, therefore, there is appreciation expressed for positive guidance, enthusiastic leadership and willingness to listen; strong disapproval for the dictatorial style that relies on office or position; and considerable frustration with any form of manipulation.

2. Finance

This featured in a surprisingly large number of replies scattered over five of the seven parishes although one of these provided almost half the financial comments.

There is some dismay expressed over the fact that this should be an issue: "a lot of awkwardness and even hot words are spilled over the fact that the parish council is not supposed to concern itself with money matters - and yet so much of what we do overlaps into the money field as a case of necessity."

In some comments there is an expressed recognition of the priest's final responsibility but there is a general call for efficiency and for openness in financial matters. "Finance and maintenance must be run almost as a business and that needs specialists on the parish council." "The finance committee must be represented at parish council meetings to present a brief report and answer questions." That committee is referred to in one parish as "the higher hierarchy" and there is a request for the instilling of confidence by a

"complete sharing of all financial matters to include: analysis of income, budgeting of finance, documentation of parish assets and acceptance of qualified laymen."

Two suggestions are put forward to deal with the situation. "We have now no idea how the parish funds stand. A good secretary could see to that and could deal with all financial matters even if he were paid for it and the parish priest paid a stipend from the funds (although another comment mentions the "peasant wage" on which priests are supposed to exist). And from another parish comes the suggestion that in financial matters, the parish council should be run on local body lines "i.e. sub-committees present estimates for the year; which are published for the awareness of parishioners and then an open council meeting is held for the accepting or cutting back of those estimates."

In brief then, there is a strong request to do away with secrecy on finance and, at the very least, to accept the consultation of qualified laymen.

3. Ideals

The most important and widespread call here is for clarification especially of pastoral goals, of areas of responsibility and ways of acting. Negative comments include the following; "The parish council fills the function of being a structure devoid of real purpose and meaning... it has never achieved the ideals laid down by Cardinal McKeefry... The reputation of the parish council in this parish is that of a group of stubborn old men 'discussing' church affairs, but quite out of touch with the real situation." At a more constructive level is the suggestion that parish councils adopt what Michael Winter calls a "holistic" approach, rather than an activities oriented or problem solving approach (cf Chapter 2).

"This would mean looking for clearly defined and considered goals to meet the actual needs of the community.... we become too bogged down in day to day parish affairs... we should be totally aware of the need to build a strong Christian community." Allied with this, although at a more specific level, is the comment that "our ideas on social justice are still with the starving millions overseas and not with the problems of our near neighbour and our relationship with him."

A focal point here is the need to be clear on the precise responsibilities of the priest and the council. This desire seems to be behind some of the negative comments on priestly style already quoted and is stated directly as follows: "The power of the priest and that of his council should be clarified even if only in a negative sense i.e. in what sphere each has no powers."

There is a feeling that "if people knew where they stood" an air of confidence would be developed. Part of this clarifying process is seen by a number of respondents to require more explicit direction from the Archbishop on areas of responsibility and in one case mention is made for priests and other council members of guidelines such as those produced by Rotary International "which provides very explicit and useful guidance to its club directorates on every aspect of service."

While many replies indicate a high degree of warmth in the parish council climate, there is also a stress on the fact that if the parish council is to build up a Christian community in the parish it must itself be a dynamic and prayerful community in miniature. There is the isolated comment that "I know of two people on this council, one being the chairman, who don't yet know my name", but at a

more general level is the request for decisions to be taken in a more prayerful and Christian spirit. "We should not be just another group of business advisers or policy planners."

Other comments include a stress on parish visiting, especially to welcome new-comers, if the community is to function properly and in one reply, special mention is made of the Maori parishioners: "that is why so many Maoris don't attend Church services: they need to feel a sense of belonging with the Pakeha parishioners." There is also a widespread awareness that communication between the parish and the parish council needs to be a two-way process so that the council becomes a truly representative body, not only in terms of its elective procedures, but also in terms of its expression of opinion. Little attempt is made to suggest how this could be improved, but a local parish has recently sought to bridge the gap by having a special ceremony of installation or blessing for the new council at a Sunday Mass along with the provision of readily identifiable badges to be worn at various parish functions, including Mass on Sunday.

Finally there are a number of replies that indicate the importance of the council's involvement with the youth of the parish, the need for the council to be structured on sub-committee lines and one request for councils "to have more contact on a deanery basis to provide lay support"

(C) MEASUREMENT OF PARTICIPATIVE STYLE1. Observers' Judgement of 3 "Pure Styles"

At each parish council meeting two observers rated the parish priest and the council chairman on the Tough Battler, Friendly Helper, Logical Thinker nine point scale (cf Chapter 3). In Table I observers' individual scores are given in brackets and the "agreed score" (underlined) is taken to be the average of the two observations.

Observer Agreement

Perfect agreement on 9 point scale	54.8%
Within 1 point on 9 point scale	89.8%
Within 2 points on 9 point scale	96.3%
Within 3 points on 9 point scale	100%

This can be regarded as a high level of agreement, sufficient for accurate assessment and for subsequent correlational measures.

General Trends

Among the priests, 4 high scores were registered on the friendly helper scale, 4 low ones on the tough battler scale and 5 lay in the middle range of the logical thinker scale. Among the chairmen, however, there is a wider variety of scores and no general trends seem to emerge. In Section Two of the results rank order correlation between these scores and the climate discrepancy scores will be calculated. From Table I, however, the most significant and practical observation to be made is that in general the priests tend to display a "friendly helper" orientation in their council meetings, but their logical thinking in terms of planning, assessment of the situation, and outlining of objectives and alternatives, lies more in the middle of the scale. This will be seen to have some significance in relationship to climate discrepancy.

TABLE I

OBSERVERS' JUDGEMENT OF PRIEST AND
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN ON 3 DIMENSIONS OF
PARTICIPATIVE STYLE

<u>PARTISH</u>	<u>TOUGH</u>		<u>FRIENDLY</u>		<u>LOGICAL</u>	
	<u>HELPER</u>	<u>HELPER</u>	<u>HELPER</u>	<u>HELPER</u>	<u>THINKER</u>	<u>THINKER</u>
	Priest	Chairman	Priest	Chairman	Priest	Chairman
A	<u>6</u> (6,6)	<u>2.5</u> (2,3)	<u>4</u> (3,5)	<u>7</u> (7,7)	<u>4</u> (4,4)	<u>3.5</u> (3,4)
B	<u>7</u> (7,7)	<u>7.5</u> (8,7)	<u>2</u> (2,2)	<u>3</u> (3,3)	<u>2</u> (2,2)	<u>2.5</u> (2,3)
C	<u>3</u> (3,3)	<u>4</u> (4,4)	<u>7.5</u> (8,7)	<u>6</u> (6,6)	<u>6</u> (7,5)	<u>7.5</u> (8,7)
D	<u>3.5</u> (4,3)	<u>7</u> (7,7)	<u>5.5</u> (6,5)	<u>4</u> (4,4)	<u>4.5</u> (3,6)	<u>4.5</u> (4,5)
E	<u>4</u> (4,4)	<u>7.5</u> (8,7)	<u>7</u> (7,7)	<u>3</u> (3,3)	<u>4</u> (4,4)	<u>5.5</u> (5,6)
F	<u>2</u> (2,2)	<u>4</u> (3,5)	<u>6</u> (6,6)	<u>7</u> (7,7)	<u>5</u> (5,5)	<u>5.5</u> (6,5)
G	<u>2</u> (2,2)	<u>6.5</u> (7,6)	<u>7</u> (7,7)	<u>6.5</u> (6,7)	<u>4.5</u> (5,4)	<u>7</u> (7,7)

2. A.S.O. Scores (Assumed Similarity of Opposites)

It was hoped that this would provide another satisfactory measure of interpersonal style, but difficulties were encountered. One questionnaire was not completed and cannot now be obtained and from comments made by other subjects, it seems that the end of a one and a half to two hour interview, with time pressing, is not the most appropriate moment for the presentation of such a test. For these reasons, the A.S.O. score will not play a part in the overall assessment. It is included here to indicate the overall design of the research procedure, and the obtained results are presented in Table II.

TABLE IIA.S.O. SCORES FOR PARISH PRIESTS

<u>Parish</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
A.S.O. Score	8.77	1	12	6.8		10.7	10.2

(D) OBSERVATION OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Note: The outline of procedure (Chapter 3) has indicated the steps taken to overcome the expected problems of distraction and possible artificiality caused by the presence of 2 observers at council meetings. Despite these safeguards, the observers were aware of some uneasiness at the start of most meetings, but were confident that after the first 20 - 30 minutes all councils were functioning freely and frankly. One council decided that the observers should leave for the discussion of one confidential issue which was left till the end of the meeting.

1. Problem Identification

In 4 parishes, considerable time was spent on discussion of minutes. This seemed to be expected by parish council members despite the fact that in three parishes there was unnecessary overlap and wasted discussion on matters that seemed to have been previously decided. Three parishes had a well organised agenda and two of these concentrated on sub-committee recommendations. In terms of efficiency this seemed the most satisfactory method, particularly where the chairman was firm and logical and where the sub-committees had undertaken adequate research. In five parishes, the parish priest seemed to have had most say in the drawing up of the agenda, usually in consultation with the chairman. One parish council had a number of new members and after a slow start concentrated on a worthwhile exercise in planning. In five parishes prior information about agenda would seem to be required and ideally this would include essential sub-committee recommendations.

2. Generation and Processing of Data

Here the observers were looking for the content and method of discussion - what issues were raised and how were they dealt with.

All councils dealt at some stage with spiritual or pastoral matters (the liturgy, preparation for Confirmation or First Communion, the care that should be offered to special groups in the parish, ecumenical activities etc.) Council members expressed willingness (explicitly in three parishes and implicitly in others), to be involved in and responsible for such matters, but there was a general feeling of uncertainty, both with regard to goals to be achieved, and in regard to the means of achieving those pastoral goals that were understood. Discussion on these matters often lapsed in mid-air and in five parishes the bulk of the time was spent on more mundane matters - practical, administrative or financial affairs - where the issues seemed more clear-cut and easily grasped. In most council meetings there was a definite atmosphere of free frank discussion but methods of "processing the data" could still be improved so that various positions could be genuinely discussed in relation to each other. On many issues there was clear agreement and no apparent need for discussion, but it did appear to the observers that in at least four parishes (possibly 5) there was little real examination of other issues on which alternatives needed to be clarified. In only one parish was there a general practice of eliciting information or ideas from members other than those who volunteered to speak without prompting or special invitation.

Apart from a somewhat hurried gesture of prayer at the beginning or end of each meeting

(and in some cases a pertinent pastoral comment from the priest) little opportunity was provided at any council meeting for reflection on the spiritual implications of council business.

In all parishes the priest, and in most cases the council chairman, were marked by the observers as the two most influential members in the generating and processing of data; this was to be expected.

3. Decision Making

Few issues went to the vote. In all meetings the aim appeared to be a consensus opinion and on most issues where decisions were made consensus did seem to be achieved. At times, however, the consensus may have been more apparent than real because of strong words from the chairman or the parish priest - but the observers had no objective means of testing this impression. It would be worth noting, though, that silence does not always imply consent.

4. Planning

This was accomplished most effectively in those parishes which had an effective sub-committee structure or where individual members, at the chairman's insistence, took responsibility for follow-through action. In one parish, though, there were three topics on which action was decided, while five other topics were deferred without sufficient reason, or were left vaguely undecided. In general, a clearer delineation of areas of responsibility and a stronger sub-committee structure would be helpful for effective follow-through.

(E) THE ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire used (cf Chapter 3) was distributed to 68 parish council members. 62 were returned with one incomplete. The return rate of 89% was regarded as satisfactory.

Subjects were asked to mark each of 7 items on a 9 point scale. They were to mark with an A their judgement of the actual situation of their parish council and with an I their judgement of the ideal situation. It was decided to use means rather than medians and so for each parish on each item, the mean of the A scores is given as MA and the mean of the ideal scores as MI. A climate discrepancy score for each item is then taken as the difference between these 2 means. The larger this score is, the larger is the perceived discrepancy between the actual and the ideal situation. This score, therefore, records the degree of dissatisfaction which exists with the present climate or functioning of the parish council in question.

TABLE III:

MEAN SCORES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR ACTUAL AND IDEAL CLIMATE IN 7
PARISH COUNCILS, WITH CLIMATE
DISCREPANCY SCORE FOR 7 FACTORS
AND FOR OVERALL CLIMATE

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>CONFORM-</u> <u>ITY</u>	<u>RESPONS-</u> <u>IBILITY</u>	<u>STANDARDS</u>	<u>REWARDS</u>	
<u>A</u>	MA	6.01	6.01	5.08	5.08
	sA	2.23	1.89	1.87	2.33
	MI	5.18	7.45	7.55	6.63
	sI	1.78	1.24	2.05	1.72
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>0.83</u>	<u>1.44</u>	<u>2.47</u>	<u>1.55</u>
<u>B</u>	MA	7.77	4.00	2.77	4.33
	sA	1.31	2.06	1.73	2.19
	MI	4.00	7.67	8.22	7.55
	sI	0.87	1.48	0.99	1.84
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>3.77</u>	<u>3.67</u>	<u>5.45</u>	<u>3.22</u>
<u>C</u>	MA	3.6	7.6	6.2	6.6
	sA	2.88	1.67	1.79	2.68
	MI	2.6	8.6	8.2	8.8
	sI	2.07	0.54	0.83	0.44
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>1.0</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.2</u>
<u>D</u>	MA	3.5	6.66	5.16	5.67
	sA	1.22	1.08	1.2	1.96
	MI	3.66	6.34	7.16	6.49
	sI	1.53	1.72	1.37	1.57
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>0.16</u>	<u>0.32</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>0.82</u>
<u>E</u>	MA	5.25	6.18	3.5	5.26
	sA	2.82	1.91	1.69	0.62
	MI	5.62	7.15	6.62	5.73
	sI	2.84	1.33	2.34	1.27
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>0.37</u>	<u>0.97</u>	<u>3.12</u>	<u>0.47</u>
<u>F</u>	MA	4.25	7.57	5.25	7.13
	sA	2.44	1.63	2.77	0.64
	MI	3.63	7.86	6.75	6.87
	sI	1.85	1.45	0.5	0.83
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>0.62</u>	<u>0.29</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>0.26</u>
<u>G</u>	MA	4.7	6.55	5.0	5.71
	sA	1.79	1.40	1.83	1.99
	MI	5.28	8.0	8.0	7.0
	sI	3.05	0.58	0.41	1.63
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>0.58</u>	<u>1.45</u>	<u>3.0</u>	<u>1.29</u>

TABLE III contd

PARISH	CLARITY	WARMTH	LEADERSHIP	OVERALL CLIMATE DISCREPANCY	
A	MA	5.26	5.72	5.35	<u>2.18</u>
	sA	1.78	1.82	2.28	
	MI	8.0	8.89	8.0	
	sI	0.77	0.68	1.27	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>2.74</u>	<u>3.17</u>	<u>2.65</u>	
B	MA	3.1	5.0	3.89	<u>4.19</u>
	sA	2.38	2.15	2.14	
	MI	8.56	8.36	8.33	
	sI	0.83	1.7	0.9	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>5.46</u>	<u>3.36</u>	<u>4.44</u>	
C	MA	6.6	8.0	6.8	<u>1.66</u>
	sA	2.07	1.23	2.12	
	MI	8.6	8.8	8.6	
	sI	0.55	0.45	0.89	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>2.0</u>	<u>1.8</u>	<u>1.6</u>	
D	MA	6.46	8.16	6.83	<u>0.91</u>
	sA	1.41	1.64	2.15	
	MI	7.83	8.66	8.0	
	sI	1.7	0.45	1.27	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>1.37</u>	<u>0.5</u>	<u>1.17</u>	
E	MA	4.0	6.25	5.0	<u>1.88</u>
	sA	1.85	2.19	2.31	
	MI	7.86	8.37	7.28	
	sI	1.72	0.6	1.63	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>3.86</u>	<u>2.12</u>	<u>2.28</u>	
F	MA	6.25	7.75	7.0	<u>0.96</u>
	sA	1.98	1.75	1.19	
	MI	7.75	8.95	8.28	
	sI	0.71	0.75	0.99	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>1.5</u>	<u>1.25</u>	<u>1.28</u>	
G	MA	5.12	7.28	5.71	<u>1.76</u>
	sA	2.66	1.42	1.82	
	MI	8.71	8.42	8.0	
	sI	0.57	0.67	0.82	
	Climate Discrep- ancy	<u>2.59</u>	<u>1.14</u>	<u>2.29</u>	

The results from Table III may be summarised as follows:-

(i) The highest discrepancy scores overall are for "standards" and "clarity" and leadership", indicating some dissatisfaction in those areas; this finding, particularly with regard to "clarity" is borne out by remarks from the priest's interviews and by written comments from parish council members and from observation of council meetings.

(ii) On every item except "conformity" ideal scores show considerable agreement, both within parishes (evidenced by low SI's) and between parishes as well. We may conclude therefore, that parish council members have a reasonably clear idea about where the parish council should lie on most items. In general, SA scores show less agreement within parishes on judgement of the actual situation.

(iii) Overall climate discrepancy scores (last column) show 2 low scores, 4 in the middle range and 1 high score. This seems adequate for its choice as a criterion variable for subsequent measures.

(iv) The form of questionnaire used does provide satisfactory and easily scored measures and could be adapted in future research to cover other areas specifically relevant to parish councils e.g. level of pastoral involvement, prayerfulness, communication with the parish etc.

(v) It should be clearly understood that the climate discrepancy scores refer to perceived discrepancy between actual and ideal situations. Theories of planned change would indicate that a high score on this measure may refer not only to a dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs, but also to a situation in which change is more likely to occur.

This possibility would require further research over a period of time, but other studies have shown that dissatisfaction can develop into a creative tension.

SECTION TWO

AN OVERALL VIEW

The purpose of this section of results is to view the data as a whole, and in particular to look for possible correlations, especially in connection with the climate discrepancy score.

(A) CLIMATE DISCREPANCY AND PARTICIPATIVE STYLE

It was hoped to have 2 measures of participative or leadership style for the priests, the A.S.O. score and the observers' judgement on the Tough Battler, Friendly Helper, Logical Thinker scales. Theoretically, too, there was expected to be some relationship between these 2 measures, because, as Schein (1969) points out, the Friendly Helper for example will achieve his world of warmth and intimacy only by allowing conflicts and differences to be raised and resolved. "He finds that he can become close with people only if he can accept what is dissimilar as well as what is similar in their behaviour. The Tough Battler will achieve his world of toughness and conflict only if he can create a climate of warmth and trust in which these will be allowed to develop, and the Logical Thinker will achieve his world of understanding and logic only if he can accept that his feelings and the feelings of others are also facts and contribute importantly toward our ability to understand interpersonal situations". (Kolb et al 1974 b. p.199).

Section One of Results however has explained why the A.S.O. score, because of a fault in research design, will not be used. Therefore in examining the relationship between climate discrepancy and participative style we use only the observers' judgement on the Friendly Helper, Logical Thinker, Tough Battler 9 point scales as the measurement of participative style - and on these scales, scores were judged for both parish priest and council chairman.

For a sample of this size, Spearman's rank order correlation, a non-parametric statistic of relationships, was chosen as the most appropriate measure. Table IV presents the matrix of these correlations. A positive score indicates some degree of positive relationship between a high score for that participative style and a high score for that group on climate discrepancy. A negative score on Table IV indicates the reverse. Levels of significance are as follows:-

At 10% level	=	0.714
At 5% level	=	0.786
At 1% level	=	0.929

RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CLIMATE DISCREPANCY SCORES FOR PARISH
COUNCILS AND OBSERVERS' JUDGEMENT OF 3 PARTICIPATIVE STYLES FOR PARISH
PRIESTS AND COUNCIL CHAIRMEN

	Conform- ity	Respons- ibility	Stand- ards	Rewards	Clarity	Warmth	Leader- ship	Overall Climate Discrepancy
Tough Battler Priest	0.35	0.79	0.64	0.74	0.69	0.67	0.60	0.75
Friendly Helper Priest	-0.75	-0.32	-0.24	-0.43	-0.36	-0.44	-0.42	-0.39
Logical Thinker Priest	-0.12	-0.57	-0.79	-0.32	-0.77	-0.625	-0.70	-0.80
Tough Battler Chairman	-0.214	0.07	0.68	-0.04	0.41	0.11	0.12	0.18
Friendly Helper Chairman	0.16	-0.26	-0.64	-0.33	-0.17	-0.12	-0.14	-0.24
Logical Thinker Chairman	-0.17	-0.40	-0.36	-0.38	-0.38	-0.56	-0.42	-0.47

Results indicate that where the priest scores highly on the Tough Battler style, climate discrepancy scores for that parish council are likely to be high for Responsibility (significant at the 5% level), for Rewards (significant at the 10% level) and for Overall Climate (significant at the 10% level). Other correlations for the Tough Battler style are not significant but are all positive.

For the Friendly Helper style among the priests the only significant correlation is a negative one with the climate discrepancy score for Conformity. The correlation with overall climate discrepancy is again negative, but not significant.

The Logical Thinker style for the priest shows significant negative correlation with climate discrepancy score for Standards (significant at the 5% level) and for Clarity (significant at the 10% level) and for Overall Climate discrepancy (significant at the 5% level). Again, other correlations for this style are not significant, but are all negative.

No significant correlations can be discovered between the leadership or participative style of the chairman and climate discrepancy scores, although a logical thinking style does produce a negative correlation throughout.

This sample is too small for any large scale predictions, but results do at least indicate that for the priest a logical thinking style is related to a satisfactory climate, that a tough battler style is counter-productive in regard to climate discrepancy and that it is not enough to be a friendly helper. Results also indicate that the participative style of the priest is more significant than that of the council chairman.

(B) ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
AND CHANGE

Apart from leadership style, the hypothesis for this thesis indicated some relationship between climate discrepancy and the understanding of and attitude towards shared responsibility on the part of the priest.

A more precise content analysis on a much larger sample is necessary here but Table V provides some attempt to assess any general trends in this area. The main findings to emerge are (i) that attitudes towards shared responsibility are more important than an intellectual understanding of the concept and (ii) a satisfactory climate score is more likely to be attained when a priest's attitudes are in keeping with his intellectual understanding.

TABLE V CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRIESTS' INTERVIEWS
ALONGSIDE PARISH COUNCILS' CLIMATE
DISCREPANCY SCORES

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>OVERALL</u> <u>CLIMATE</u> <u>DISCREPANCY</u>	<u>UNDER-</u> <u>STAND</u> <u>ING</u>	<u>ATTITUDES</u> <u>TOWARDS</u> <u>SHARED</u> <u>RESPONS-</u> <u>IBILITY</u>	<u>ATTITUDES</u> <u>TO</u> <u>CHANGE</u>
A	2.18	Good	Positive Some hesitancy Some paternalism	Positive
B	4.19	Good	Some hesitancy Manipulative tendency	Positive but some hesitancy
C	1.66	Fair	Positive Some paternalism Some authoritar- ianism	Positive
D	0.91	Good	Positive Some paternalism	Positive
E	1.88	Good	Positive Some laissez- faire	Very positive
F	0.96	Medium	Positive Seeking guidance	Some hesitancy
G	1.76	Medium	Some hesitancy Seeking guidance	Positive

(C) OTHER FACTORS

In this study, the age of the parish priest, the length of time he has spent in the parish and the length of time the parish council has been together did not show correlation with climate discrepancy, leadership style or theological attitudes. There was some slight indication that younger parish priests are more likely to have a good theological understanding of shared responsibility and change and that councils in large parishes may find it more difficult to achieve a satisfactory organisational climate score. But on none of these points is there sufficient evidence from this study for valid and definite conclusions.

SECTION THREEPROFILE OF PARISH COUNCILS CHOSEN
BY CLIMATE DISCREPANCY

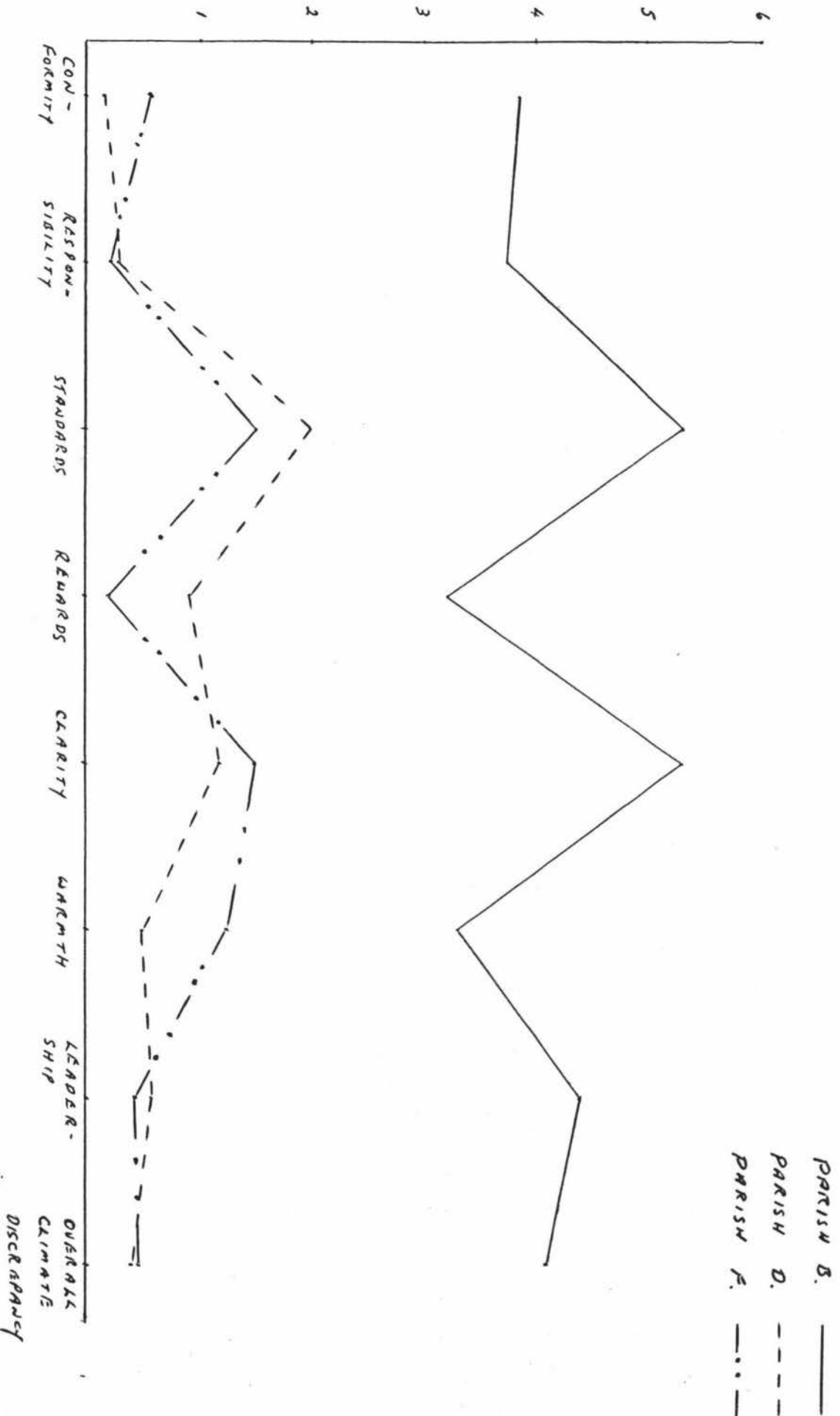
In this section the climate discrepancy score is chosen as the criterion variable and a more detailed examination is made of the two parishes with "most satisfactory" and "least satisfactory" scores on this measure. Where relevant, the parish with the second "most satisfactory" discrepancy score will be used to check conclusions. The main purpose of this section, therefore, is to clarify the differences that exist in this sample between councils with high and low climate discrepancy.

(A) CLIMATE SCORES1. The Criterion Variable - Discrepancy Score

Graph I presents the climate discrepancy results in visual form. Parish B, with the discrepancy score of 4.19 (high perceived discrepancy between actual and ideal) is to be compared with parish D, whose discrepancy score is 0.91 (low perceived discrepancy between actual and ideal) and parish F (discrepancy score of 0.96) is included for comparison.

It is to be noted that on all factors Parish B scores consistently higher indicating that it is not operating near its perceived ideal, but the pattern of scores should also be considered. The highest scores for all three parishes are for "standards" and "clarity" and this has already been noted in Section I as a general trend. Throughout the range of parishes, these two issues seem to need particular attention.

GRAPH I. CLIMATE DISCREPANCY SCORES IN PARISHES B, D AND F.



2. Scores for "Actual" Climate

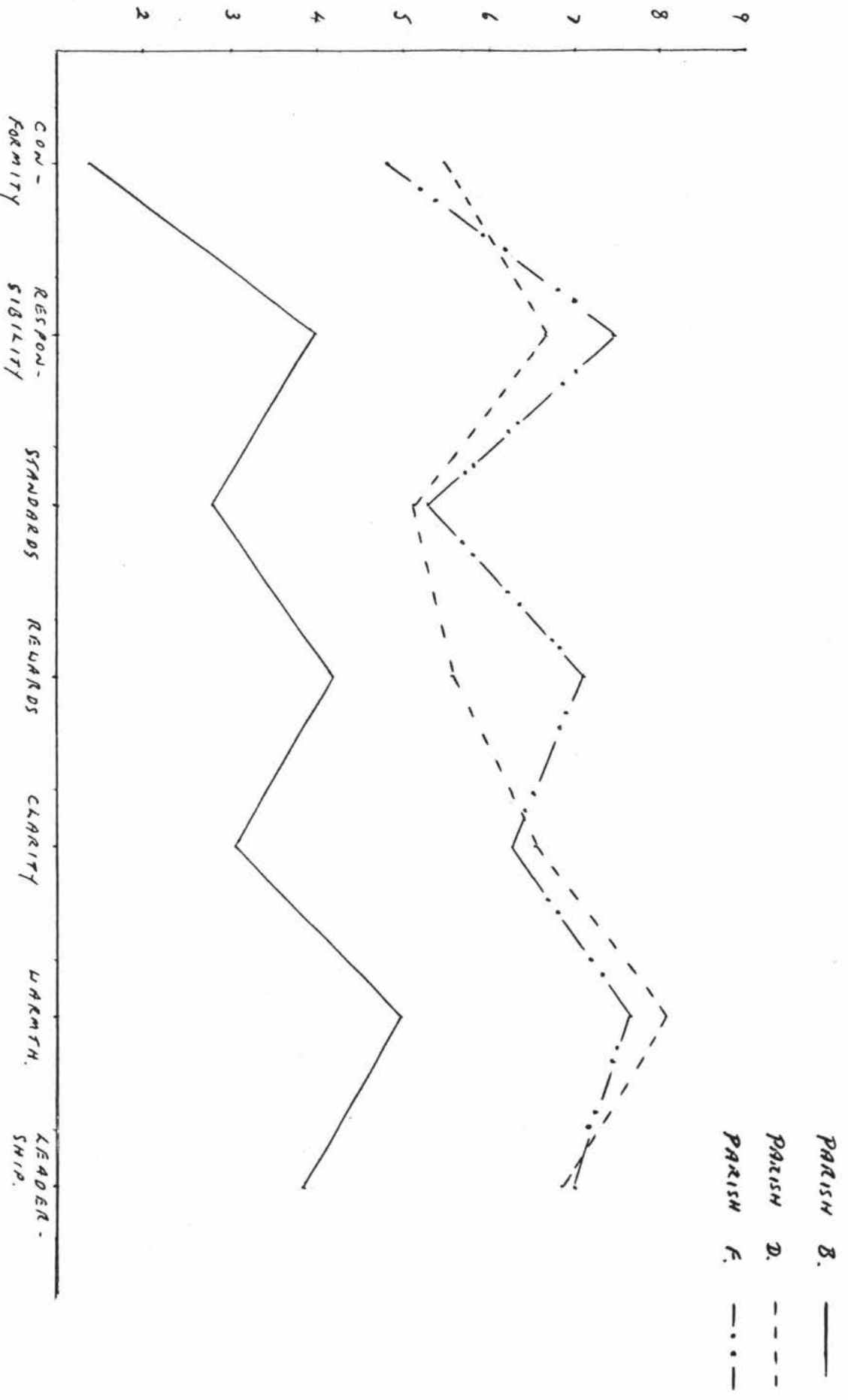
Graph II presents these results. (It should be noted that for the sake of clarity, scores for Conformity on Graphs II and III have been reversed on the bipolar 9 point scale.) In Graph II, for Actual Climate Parish D scores higher on all factors. But Parish F with a slightly higher discrepancy score than Parish D, also scores consistently higher than Parish D for this judgement about the actual climate. Again, standards and clarity call for special attention and it should be noted that Parish F has a higher actual than ideal score for rewards (7.13 to 6.87) and Parish D follows this pattern for responsibility (6.66 to 6.34) although these differences are not significant when standard deviations are considered.

From the table of standard deviations for "Actual" Climate (Table VI) we may note that the parish with the lowest mean discrepancy score on the criterion variable, Parish D (Climate Discrepancy = 0.91) also shows greatest agreement on its perceived Actual Climate (Mean standard deviation = 1.52) Parish F, with the next lowest variability of Actual scores (Mean standard deviation = 1.77) and Parish B, with the high Climate Discrepancy score of 4.19 has also the greatest variability in its Actual Climate scores (Mean standard deviation = 1.99).

TABLE VI STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON ACTUAL CLIMATE IN
PARISHES B, D AND F

<u>PARISHES</u>	<u>CONFORM-</u> <u>ITY</u>	<u>RESPONS-</u> <u>IBILITY</u>	<u>STAND-</u> <u>ARDS</u>	<u>REWARDS</u>	<u>CLARITY</u>	<u>WARMTH</u>	<u>LEADER-</u> <u>SHIP</u>
B	1.31	2.06	1.73	2.19	2.38	2.15	2.14
D	1.22	1.08	1.2	1.96	1.41	1.64	2.15
F	2.44	1.63	2.77	0.64	1.98	1.75	1.19

GRAPH II. SCORES FOR ACTUAL CLIMATE IN PARISHES B, D AND F.



3. Scores for "Ideal" Climate

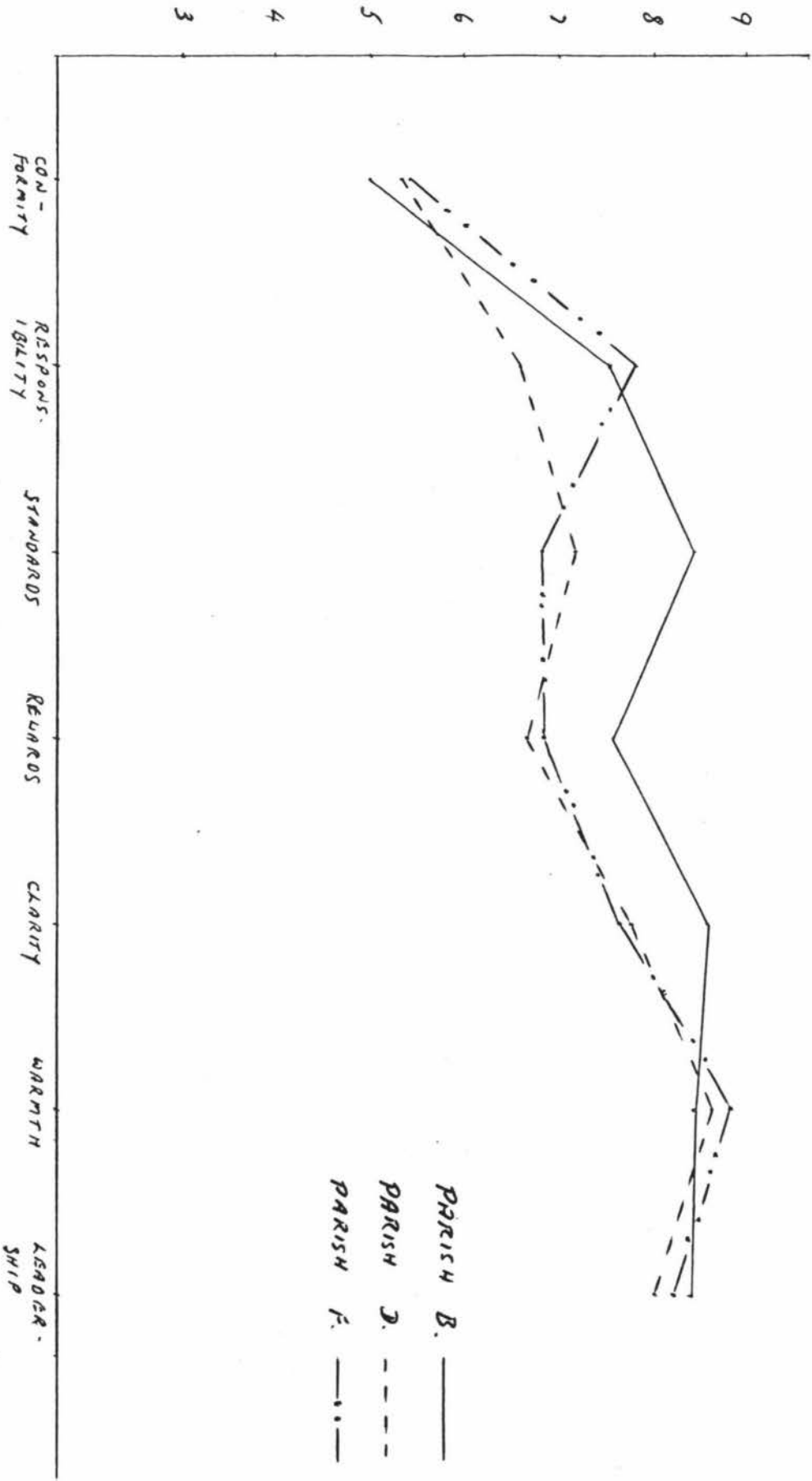
Graph III presents the "Ideal" climate scores and indicates clearly that there is considerable agreement between the three parishes on what the Ideal Climate should be. Parish B has higher ideals for standards, rewards and clarity, and Parish D has a low ideal for responsibility but the overall pattern shows definite similarity.

Standard deviations on Ideal climate score (Table VII) show too, that there is considerable agreement within these parishes in regard to the Ideal Climate, more so than for the Actual Climate, especially for Parishes B and F. We may conclude, therefore, that there is an agreed hypothetical ideal climate for parish councils in this deanery.

TABLE VII STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON IDEAL CLIMATE
IN PARISHES B, D AND F

<u>PARISHES</u>	<u>CONFORM-</u> <u>ITY</u>	<u>RESPONS-</u> <u>IBILITY</u>	<u>STAND-</u> <u>ARDS</u>	<u>REWARDS</u>	<u>CLARITY</u>	<u>WARMTH</u>	<u>LEADER-</u> <u>SHIP</u>
B	0.87	1.48	0.99	1.84	0.83	1.7	0.9
D	1.53	1.72	1.37	1.57	1.7	0.45	1.27
F	1.85	1.45	0.5	0.83	0.71	0.75	0.49

GRAPH III. SCORES FOR IDEAL CLIMATE IN PARISHES B, D AND F.



(B) INTERVIEWS WITH PARISH PRIESTS

1. Parish Data

A number of facts about the parish and the parish priest do not, from this research, seem to have any bearing on the criterion variable of climate discrepancy. The age of the parish priest, his length of appointment to the parish, the urban-rural mixture of the parish and the number of priests in the parish are different in Parish B (high discrepancy score) and Parish D (low discrepancy score), but on all these factors Parish B shows similarity to Parish F (low discrepancy score) and it would therefore be wrong to conclude from this data that they are significant. The geographical unity of the parish, the stability of residence, the length of time that there has been a parish council and the length of time the present parish council has been together are similar in all three parishes. There is some indication that the size of the parish may be important, with a bigger parish being related to a less satisfactory discrepancy score for its parish council, but here too, the data is not clear enough for definite conclusions.

2. Parish Council Structure

In terms of size of the parish council, parishes B and D are similar as they are in respect of the number of functioning committees and their term of office. The main differences in regard to structure are (a) that Parish B is one of those which attempts to keep finance apart from the parish council whereas Parish D has finance as a recognised sub-committee of its parish council; and (b) Parish D makes a constant practice of drawing its sub-committee members from outside the parish council, whereas this happens in part for Parish B. Comparisons with Parish F tends to confirm these two factors as differences although the position of the finance committee in Parish F is not entirely clear.

3. Understanding of and Attitudes Towards Shared Responsibility

On Table V parish priests B and D are both classified as having a "good" intellectual understanding of shared responsibility. On closer examination, D's understanding would have to be regarded as somewhat clearer and more detailed, but B also speaks explicitly of the aims of parish councils in pastoral terms "to have the community share in the pastoral work of the church, playing their full part as members of the Body of Christ". Both mention too the "servant" image of priestly authority.

On attitudes towards shared responsibility however, there are clearer differences. B displays some hesitancy, some vagueness with regard to its practical implications; "they should have some power in decisions and some responsible authority", a statement that was not fully clarified even with further questioning.

D on the other hand, is more positive with regard to the implications of shared responsibility. "The parish council must have basically an apostolic function... the democracy in action produces leaders whom you would never have considered. There is to be decision-making in some areas at least."

A further difference lies in the fact that whereas D displays some paternalistic attitudes - "patience is required, as in the training of a child" - B goes further in this line to display some tendency towards manipulation; "I find it necessary to let them talk... they usually come round to a balanced view... they need to feel they made the decision."

Comparisons with Parish F on these factors does not indicate their relevance one way or the other. F is marked as having a medium understanding of shared

responsibility, a positive attitude towards it and a seeking of guidance especially from higher authority, but no real indication of paternalism nor certainly of manipulation. On these matters therefore, it seems legitimate to compare B and D directly and again the indications are that in terms of climate discrepancy score, attitudes towards the implications of shared responsibility are more important than the understanding of it as a theological concept. A somewhat hesitant manipulative attitude appears to be connected with an unsatisfactory climate discrepancy score while a positive attitude, even with some paternalism, appears to be connected with a satisfactory discrepancy score.

4. Understanding of and Attitudes Towards Change

Parish priest B has the clearest historical understanding of change. He speaks of the education of the laity bringing about a new awareness and new requirements and is of the opinion that "the main value of the old system.... where the priest made all the decisions, was that it belonged to its time." Neither D nor F (low discrepancy scores) speak of historical realities in regard to change and are more concerned with immediate factors and future possibilities; "the parish council now provides a tremendous sounding board for the priest's bright ideas"; "it is new to have a truly representative body of parishioners to say yes or no"; "the new thing is that we are really trying to have parishioners involved."

These could be regarded as attitudinal rather than intellectual factors but in terms of attitude to change the content analysis table (Table V) shows B and F classified as "positive with some hesitancy" D simply as "positive."

The tentative conclusions from this data would be that an historical understanding of change on the part of the priest is not necessarily connected with a satisfactory climate discrepancy score in that parish council whereas a heightened awareness of present possibilities in regard to change may be more important in that respect.

(C) COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Of the council members who sent in the organisational climate questionnaire, 70% from Parish B provided additional comments, 35% from Parish D did so and just under 30% from Parish F. In other words, a far higher proportion of comments was received from the parish council with the highest climate discrepancy score and this was to be expected if the discrepancy score was in fact assessing felt dissatisfaction with the actual situation. Parish B provides negative criticism especially on finance - "it should not be cloaked in secrecy" (mentioned in 55% of Parish B replies); on the priest's power or style of acting - "council members are frustrated when decisions are circumvented" (mentioned in 65% of replies); on pastoral awareness "parish councils should carry out pastoral works... and this is badly neglected" (in 55% of replies); and on lack of clear guidelines from above - "we should hear from the Archbishop the role he wants parish councils to play" (30% of replies). Positive suggestions are offered on all these issues e.g. on finance "the parish council could be organised on local body lines with sub-committees submitting estimates..." and on other issues as well e.g. on making the parish council truly representative.

From parish councils D and F there are critical comments on priest's style (in 20% of their responses) and on finance (in 15%) and on pastoral awareness (in 30%) but the bulk of comment provides suggestions

for further improvement; "the council needs more contact on a deanery basis"; "youth should be catered for"; "parish visiting should be stressed"; "priests' training needs a rethink". But in general these suggestions are less detailed and certainly less radical than those proposed by Parish B.

The indications here, then, are that a high score on climate discrepancy may be related not only to the generation of more critical comment but also to the generation of more positive ideas.

Further research could examine whether or not those positive ideas are likely to bear fruit in a council with a high discrepancy score.

(D) LEADERSHIP STYLE OF PRIEST AND COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

A.S.O. scores for priests are not considered here (cf Section I of Results). Table VIII presents the observers' ratings for priest and chairman on the 9 point Tough Battler, Friendly Helper, Logical Thinker scales of leadership or participative style. In keeping with the rank order correlation results (cf Section Two) the high climate discrepancy score of Parish B is related to a high Tough Battler score and a low Logical Thinker score for the parish priest. This would seem to be the most significant result. Priests D and F have low scores for Tough Battler, but their Logical Thinking scores lie about the middle of the scale. Their Friendly Helper scores are also higher than priest B's but the rank order correlations have shown that this may not be significant. It is worth noting however, that priest B was rated in the interview as having a good intellectual understanding of shared responsibility and change, but in the situation of the council meeting he did not score highly as a Logical Thinker.

Ratings for council chairmen did not seem to follow a pattern in relationship to climate discrepancy scores. Chairmen B and D both score highly on the Tough Battler scale, chairman F alone rates highly on the Friendly Helper scale, and the only indication that may be significant is that chairmen D and F both rate higher than chairman B on the Logical Thinker scale. It is possible, in other words, that a low score for the chairman on that scale may be related to a high discrepancy score for that parish council.

TABLE VIII OBSERVERS' RATINGS OF PRIEST AND COUNCIL CHAIRMAN ON 3 PARTICIPATIVE STYLES

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>TOUGH BATTLE</u>	<u>FRIENDLY HELPER</u>	<u>LOGICAL THINKER</u>
Priest B	7	2.5	2
D	3.5	5.5	4.5
F	2	6	5
Chairman B	7.5	3	2.5
D	7	4	4.5
F	4	7	5.5

(E) OBSERVATION OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. Problem Identification

In all three parishes an agenda was followed although this was somewhat vague in Parish F, and in each council sub-committee chairmen helped to define a number of issues. The most significant difference occurred in regard to the parish priests' participation in identifying the problems. In councils D and F (low discrepancy score) the priests were active in

this role for both major and minor issues, in Council B (high discrepancy score) the parish priest was marked by both observers as identifying problems only in respect of major and contentious issues. Among the council chairmen, the most active in this regard was chairman D.

2. Generation and Processing of Data

The observation forms for all three parishes record that little effort was made in any of these councils to elicit opinions from silent members except in Parish D where the chairman, from time to time, gave a general invitation for further comment. None of the three priests was influential in exploring alternatives; and especially in Parish B, when alternatives were discussed they were outlined by council members rather than by the chairman. The processing of data was more heated in Parish B than in the other two, there seemed to be less respect there for differing opinions on contentious matters, and there were fewer "silent" members.

3. Decision Making and Planning

In all three parishes, the council chairman genuinely sought consensus and on most issues this seemed to be achieved, but Parish B showed the highest proportion of issues actually being voted on. In Parish D, the chairman took responsibility for follow-through on a number of matters and in Parishes B and F existing or ad hoc committees took responsibility for some major issues. Among the priests, F was the most active in this respect.

Comment

Table IX presents these observations in schematic form and in terms of this research the most

significant differences to be noted are:

- (a) In Parish B, the priest is not obviously active in problem identification.
- (b) In Parish B, there is more likelihood that some opinions are ignored.

TABLE IXSUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS OF COUNCIL
MEETINGS IN PARISHES B, D AND F

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION</u>	<u>GENERATION AND PROCESSING OF DATA</u>	<u>DECISION- MAKING AND PLANNING</u>
B	Agenda	Sometimes heated	Consensus sought
Climate Discrepancy score	Sub-committee chairmen Council members	Opinions ignored Members involved	Voting Sub-committee follow through Deferment
4.19			
D	Agenda	Chairman calls for comment	Consensus sought
Climate Discrepancy score	Parish priest active Council chairman active Sub-committee chairmen	Silent members left alone Opinions respected	Some voting Chairman takes or delegates responsibility for follow through
0.91			
F	Agenda	Silent members left alone	Consensus sought
Climate Discrepancy score	Parish priest active Sub-committee chairmen General business	Opinions respected "Official" viewpoint sought	Some voting Sub-committee follow through Deferment Parish priest active
0.96			

SUMMARY OF SECTION THREE

Here the main differences between parish councils with high and low climate discrepancy scores are summarised.

The parish council with a high climate discrepancy score attempts to keep finance separate from council business. It rarely draws sub-committee members from outside the council, and members of the council are very ready to comment, both with positive ideas and especially with negative criticism. The parish priest displays some manipulative tendencies with regard to leadership and shared responsibility, and while he has a clear historical understanding of change he shows some hesitancy in regard to its immediate possibilities. In terms of observed participative style he scored high on the Tough Battler scale and low on the Friendly Helper and Logical Thinker scales. He was not active in identifying problems, except on contentious issues.

On the other hand the 2 parish councils with low climate discrepancy scores discuss finance as part of the council agenda, are more likely to draw sub-committee members from outside the council, and have little to offer in the way of comment, positive or negative. One of the 2 parish priests shows some paternalism, but neither of them display manipulative tendencies. Their attitude to change concentrates on immediate possibilities rather than on historical understanding of it. In respect of observed participative style both parish priests score low on the Tough Battler scale, and both are in the middle of the range on the Friendly Helper and Logical Thinker scales. Both are active in identifying problems in major and minor issues.

Finally, there is some indication that in the council with a high climate discrepancy score, members' opinions are more likely to be ignored, and there is less agreement about the Actual climate than in the two comparison councils.

The sample here is too small for generalised conclusions, but these profiles do indicate definite possibilities for further research.

CHAPTER FIVECONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONSSECTION ONECONCLUSIONS

This section will be a summary of the main findings in terms of the stated aims of this research.

(A) STRENGTHS OF PARISH COUNCILS

1. Throughout the region there is clearly evident in parish council members a strong faith in the Church and in the mission of the Church. The backbone of parish councils is the solid ordinary Catholic who has a genuine desire to serve the parish and a willingness to be involved. There are many such people.
2. In matters of practical concern, all parish councils have members with a wealth of experience and a generous desire to use that experience for the good of the parish. Where sub-committees are effective, these practical talents in particular are put to good use.
3. In each parish council there is some positive appreciation of the possibilities of the council structure and a genuine wish to make it work. Allied with this is the fact that a number of parish council members have sound ideas for further improvement.

4. In most parish councils there is a reasonably high level of trust and a warmth in personal relationships. In general, members' opinions are respected when they are expressed and in each council the accepted ideal is consensus.

5. Overall, parish priests in this area have a reasonable intellectual understanding of the theology of parish councils and are at least making a genuine effort to grapple with the implications of this structure. They are aware of the need for improvement and would be willing to accept positive assistance if it was offered.

(B) WEAKNESSES OF PARISH COUNCILS

It is to be expected that research of this kind would concentrate on aspects that require improvement and this has proved to be the case. Recommendations in line with these conclusions will be dealt with in Chapter Six.

1. THE NEED FOR CLARITY

In the opinion of this researcher, clarity is one of the primary requirements. The Organisational Climate Questionnaire, comments from parish council members and observation of council meetings all indicate the need for clarity in regard to goals, methods and areas of responsibility. Unless this clarity is achieved, good-will seems likely to dissipate, or, at the very least, the potential of parish councils will not be realised.

In regard to goals, parish council members need to have a far deeper understanding of pastoral aims, and pastoral responsibilities. This must not be an intellectual exercise; it must involve a response

to the pastoral needs of the parish community and ideally will include an agreed list of priorities for parish council action. If that is achieved, even minimally, then there is a far greater likelihood that there will be clarity of methods as well. In all parishes, clarity and standards scored high on climate discrepancy. In this respect the sub-committee structure needs to be strengthened. It is quite inadequate in some parishes and valuable time is wasted at council meetings by poorly-presented and badly-researched recommendations. Observation of council meetings indicates that these inadequacies are caused again by lack of clarity, both in regard to the precise functions of various sub-committees and in regard to the relationship between the sub-committees and the parish council.

This raises another fundamental issue where clarification is needed and that is in regard to areas of responsibility. If the parish priest does have to ratify all council recommendations, then that needs to be clearly spelled out. Serious and destructive frustration is caused when council members think they are participating in the making of a decision and find that in fact they are offering advice. It is admitted that many parish councils function happily in a spirit of trust between priests, religious and laity and this must remain the basis for any sharing of responsibility, but in a human setting, warmth of relationships is not a substitute for clarity. Lay and religious members of the parish council need to understand that consultation is a vital and valid part of the decision-making process, and priests need to assess clearly the implications of going one step further to share with parish councils the actual making of pastoral decisions. In other words, in each parish council there needs to be a genuine examination of consultation and decision making powers and the areas in which each of these

could apply. In a society of saints, this question would not be necessary - in a society of sinners, it is.

2. THE NEED FOR ACTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

The primary need in regard to areas of responsibility is as has been stated, the need for clarity, so that people will know where they stand. However, the present writer has concluded from this research that parish councils must be given real teeth, and false teeth are not enough. On some issues at least the parish council as a whole, priests, religious and laity, needs to be seen as a decision-making body. In fact, this occurred, in varying degrees, in all the councils studied, and it is quite possible that the "decision-making" issues will vary from parish to parish in accordance with different needs and different people. The role and the ultimate responsibilities of the parish priest must be clearly understood. But the principle of decision-making powers for the council in some areas needs to be accepted by all council members and by parishioners if the council structure is to be given credibility in the parish and if council members are to increase their already genuine spirit of pastoral concern. It is stressed again that decision making is not the only way of sharing in responsibility, but at the present stage of parish council development it seems to this writer to be a necessary principle at the parish level. Bernard Lyons (1970 p.40) agrees. "A certain power and effect is inherent in the advisory function, but this limited role cannot be said to be the realisation of what Vatican II hoped for in the parish community.... And until canon law is changed or a bishop outlines the direction that he wants, a pastor has to overcome his own fear of uncharted courses."

3. THE NEED FOR EFFICIENCY

Observations of council meetings and comments from council members indicate a need for improved methods of procedure in most parishes. The agenda is rarely circulated beforehand, sub-committee recommendations are too long and rambling, silent members are not given enough encouragement to speak, there is not always a check on whether decisions have been implemented and there is little emphasis given to prayer. In most councils financial matters are adequately dealt with, except that too much time is liable to be spent on them and there needs to be more openness about them; considerable and unnecessary frustration is caused when the attempt is made to keep financial affairs quite separate from parish council affairs. In general however, parish councils deal comfortably with practical matters of administration but are less efficient and confident when handling matters of specifically pastoral concern. In this respect, clarity of goals is likely to increase efficiency of method.

4. THE NEED FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

All councils expressed some dissatisfaction with regard to the relationship between the council and the parish. This research has not examined the attitudes of parishioners to parish councils, but there is some indication from the comments of parish priests and from council members that parishioners in general are ignorant of, and not interested in, the affairs of the council. Only two councils have undertaken positive and continuing steps to overcome this problem and none have assessed the question of accountability to the parish.

5. THE NEED FOR WIDER AWARENESS

Parish council constitutions and the agenda for meetings show little awareness that the parish is part of a diocese, let alone part of the wider Church. Even between neighbouring parishes there seems to be very little communication and even less concerted planning. If parish councils are to organise programmes of adult education, marriage enrichment, scriptural studies etc., inter-parish communication would be valuable in many cases.

In the field of ecumenism, none of the parish councils studied is particularly active. Good-will is certainly present, but it rarely develops into action.

(C) THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF PARISH PRIESTS

1. Despite the reasonable theological understanding that priests in this area have of shared responsibility there is room for a deeper awareness of its implications, and particularly for a personal assessment of each priest's attitudes towards it. In all the priests who took part in this research there is evidence of a genuine openness, but results indicate that priests' attitudes need to be considered and this research at least suggests that priests' attitudes may be more closely related to the climate discrepancy of the parish council than priests' intellectual understanding. This applies both with regard to shared responsibility and with regard to change.

2. It would seem that priests as well as lay members of the council need more time to reflect on the pastoral goals of their particular parish. Again the point is made that clarity of goals is likely to assist clarity of means.

3. Priests need a deeper understanding in the matter of leadership - its theory, its implications and its exercise. They should realise for example, that it is not enough to be a friendly helper, that a tough battler style is probably related to an unsatisfactory climate in the parish council, that in some issues logical thinking is required from the priest; and they should be thoroughly aware of the frustration caused to others by manipulative tendencies. The tasks and the responsibilities of leadership are far wider than has been dealt with in this research, but it seems likely that all priests would benefit from a better understanding in this matter. The same can be said too for parish council chairmen and other council members, because, in varying degrees, they all have leadership roles to play.

(D) FACTORS RELATED TO CLIMATE DISCREPANCY

The specific hypothesis examined in this research is that the satisfactoriness of a parish council's organisational climate will be affected by:

- (a) the parish priest's theological understanding of and attitude towards shared responsibility.
- (b) the parish priest's style of functioning within a group.

Results suggest firstly that the parish priest's attitude towards shared responsibility is more likely to affect the climate discrepancy score than his theological understanding of the concept. In the council with a high discrepancy score the parish priest was marked as having a somewhat hesitant attitude to shared responsibility and some tendency towards manipulation. In the two parishes with low discrepancy score the parish priest's attitude is marked as "positive, some paternalism" and "positive, seeking guidance". The sample is not large enough

nor are the measures sufficiently precise to allow general conclusions, but the data does at least suggest this relationship between climate discrepancy and priest's attitudes.

Secondly, the results indicate more clearly that climate discrepancy is related to the priest's participative or leadership style. Spearman's rank order correlation measure provides results significant at the 5% and 10% level, to show that a high rating on the tough battler scale is related to a high climate discrepancy score for "responsibility" for "rewards", and for "overall climate". On the other hand a high rating on the logical thinker scale is related to a low climate discrepancy score especially for "standards", for "clarity" and for "overall climate". High ratings on the friendly helper scale show negative but non-significant correlations with high climate discrepancy scores. In other words, a tough battler style for the priest is probably related to an unsatisfactory organisational climate for the parish council, a logical thinking style is probably related to a satisfactory climate, and a friendly helper style possibly contributes to a satisfactory climate, but it is not sufficient.

Thirdly, the matrix of correlations shows clearly that the priest's participative style in terms of Schein's 3 basic types is more significantly related to the climate discrepancy of the parish council than is the chairman's participative style.

SECTION TWOSOME THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Fiedler distinguishes two major types of work groups (a) the interacting group, where members are and perceive themselves to be, inter-dependent in achieving a common goal, and (b) the co-acting group, where members work individually and independently on the task in hand. In these terms a parish council would be primarily an inter-acting group with one appointed leader (the parish priest) and one elected leader (the council chairman). Research studies of business organisations (cf Fiedler 1967) have shown that a warm, integrative style of leadership is more effective in inter-acting groups, and a critical, cool, evaluative style more effective in co-acting groups. It might be expected therefore, that for a parish council, a high observed rating on a friendly helper scale for the leader would be significantly related to a satisfactory score for organisational climate. This did not prove to be the case. In fact, rank order correlations showed that the rating for the leader on logical thinking was more significant in regard to climate discrepancy than a high friendly helper rating. This finding needs to be tested of course, by the use of Fiedler's own measurement of leadership style, L.P.C. and A.S.O. scores, but even as it stands it raises some theoretical implications. In the first place, it would seem to confirm the long held conclusion that leadership is a group function and cannot be studied in isolation. Secondly, it raises again the question of the precise nature of parish councils as working groups and the lack of clarity about this in the minds of priests and council members. And thirdly

it implies that we are not dealing in this research with extremes of leadership style; in Schein's terms, the tough battler, the friendly helper, and the logical thinker can all demonstrate characteristics of "group centred" leadership, allowing group members to participate in decisions, and the same can be said, in Fiedler's terms, for the "warm" style 1 and the "cool" style 2 leader. It seems unrealistic, therefore, to treat leadership and participative style as a simple linear variable, as Fiedler is inclined to do.

2. In this research, the concept of organisational climate and climate discrepancy has proved to be a useful measuring instrument. Future research could well adapt this instrument to measure other aspects of parish council work e.g. the perceived actual and ideal levels of pastoral concern, of prayerfulness and of communication with the whole parish.

3. Part of this research has dealt with the question of shared responsibility in a hierarchical structure and it has attempted to specify levels and areas of dissatisfaction in the parish council organisation. Both these aspects have theoretical implications with regard to strategies of planned change. Benne and Birnbaum (1969) for example point out that stress may give rise to dissatisfaction with the status quo and thus become a motivating factor for change, although one should ordinarily avoid beginning change at the point of greatest stress. They state, too, that "the effectiveness of planned change is often directly related to the degree to which members at all levels of an institutional hierarchy take part in the fact-finding and the diagnosing of needed changes and in the formulating and reality-testing of goals and programmes of change" (p. 332.) The methods of this present research,

in particular the assessment of participative style and of the organisational climate in parish councils, would be usefully employed in planning such strategies of change in the immediate future.

CHAPTER SIXSPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Each parish council should set aside some time each year for reflection, recollection and planning. The minimum period of time for this would be one full day - it cannot be done at ordinary council meetings. The programme for such a day or days should include time for prayer and reflection and it should consider the goals of this particular parish and parish council, the structure of this parish council, the areas of responsibility and the immediate list of priorities for action. It does not seem essential to import outside "experts" for such a programme, but if they are invited it should be clearly recognised by all concerned that the "expert" is there not to provide all the right answers but to stimulate reflection, clear understanding and practical action.

2. It is recommended that the parish priests of this area organise for themselves a seminar to consider shared responsibility, the structure of parish councils and the meaning of leadership in this context.

3. Despite the insistent call for clarity from this research it is not recommended that diocesan authorities provide detailed and specific constitutions for parish councils. Throughout this area parish councils are at different levels of development and specific directives that covered every detail would limit some councils and bewilder others; nor would they be related to particular needs in particular places. What diocesan authorities should be

providing is:

- (a) a new outline of theological principles for priests and other council members and for parishioners in general.
- (b) the challenge and the opportunities for priests and council members to reflect together on pastoral realities.
- (c) options and possibilities for the structuring of parish councils.
- (d) guidance and ideas for parish council sub-committees.
- (e) recognised structures at the diocesan and, preferably, the deanery level to allow for the sharing of ideas, the implementation of policy and the widening of pastoral awareness.

4. It is recommended that parish councils in this area make more use of the sub-committee structure, with the functions of the sub-committees clearly related to the goals of the parish council and with sub-committee members in general drawn from outside the council itself.

5. The relationship between the parish and the parish council has not been the object of study in this research but observation and comment suggest that this relationship needs to be strengthened. It is therefore recommended:

- (a) that parish council elections be preceded by a programme of parish reflection;
- (b) that eventually parish council elections throughout this deanery be held at the same time to increase the possibility of public relations.
- (c) that each new council begin their term of office with a public parish ceremony presided over by the parish priest.
- (d) that the question of the parish council's accountability to the parish be carefully examined.

6. It is recommended that parish councils reflect seriously on the content and the procedure of their meetings. Pastoral rather than administrative concerns should predominate - although it is not recommended that financial matters be kept entirely separate from council business. Lack of openness in this matter causes unnecessary frustration. Procedure of meetings needs to be tightened while allowing for the expression of all opinions. In this regard it may be advisable to appoint a member of the council or an outsider to observe and comment upon one meeting a year with the help of a standardised method of observation.

7. Finally, it is recommended that in this deanery parish councils made up of priests, religious and laity working together be recognised as decision-making bodies, at least in some matters. The unique pastoral position of the parish priest must be understood but ideally priests would speak of the parish council as "we" instead of "them".

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