7

Interpersonal Relationships on the Job

One young fellow told me that he always felt they sent the bottom of the barrel to serve this church, and when he heard they were sending a woman, he felt this was the pits. He said he never thought he could communicate with a woman, but finds that he can communicate better with me than he has with anyone in the past. It is really great when they can tell you these things! . . . I find in most of the churches that I have served, it hasn't been men whom I've had the most difficulty with, but other women, particularly older women who might have been doing what I was doing if they had been born twenty years later . . . . I think that even these women who tear you down don't realize what they are doing. I think that is why you can forgive them. It is an inadequacy within themselves, I think, or a feeling that "I really can be doing more than I am doing."—CLERGYWOMAN

In the one church that I am familiar with that had a female pastor, the men got along great with her, but the women didn't. (She was in her mid-forties, widowed with children.) With male pastors before and after her, both men and women worked well.—LAY LEADER

When I first came as an assistant, there were a lot of people who really had severe doubts about having a woman and were prepared to leave even though they had stuck it out in this parish through thick and thin. But my coming to the church was the last straw. (I didn't know the extent of the opposition, only that there had been "some.") These people were persuaded to wait until I got there, and they ended up not leaving. Some said things like: "I don't know if you know this, but your close friend now, my husband—or your close friend now, my wife—was dead set against you and was ready to leave." That is how I really found specifically who they were and the extent of the opposition. But up until they sort of made themselves known, I operated in a kind of naive innocence. That I think

was probably my greatest protection because my energies were not siphoned off.—CLERGYWOMAN

Earlier we used the sociological concept of "status" in referring to the position that an individual occupies as an ordained minister. In the different roles one is called on to perform in the status of minister, he or she relates to various people who form what may be called the minister's "role set."[1] These include lay parishioners, a senior pastor if the minister happens to be in an associate or assistant relationship, clergy in other churches, and denominational officials. The quality of the interpersonal relationships that clergywomen and men develop with these various members of their role set are important ingredients in effective functioning and in satisfaction with the profession. We deal with various aspects of these relationships in this chapter; and, in the following chapter, we focus more on satisfaction.

Relationships with Laity

Positive relationships between a minister and the parishioners in his or her role set are critical for effective ministry. In the role of preacher and teacher, the ordained minister's capacity to persuade or inform is greatly enhanced when there are positive bonds of affection between her or himself and parishioners. In the pastoral role, clergy are permitted to share in parishioners' deepest personal experiences. As with preaching and teaching, effectiveness in this role is aided or hindered by the quality of interpersonal relationships between pastor and people. Clergy who are constantly in conflict with individuals or groups within their parishes, however justified these conflicts may be, are likely to have difficulty moving towards realization of their goals for ministry and find themselves frustrated and discouraged. Indeed, as our data show, the more difficulties clergy reported having encountered with lay leaders and parishioners during the past year, the more likely they were to have considered leaving their present parish. Moreover, they were also likely to have thought seriously of leaving the ordained ministry. Because clergy-parishioner relationships are so critical to effective ministry, we consider several aspects of these relationships in this section. What is the extent of conflict experienced by clergy in our sample? With whom are they in conflict? Do clergymen and women differ in the types of persons with whom they have difficulty? How do clergywomen and men handle conflict? To whom do they turn for support?

Slightly over half of the clergywomen and just under half of the clergymen said that at least sometime last year they were having trouble with one or more lay leaders. At the same time, 90 percent of both men and women clergy reported that in the last year they usually felt ac-

cepted, liked, and appreciated by most of their congregations. Few clergy (around 10 percent) described themselves as "usually" in conflict with one or more lay leaders in the year past. Overall, it seems that though men and women pastors do minister to harmonious congregations in which they are appreciated, most pastors also have had recent experience in dealing with individual parishioners who do not like them.

Sometimes clergy seem to have consistent difficulty with lay leaders of certain age, sex, and occupational types. We hypothesized that this was the case and asked respondents how well they typically got on with several different categories of lay persons. Ninety-five percent of both women and men pastors claimed they got on at least "satisfactorily" with all types of laity listed. But, in distinguishing between those types of laity with whom they got on just satisfactorily from those with whom they got on "very well," clergywomen reported most difficulty with businessmen and executives, middle-aged men, and middle-aged women. For example, 52 percent of the clergywomen said they got on very well with businessmen and executives compared to 67 percent of the clergymen; whereas 57 percent of the clergywomen said they got on very well with middle-aged women compared to 70 percent of the clergymen, who reported very good relations with middle-aged women.

The relationships of clergy, men and women, with businessmen and executives is especially interesting. Only about half of the women pastors report that they get on very well with businessmen and executives, regardless of denomination. It is interesting to speculate why this is so. Perhaps church members who are male business executives may have some difficulty in accepting a woman in a position of executive decision making, even or especially in the church. This putative resistance may not be conscious on the part of the executives in the congregations pastored by women. One faculty woman reported that in talking with clergywomen's groups or with individual women pastors who return to their seminary for a visit, she has discovered a common, but ironic, phenomenon: the executives who are now giving the woman pastors a hard time in their daily ministry are often the identical individuals who had been instrumental in extending her a call. Male business executives, the woman faculty member noted, are often very used to "equal opportunity" if not "affirmative action" hiring in their own corporations, and so have less difficulty with the idea of hiring a woman per se for a good position than would those who are infrequently involved in hiring staff. However, these same executives are not typically used to having a woman share decision making with them or have more power than they do in the organization of which they are both members. As the woman's pastoral ministry unfolds in a particular church, she may

therefore find that the men who were her supporters in the hiring process are increasingly opposing her suggestions and undermining the policies or programs she most strongly supports. These executives, frequently middle-aged men, may very well not realize that the sex of their pastor has any relevance to why they are finding her style and decisions less and less to their liking.

When we examined denominational differences, clergywomen did not differ much in how they get on with businessmen and executives. However, differences between men and women pastors did emerge more strongly in some denominations than others because the men in such denominations reported themselves as especially high or low in ability to get along well with businessmen and executives. For example, differences between men and women pastors in the Lutheran denominations were either nonexistent (LCA) or slightly in favor of the women (ALC), because the male pastors in both denominations reported *less* ease in getting along with male business executives than did men in the other denominations. Conversely, differences between men and women pastors in the United Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ were greater than those in other denominations because United Presbyterian and UCC clergymen described themselves as having *more* ease as a group than men in other denominations in getting along with businessmen and executives. These denominational differences are probably in part due to how much respect and power the male pastors and businessmen and executives accord one another in church committee meetings, and congregational and community life.

Businessmen and executives probably like and expect to make decisions and exert influence in organizations of which they are members. Hence, they will probably get on better with the male minister who allows them some input into running the church. Indeed, it appears that clergymen of the denominations who get on best with the businessmen and executives, the United Presbyterians and UCC, are far more likely to describe themselves as being quite "democratic" in their typical leadership style than the clergymen who got on least well with businessmen and executives as a denomination, the Lutherans. For example, we utilized a ten-point scale, ranging from what is described as authoritarian behavior (but termed "directive" in order not to bias clergy against describing their behavior by a term they might deem pejorative) to what is described and termed as very "democratic." Forty-three percent of the United Presbyterian clergymen, compared to only 20 percent of the LCA clergymen, rated themselves between eight and ten on the "democratic" end of the continuum.

A directive style of pastoral leadership, often called the *Herr Pastor* style, is frequently associated with Lutheran Churches. Our data sug-

gest that such pastors are not as likely to include businessmen and executives in the decision making of the churches as those with more democratic styles. This may be the major factor in straining the relationship between some male clergy and business executives. This hypothesis receives further support when it is noted that the American Lutheran Church, the one denomination in which clergywomen got along slightly better with businessmen and executives than the clergymen did, also was the denomination in which clergywomen were most likely to say they typically used a quite democratic leadership style. This has ramifications, of course, for clergywomen and men in all the other denominations. The most obvious one is that, if the pastor wishes to retain the good will and active support of businessmen and executives in the congregation, it would behoove her or him to allow these parishioners some voice in deciding congregational policies.

While we noted that both clergywomen and clergymen generally reported being able to get on very well with elderly men and women among their parishioners, 13 percent fewer clergywomen than men reported that they got on very well with middle-aged women in the congregations they had served as pastors. Clergywomen interviewed often volunteered that competitive feelings they engendered among some middle-aged women by their very presence as pastor apparently were the major cause of friction with this age-sex group. Some middle-aged women may be threatened by the woman pastor who has entered their primary arena of power outside the home—parish politics and church programs—and has achieved an official status in the church above theirs. Others may fear that their husbands may like the woman pastor —too much. For this reason, one woman pastor related that, while in seminary, her dean warned the women seminarians: "Avoid the middle-aged men and work instead with their wives in the church; and never ride in a car alone with a middle-aged married man!"

Though in seven of the denominations, clergywomen did not get on as well with middle-aged women as did the clergymen, in three denominations clergywomen got on so well with this age-sex group that there was no significant difference between the men and women pastors. These latter three denominations are the Presbyterian Church U.S., Disciples, and Episcopal (86, 69, and 63 percent of the clergywomen respectively saying they got on "very well" with middle-aged women). In contrast, the two Lutheran denominations stood out in having the lowest percentage of clergywomen saying they got on "very well" with their middle-aged women parishioners (31 percent of ALC and 36 percent of LCA).

Analysis indicates that a major cause of these denominational differences is probably the relative youth of the clergywomen in the Luther-

an denominations as compared to the others. For example, while 43 percent of the ALC and 45 percent of the LCA clergywomen are age thirty and younger, only 29 percent of the Presbyterian U.S., 19 percent of the Disciples, and 5 percent of the Episcopal clergywomen are this young. In fact, as Table 7.1 reveals, the older the clergy of both sexes (the table does not include denominations), the better they get on with businessmen and executives and middle-aged men and women. Clergywomen thirty years of age and younger are far more likely to have difficulty with both middle-aged men and women than young clergymen.

The middle-aged parishioner groups, particularly those of business-executive families, may be problematic to clergywomen, because they are apt to be the present or rising lay leaders in the churches, those who would have the power to give the clergywomen difficulty if they so chose. (Slightly under half of both the men and women lay leaders in this study were between the ages of 40 and 60). As noted, middle-aged men in business positions with supervisory responsibility might resent any clergyperson's attempting to exercise power in churches where they are lay leaders, but this is particularly likely for clergywomen, and especially a young clergywoman. Middle-aged women may also be particularly resentful of a younger woman who is both attractive and engaged in pastoral activities in the church that they themselves might like to have been doing. Also, younger clergywomen may not be as adept as older clergywomen in knowing how to navigate around such hostilities and jealousies. The data suggest, however, that, in time, clergywomen do learn these interpersonal skills.

Over the years, it is the rare pastor who will experience no conflict

Table 7.1 Getting Along with Types of Laity* (by Clergy Age and Sex)

	51+		*40–50*		*35–40*		*31–34*		*30–*	
	W %	*M* %	*W* %	*M* %	*W* %	*M* %	*W* %	*M* %	*W* %	*M* %
Business executives	58	70	57	65	50	68	48	56	47	58
Middle-aged men	70	77	60	66	48	68	45	44	42	73
Middle-aged women	60	77	66	69	53	65	55	54	44	72
(N)	(89)	(300)	(99)	(208)	(127)	(103)	(142)	(77)	(113)	(33)

*% = percent saying they got along "very well" with this type of person.

with parishioners. In describing the kinds of issues that have caused conflict in their ministries, clergy most frequently pointed to theological or value differences between themselves and the laity involved. Fifty-three percent of the clergywomen and 40 percent of the clergymen cite this area as important in conflicts. Often these theological or value differences merge into power issues, for example, how much power the clergyperson should exercise in the parish, in what areas, and in what manner, as compared to the laity in the congregation. Also important is whose side the pastor takes in conflict over power between lay groups in the parish.

A slight majority (62 percent) of the clergywomen indicated that probably the fact that they are women played some role in conflicts and difficulties which occurred with individual laypersons over the years, but only 27 percent of the women believed their sex was an important factor in any such conflicts. Certainly, a woman pastor's age, experience, theological perspective, political and social values, leadership style, and personality, in comparison or contrast to similar attributes of laity in the congregation, may be a more important source of conflict than her gender. However, as several clergywomen noted, how much the fact that they are women enters into their occasional difficulties with laypersons is often hard to ascertain. Laity who object to a clergywoman because of her gender are unlikely to voice this complaint directly to the clergywoman or to those in the church who have hired her; instead, they often couch their objections in more acceptable terms having to do with her competence, personality, or style.

How does having a feminist perspective relate to conflict? Our hypothesis was that feminists would be more likely to engender conflict. Clergywomen, who by the Index of Church Feminism (see Chapter 4) are more feminist in their orientation, are indeed more likely than less feminist clergywomen to say that they sometimes have difficulties with laypersons *because* they are women. Whether this occurs because a strong feminist perspective exacerbates difficulties with laity, or because feminist clergywomen are more likely to recognize lay prejudice against women pastors is not clear.

Rejection by one's parishioners, for whatever reason, is painful. This includes rejection because of one's gender; however, being able to attribute an experience of rejection to the fact of being female may give women ministers some psychological advantage, as one clergywoman explains half-humorously:

> *There is one advantage for women ministers in the prejudice against women and the difficulties of breaking through that. This is that ordained women right now have a tremendous advantage over their male col-*

leagues. When they get the door slammed in their faces, or somebody gets into a snit at them, they can sit back and say, "Well, it is just because I am a woman." If you think about it, this is a tremendous advantage, because it immediately depersonalizes the whole thing.

Now, people's ministries are rejected for all kinds of reasons: Your hair is not the right color; your voice is not the right kind. There are thousands of reasons why people's ministries are rejected; and if you are temporarily in a position where you can tell yourself categorically that rejection has nothing to do with your intrinsic being, that it is just a matter of being female, that gives you a tremendous amount of freedom, and keeps you from getting terribly depressed and upset. But when three people in one morning say something mean to their minister who is a man, he has to take it personally!

The almost inevitable conflicts and misunderstandings that arise between pastor and parishioners raise the question regarding the degree that parish ministers should have confidants and close personal friends among their parishioners. Opinion is divided here generally, as well as among the clergy in this study.[2] Seminary and denominational staff frequently exhort clergy to develop their own support groups wherever they go, including developing support and feedback groups within the parish. Nevertheless, they caution clergy against being seen as "playing favorites" among parishioners. About half the clergy, but more men than women, said that in handling conflicts among or with parishioners, they would "quite likely" go to one or more parishioners for assistance or advice on how to handle the conflict (47 percent of the women and 59 percent of the men). Far fewer would go to anyone outside the congregation (with the exception of a family member) to get support or assistance in a personal conflict with parishioners or a church fight. If the clergy is not fortunate enough to have other professional staff in the church to whom he or she can turn, then parish leaders or friends in the congregation are sometimes not only the best option, but the only option. Having special individuals in the congregation who can provide a sounding board and support sometimes works out well for both parties, but sometimes it does not. The following three clergywomen's experiences of having close friends in their parishes to whom they went for advice and support are illustrative:

There was one couple about the second year into my ministry there who realized I was under some strain. We had an intentional covenant with one another, no matter what time of day or night that I felt the need to talk. . . . We talked about what it would mean for them to be that kind of support for me, that it might mean they would come under fire. You know

the old stereotype: "Don't make friends with anybody in the congregation." But we talked about that, and we talked about the good things that could happen and the bad things that could happen, and we made the covenant with one another. . . . But when I left, when this whole conflict thing came up (with the senior minister), they were very supportive of me, and it was difficult for them to stay in the church. He was the Vice Chairman of the Board and she was in charge of all the programming of the church, and they were both ready to drop out of the church. We had to talk this through, but they stayed.—YOUNG SINGLE CLERGYWOMAN

There is one woman in the church that I kind of feel that I can go and tell her anything I want to and know it would go no further. I know she would be sympathetic and listen and probably have something to say that I would need to hear. I have dumped on her, and she does the same thing to me. There are other people in the church that I can tell certain things to, but not everything. I do have outlets in the church, but I guess I am really struggling with that, whether that is a good thing to do or not.—YOUNG SINGLE CLERGYWOMAN

I have done what I suspect a lot of male ministers have done, and that is discover that you really can't share intimately with members of your congregation. When I first went to the church, I was needing a lot of support, a lot of nurturing. One of the women in the church and I became very good friends, and she wanted me to be her "best friend." She used those words. We got along well, probably too well; and I was too dependent on her, and she gloried in it. Finally, I realized it couldn't go on. Partly because, while I never told her anything I was to keep in confidence, we did talk about other things having to do with the church; and she spoke when she ought not to have. So I had to break that off, and that was kind of painful. . . . I think we have both done very well, because she still respects me. But we aren't nearly as close.—MIDDLE-AGED SINGLE CLERGYWOMAN

Finding a source of support and friendship is particularly problematic for single clergywomen, and especially for those in rural communities or small towns that do not provide other clergy or professional groups. We will come back to the subject of support for clergy. But at the moment, it is important to note that probably for all clergy, but particularly for single women pastors of churches outside of metropolitan areas, more attention and discussion needs to be given to how and to what extent clergy can and should develop friendships and support groups within their congregations.

Despite some problems of occasional conflict with lay leaders, difficulties with certain types of laypersons, and the dilemmas of establish-

ing friendships with parishioners, overall both clergywomen and clergymen report generally harmonious relations with parishioners. Difficulties which do sometimes occur between pastors and parishioners befall women clergy only slightly more frequently than men. Considering that these women have far less experience in parish ministry than the men in this study, these results should be interpreted as evidence of successful relations on the whole between women pastors and parishioners. These findings confirm those of recent denominational studies of women ministers that indicate that, once in the churches for a while, clergywomen are well accepted by their parishioners.[3]

Ministerial Style, Dress, and Address

In their study of a small town in upstate New York, Arthur Vidich and Joseph Bensman commented on the high social visibility of the minister in such towns: "People take an interest in his public behavior and his private life and judge him on the basis of his personality and how he 'fits' into the life of the community."[4] While urban anonymity may reduce the community visibility of the ordained minister, there is still considerable interest within congregations about the minister's style and behavior. Learning to relate one's ministerial style and behavior to the expectations of parishioners, without at the same time compromising one's integrity, is certainly an important ingredient in a harmonious pastor-parishioner relationship. Based on the generally positive relationships reported in the preceding section, it would seem that most clergy in our sample have learned to adapt style and behavior reasonably well. In this section we look at three aspects of style and behavior that contribute to or detract from clergy-parishioner harmony: leadership style, dress, and mode of address or preferred title.

Before turning to the data, further reflection on why style, dress, and mode of address are important aspects of the clergy-parishioner relationship may be helpful. As leaders within a congregation, clergy exercise authority, or legitimate power, in their various roles. Jackson Carroll has called attention to several aspects of clergy authority that are important in pastor-parishioner relationships.[5] He distinguishes between the authority an ordained minister has that is derived from the formal clergy office or status and that which is derived from his or her personal attributes. He further distinguishes between clergy-lay authority relationships which are symmetrical and those which are asymmetrical. The more symmetrical the relationships, the more clergy and laity share power in church affairs. In asymmetrical relationships, either clergy or laity, but typically clergy, have more power than the other. If there has been a trend in recent years, it seems to be towards more

symmetrical relationships in the church and in American society more generally. Finally, Carroll notes that the amount and kind of authority that the ordained minister exercises is to some extent relative to the particular congregation in which she or he exercises it. That is, a pastor's authority is dependent, not only on his or her attitudes and actions in the congregation, but also on what parishioners in that congregation believe is the appropriate exercise of authority for their minister.

This subtle "relational" aspect of authority often gets expressed by the way clergy and laity agree or disgree over the issues such as leadership style, appropriate dress for a clergyperson, and the way he or she is addressed. How clergy and laity view these issues may be taken as indicators of a preference for either authority based on the formal clergy office (more formal dress and mode of address) or a more personal basis of authority (less formal dress and mode of address).[6] Likewise, asymmetrical authority relations imply a leadership style that is both more autocratic and formal (in dress and address) than the more democratic and informal style implied in symmetrical relationships. Symmetrical relationships, however, risk becoming ambiguous and conflict-prone if the areas in which clergy and laity each exercise authority are not clearly defined or at least tacitly agreed on, or if the pastor has certain atypical personal characteristics, such as a woman's body.

In the preceding section, pastoral leadership style was discussed as we considered the way clergymen and women get on with male business executives. How clergy usually go about making decisions in their congregations (on their own or by seeking the opinion of others in the church) is one way they exercise their authority. In her study of women seminarians, Joy Charlton points out that women may seek to reduce the status discrepancy of being a female in an authority position, which has been "sacredly" and traditionally male, by advocating for themselves a more participatory or symmetrical view of how they will exercise authority within the congregation. Charlton describes how women, in preferring the image of "facilitator" as opposed to "Herr Pastor," are in effect "ideologically reconceptualizing the ministry" as a means of dealing with the status dilemma:

> *If just being a woman in the position is challenging, they can reduce the problem by in effect saying "I don't really intend to take over the male authority position." They understate the authority, and in addition express it in a way consonant with more traditionally female styles of leadership. . . . [In this way] they are broadening and redefining the occupational status so that it includes the traditional expectations associated with sex status.*[7]

Although there was a range in the way clergy in our study depicted themselves on a ten-point scale going from one, "directive" (making decisions on own), to ten, "democratic" (seeking the opinion of others), democratic or symmetrical authority ideals dominate. For example, less than 20 percent of both women and men thought of themselves as usually somewhat "directive" in leadership style (scores one to four); and only slightly more clergywomen than men described their style as quite "democratic" (scores eight to ten)—43 percent of the women to 36 percent of the men.

Several clergy noted that their parishioners might evaluate their leadership style quite differently than they themselves did, for two reasons. First, their predecessor in the pastorate might have been either very autocratic or exceedingly laissez-faire in leadership style, making their present pastor appear far less directive or democratic by comparison. Second, laypersons may unconsciously expect different leadership styles of men and women and evaluate the same type of leadership style differently if the pastor is a woman rather than a man. This differential may be especially strong in churches and traditions where even laywomen are seldom or never seen in top leadership roles. For example, a black woman pastor of a black parish said that, while she would place herself on the democratic end of the leadership style continuum, her parishioners would probably describe her as rather authoritarian, or near the directive end. She said she believed this perception reflects unconscious sexism. That is, if a woman makes *any* input into a decision it may be regarded as unduly autocratic, whereas the same behavior would go unnoticed in a man. She described an incident in which she made a decision that nearly precipitated a major church crisis of authority when she climbed up on the parish roof along with the male trustees to see how much repair was needed, so that they could make some decisions about the maintenance budget. The trustees were infuriated at what they considered her autocratic manner, remarking that she "should have let *us* make the decision." If she were a man, she would have been expected to act precisely as she did. Her behavior would probably have been noted as rather democratic, since the trustees were included in the assessment and decision making.

In our sample, lay leaders tend to agree with the clergy's self-reports of leadership style, seeing their clergy as rather democratic on the whole in decision making. The data suggest that men as well as women are adopting a more democratic leadership style in the parish, perhaps to accord with more general cultural norms in favor of this style of leadership. From our vantage point, this can be seen as advantageous to women clergy, in that the more democratic leadership style, as Charlton's analysis suggests, is more consonant with appropriate feminine

behavior and hence may make the exercise of women's pastoral leadership more palatable to traditionalists in their congregations. From another perspective, the locus of pastoral authority is certainly clearer in the autocratic leadership style than the democratic one, and women may find themselves challenged in their leadership roles when using a democratic style more so than men. Nevertheless, no pastor is immune to challenge to authority. Research has shown that these challenges have increased in recent years for clergymen as well as women.[8] This suggests that differences in how men and women pastors exercise power in their congregations may not be overt, if indeed they exist at all. Both men and women pastors—and their laity as well—may at times experience some confusion as to how they should exercise their pastoral authority, and what such authority means, in this era of flexibility, informality and nonhierarchical relationships.

This informality is also apparent in clergy dress. Seventy-three percent of both men and women pastors report that they never or almost never wear a clerical collar outside of Sunday morning worship or other religious services. However, it should be noted that non-clerical garb cannot always be equated with a democratic leadership style. In judicatories of certain denominations, typically East Coast Lutheran and Episcopal, it may be the strong expectation that clergy wear collars at all public functions and while visiting parishioners, symbolizing authority of office, regardless of whether they are democratic or relaxed in other ways.[9] Indeed, the data on wearing the collar outside of Sunday and other services show strong denominational differences. Women and men pastors in the Episcopal Church and the Lutheran Church in America differ from clergy in the remaining seven denominations. While at least three-fourths, and typically over 85 percent, of the clergy in these latter denominations say they never wear a collar outside of church services, this is true for less than 40 percent of the LCA clergy (39 percent of the women and 30 percent of the men) and seldom true for clergy in the Episcopal Church (20 percent of the women and 6 percent of the men).

Whether or not clergy wear clerical collars, the style of clergy clothing is often of concern to denominational staff and to clergy themselves. At least one denominational study has put stress on appropriate dress for women pastors,[10] and a "dress for success" article for men pastors was recently published, urging clergymen to dress in conservative two-piece suits on all but the most informal occasions, as a means of appearing credible and trustworthy to those within and without their parishes.[11] Furthermore, clergy in our study were sensitive to what effect their clothing had on people. About 60 percent of the women and 50 percent of the men indicate that at least sometimes they consciously

alter their clothing in order to facilitate their ministries on different kinds of occasions and with different types of people. Denominational differences here were less dramatic, with the Episcopal and LCA clergymen and women not significantly different from clergy in other denominations. Disciples clergywomen were most likely to alter the dress to facilitate their ministry, and UCC clergywomen second most clothes-conscious among the women. American Lutheran and United Methodist clergymen were least likely to change their style of clothing (yet 42 percent of the ALC and 44 percent of UMC clergymen at least occasionally did so).

A good number of these clergy explained why they did or did not alter their style of clothing to fit the people or the occasion. For example, two clergywomen commented, "Appearance is the first thing people notice," and "How we present ourselves affects our ministries." Another woman explained: "If I dress not to be criticized, I can deal with more important things." Clergymen also made similar kinds of comments on why they were conscious of dress. For example, "I don't want clothes to be a barrier to what I am trying to communicate." Clergywomen were 13 percent more likely than men to be very conscious of their clothing. This is illustrated in the following woman pastor's comment that "I strategize every time I change clothes!"

Even comments from those clergy who never, or almost never, alter their clothing for events or people indicate an awareness of the potential importance of how they dress. A few indicate that they did not change their style of dress on principle. For example, a clergyman commented, "I stopped dressing for people a long time ago." Likewise, a clergywoman said, "I dress the way I like, and if the parishioners don't like it, too bad!" However, most who never or almost never dressed for particular groups or occasions said either they couldn't afford to do so ("My income doesn't give me the luxury of changing styles of dress"), or that the parish or community dressed so informally all the time that changing clothing styles was not necessary. Said one clergywoman, "My congregation dresses informally, and I dress as they do. To do otherwise would be stuffy." And a clergyman explained, "This is a very casual community. If I wear a coat and tie, someone will ask, 'Who died?' "

The majority of clergy are similarly flexible in how they prefer their parishioners to address them. Only 8 percent of the women and 13 percent of the men prefer that members of their congregations use their clerical titles alone or in conjunction with their first or last names. Clergywomen are more likely than men to prefer parishioners to address them by their first names (68 percent of the women to 48 percent of the men). Clergymen typically said they do not care one way or

another how parishioners address them. However, a number of women in associate/assistant pastor positions or co-pastorates pointed out that they do not care how parishioners address them *as long as* they are addressed in the same way as the senior pastor or any other minister in the church. As one clergywoman expressed it: " 'Pastor Karen' is fine if the congregation also addresses the senior minister as 'Pastor John.' " Consistency in the use of titles appears particularly problematic to Episcopal clergywomen in those dioceses where the clergyman is commonly addressed as "Father." The parallel use of "Mother" is not always popular with laity or with the women priests themselves. Hence, Episcopal clergywomen would typically prefer parishioners use their first names. Still they do not like the distinction being made between how parishioners address them and how they address any male priests that may also be in their parishes. Address can be as important symbolically as collars and clothing in daily interactions between pastors and parishioners.

We can make a generalization at this point. Although the majority of both women and men pastors opt for a relaxed, more "symmetrical" style of relating to parishioners and others, there is also an underlying strong concern of these clergy that they retain the dignity of their clerical status in such exchanges if only in order to have sufficient legitimacy and credibility to minister effectively to those they hope to serve. Clergywomen, whose credibility and legitimacy may be more in question generally, seem to feel more need to be conscious of how they and others use the symbols of their clerical status than do clergymen. However, even a clergyman who endeavors to introduce a very democratic style of leadership in a congregation unaccustomed to highly symmetrical relations between pastor and parishioners, may run into difficulty. This may especially be the case if, at the same time he is trying to change the mode of pastoral decision making, he is also presenting an appearance (through dress or mode of address) to the congregation which they do not deem appropriate for a pastor. Keeping some degree of consistency in the components of the "front" of clergy in their occupational role of pastor[12]—that is, being a pastor who acts and dresses in the manner expected by parishioners—is often a necessary presentation of self to ensure maximum credibility and legitimacy among many parishioners. One clergywoman, for example, recounted how she brought a church back "from death's door" (which sad state had resulted from her male predecessor's combination of informal manner and sloppy appearance) partly by her own strict adherence to her parishioners' preference for their pastor to appear in clerical attire at most functions and to "run a tight ship" as far as her involvement in church decision making was concerned.

This example again raises an issue of how far clergywomen can *in fact* deviate from parishioners' expectations of how pastors should appear and behave, especially since such women are already deviant from the normative appearance of a pastor as a man. It may also explain why there is actually very little difference between clergymen and clergywomen in self-reported pastoral leadership style, or in the way that laity view their styles. Women may find a democratic style more in keeping with a traditionally feminine style; however, where that style is not the expected one, they appear to be willing to adapt in the interest of harmony.

Getting Along with Other Clergy

(1) The Senior Minister

I think that sometimes in the first call for a woman particularly, paternalism really rises up. . . . The senior minister worked diligently at protecting me and trying to show me everything to do. With some things you have to take the risk of failing, you have to be allowed to take that risk.— CLERGYWOMAN

There were some conflicts that evolved between the senior minister and myself which were very difficult for me to define as to whether in each case it was a woman's issue, because he wanted to be so accepting, that he was accepting in a paternalistic, protecting type of way. For at least a year there were people coming to him telling him things about me that he should have told me, or he should have told them to tell me, that he was protecting me from. . . . I have talked to some other women who have been in the associate's position and also experienced this. Yet when we talk about it, we have to ask ourselves, "Is it simply a woman's issue or is it any associate minister's issue?" The senior minister's concept was that I was beginning to learn everything, and he had to show me the ropes . . . trying to help me along like he would have liked to have been helped, I guess. He maybe had a lower estimate of what I could do than I had. . . . I got some support at the time from one man who was an associate minister in another church and was having problems with his senior minister."— CLERGYWOMAN

For many men and women clergy in our study, an important person in their role set with whom they had to relate soon after they began their parish job was their senior minister. Although women are far more likely to be presently working as assistant/associate ministers, nearly three-fifths of both clergymen and women have worked under senior ministers at some time in their professional lives.

Most clergy report relatively positive experiences with the senior pastors. At least half the clergy of both sexes reported that "they and their senior ministers spent an hour or so discussing the ministry of the parish" on a regular and frequent basis. Most of the remainder said such a discussion occurred "sometimes." Although over three-fourths of both clergywomen and clergymen said it was rarely or never the case that the senior minister was "overly critical" of their work, clergywomen were slightly more likely than clergymen to believe their senior minister was overly protective of them, not giving them sufficient critical feedback. Thirty-seven percent of the women reported this happened "often" or "sometimes" as compared with 27 percent of the men. On a broader level, it seems the major complaint against the senior minister was that he was too laissez-faire in his supervision of the junior minister and/or would not or could not teach the junior much of value. Less than a fifth of the clergymen and women said that it was often the case that the senior minister made good suggestions on how they might improve their preaching, teaching, or counseling. Almost 50 percent indicated that they "rarely" or "never" received constructive suggestions from the senior minister.

Part of this relative absence of crediting their senior ministers with much positive impact on their own ministerial skills may be that the senior minister's method of relating was perceived as unhelpful. As one clergywoman put it, "The senior minister and I had regular meetings, but you couldn't call them 'discussions,' because he did most of the talking!" Another alternative is that the senior ministers were not perceived as good mentors to their junior clergy because they were not considered as competent in various ministerial tasks as the juniors believed themselves to be. Also, it may be that the senior ministers were reluctant to instruct their assistant/associate ministers too well, less these junior pastors surpass them in pastoral skills and popularity with the congregation.

"Threatened" senior ministers appear to be a relatively common phenomenon, according to these present and erstwhile assistant and associate ministers. About half the clergywomen (51 percent) and 40 percent of the clergymen say that at least "sometimes" their senior minister felt threatened by them. A number of former or present assistants or associates commented on the perceived threat felt by the senior minister. For example, one woman said, "I was twenty-eight; the senior minister had been in the church twenty-eight years." Said another, "The senior minister ignored me for the most part. He did not want an associate, he wanted to run it alone." Similar comments in this vein were also made by clergymen. For example: "He was on the verge of retiring. I was the young whippersnapper"; and, "The church of one

thousand members forced him to take an associate. He was always afraid I wanted his job."

Others attributed the threat they perceived they posed to the senior minister as part of the senior's general personality difficulties. For example: "He had mentally retired and didn't like people much," or, "He was extremely threatened by everything and everyone." Some clergywomen and clergymen felt that their senior minister was justified in feeling threatened by them, since they indeed were more competent. To illustrate, two clergymen remarked: "I was a stronger preacher than he"; and, "He feels very threatened by my popularity." Two clergywomen similarly commented: "My senior minister felt threatened because he was incompetent"; and, "We got along O.K. I did most of the work, he was kind of lazy . . . but when he found that I had mustered more support in the congregation than he was comfortable with, he would become very 'picky.' " "I know more theology than he would know if he lived to 100 years old. He was not too swift."

For the women clergy, the fact that they *are* women was credited by half as playing some role in difficulties which developed between them and the senior minister, but only about a fourth of the clergywomen felt the fact of their gender was really important. Even then it was not as important as other differences between themselves and their senior ministers. Comments volunteered by some clergywomen indicate that it was more often the senior pastor's wife who objected to the fact that the assistant was a woman. For example: "His wife was a major problem. She was manipulative and hated me. We had nothing in common."

Since the senior minister typically has a major if not deciding voice in who the assistant or associate will be, one would not expect the fact that the junior minister is a woman to be a major negative factor in itself in any conflicts which develop. Nonetheless, the senior minister, though agreeing to have a woman as assistant or associate, may unconsciously carry stereotypes of traditionally feminine behavior, which, when not forthcoming, provokes difficulties in the relationship. For example, when asked for reasons for any trouble that occurred between themselves and their senior ministers, women were more likely than men to volunteer explanations having to do with their "assertiveness" which irritated the senior. For example: "He needed to please. He was a fence sitter. I am an activitist"; and, "He felt insecure, not a democratic person. He did not like assertive persons." It is interesting to note that difficulties with the senior minister (as was the case with difficulties with laity) were significantly more likely to be reported by clergywomen with a strong feminist orientation to women's leadership in the church (by the Church Feminism Scale) than those clergywomen with a weaker or non-feminist perspective. The more feminist clergywomen

were particularly more apt to say that the fact they were women played a role in the conflicts or difficulties which developed between themselves and the senior minister. A strong feminist orientation either enabled clergywomen to perceive difficulties with the senior minister more clearly, or, in some instances, actually increased conflict between these women and the senior pastors.

According to both clergywomen and men, the most important factor in conflict with the senior minister was "personality, value, or style differences." Only a fourth of both sexes report that this factor was unimportant. This observation points to the importance of matching the junior with the senior on these factors whenever possible.

Another important reason for difficulties in the junior-senior relationship cannot be readily corrected by such matching—that of simply being in the associate or assistant position. Approximately two-thirds of both the men and women clergy indicate that difficulties inherent the associate or assistant role played some role in conflicts which developed; however, women were somewhat more likely than men to say this was important in problems they had with the senior minister. Such inherent difficulties for the associate or assistant include not having final say on pastoral matters, or being perceived by the laity as a lesser minister—as one clergyman expressed it, "the frustration in being second cucumber on the vine." A young clergywoman described her "associate pastor problem" in ministry to laity as follows: "People do not know what to do with associate pastors. The associate pastor can make a call, and they still feel they have not been called on by *the* minister, because the senior pastor has not called."

Age differences, our analysis indicates, may be very important in junior-senior clergy relations, especially for clergywomen. The *older* the clergywomen were when they entered seminary (and hence when they first encountered a senior minister as an assistant), the more likely they are to spend time with the senior minister discussing the ministry of the parish, the more likely to credit the senior minister with making good suggestions to them, and the less likely to say they threatened the senior minister. They are also less likely to say that the fact they are women entered into any conflicts which may occasionally have developed between them. This finding parallels that reported previously that older clergywomen have less difficulty in working with middle-aged laity. Being older seems generally to enhance clergywomen's ability to work effectively with others in carrying out the tasks of a parish minister. It also seems to reduce their threat to others who also wish to exercise leadership roles in the parish (that is, senior pastors and lay leaders). Perhaps an older, "mother figure" in the pastoral role is less threatening to lay leaders and senior pastors than a younger "profes-

sional woman" is, since the leadership of elderly matriarchs (especially in religious matters) is not uncommon in traditional systems and families, while similar leadership attempts from young women would probably have a far greater risk of rebuff. In terms of equity theory or "distributive justice," the investment that greater age implies in terms of experience and wisdom may partially compensate for the pastor being of lesser status because of her sex in the minds of some traditionalists. Hence, she is more deserving of their esteem than would be the case with a younger, less experienced woman.[13]

(2) Other Clergy in the Area or Judicatory

An important group within the role set of the individual minister is other clergy, either within one's own denomination or in other denominations. Clergy not only relate to each other as colleagues (and sometimes as competitors), but they also occupy the same status and thereby share common problems and concerns. Therefore, the possibility for supportive relationships with other clergy, or even joining forces to meet common problems, is an important issue. A study of ex-pastors who left the parish ministry found evidence of considerable isolation from professional peers on the part of men who left the pastorate as a contributing factor to their leaving. They reported having significantly fewer friends among other pastors than did those who had not left the pastorate.[14]

We asked several questions regarding relationships with other clergy, both in one's denomination and in other denominations, and (for clergywomen) relationships with other ministers' wives. They were asked how well they got along with these others. Additionally, as a rough indicator of the degree of integration a clergyperson has with other clergy colleagues, we asked about how many other clergy they talk with fairly regularly (at least once a month). Finally, we also asked about involvement in colleague-support groups with other clergy.

Very few clergy of either sex said they did not have good relationships with other clergy. Two-thirds of both the men and women said they got on very well with other ministers in their own denomination; and slightly over half (53 percent of the women and 56 percent of the men) said they got on very well with clergy in other denominations.[15] There were some differences between men and women pastors within certain denominations on how they got on with other clergy. This discrepancy is greatest in the Episcopal Church, where Episcopal women are over 20 percent more likely than Episcopal men to say they get on better with other ministers both in their denomination and in other denominations. In fact, there are only two denominations in which clergy women report getting along better than the men with clergy in

other denominations, Episcopal and American Lutheran. The reasons for this seems mainly to lie in the fact that Episcopal and American Lutheran clergywomen are not only more likely to report that they talk with over ten or more other clergy on a regular basis than clergymen in these denominations, but are also more likely to do so than are the women pastors in the remaining seven denominations. Since it is unlikely that clergy of other denominations would be more discriminated against by other clergy than are Episcopal and ALC women, the message here seems to be that getting on well with other clergy requires taking an active role in keeping open lines of communication.

In general, both clergywomen and men are more likely to get on better with other clergy in their own denominations than in other denominations. From one perspective, this seems understandable. Both men and women pastors probably have more structured opportunities to interact with clergy of their own denomination than with those of other denominations. From another vantage point, however, the possibility of competition for parish openings between men and women of the same denomination, given the difficult job market in some denominations,[16] suggests that women might get on worse with clergy in their own denomination than in other denominations. As yet, however, women probably do not pose a threat to the mobility aspirations of clergymen. Their numbers are too small to cause any reduction of interaction or collegiality with men on the grounds of job competition.

In fact, the women in this study were quite apprehensive about antagonistic reactions from male clergy in their denomination if a woman should get a "plum" parish more so than were clergymen. We asked what would likely be the reaction of male pastors if a woman were called or appointed to "the most prestigious parish in your judicatory as senior pastor?" Overall, 43 percent of the women and 24 percent of the men said that if this event occurred, the majority of male pastors of their denomination would be resentful, suspicious, or both. The only denomination in which women anticipated less hostility than did men was the Episcopal Church (35 percent of the women to 46 percent of the men anticipating resentment or suspicion). The finding can probably be accounted for mainly by the fact that Episcopal women priests are clustered in dioceses friendly to women, whereas more men priests in this study are drawn from dioceses which have few or no women, and do not want any! The denomination in which the highest percentage of clergywomen foresaw an antagonistic reaction from ordained men in the denomination—a projection partly affirmed by these men—was the United Methodist Church (59 percent of the women to 33 percent of the men). In terms of United Methodist deployment practices, this fear is understandable. Several Methodist clergy of both

sexes indicated that other things being equal, "plum" parish jobs go to the person with the most seniority in the region. Clergywomen are simply too new to ministry to have acquired the requisite experience. An appointment of a woman to such a position would be viewed as a violation of the reward system and an injustice. In denominations where competence is not equated so closely with seniority, or where seniority is not given precedence over competence, a clergywoman presumably will have a greater chance of obtaining a "plum" parish position without undue hostility and suspicion from her male colleagues in the denomination.

However, while competition for parish openings can be expected to increase competition among clergy in the area or judicatory, it may not create more competition between the sexes than it does among clergy of the same sex. Clergymen may be more able to reduce pangs of jealousy in seeing a woman given the top parish position in their area by rationalizing that she got it through "affirmative action," than if a man obtained this position. Both clergymen and women may use their own sex as a comparative reference group in determining whether they are better or worse off.[17] In fact, other data discussed from this study suggests that same-sex comparisons with other clergy are probably more typical than cross-sex comparisons. Women are probably still too marginal to the profession of ministry to be used by clergymen as reference individuals in judging their own career progress; and women may be as likely to compare themselves to those who are in "the same boat," that is, to other women. Given the previously discussed inequity in salary between women and men pastors with similar experience, and the greater anticipated difficulties women will have in moving from entry level positions than men, there is a far greater likelihood that clergywomen will feel "relatively deprived" in comparing themselves to clergymen than vice versa. However, the woman who too easily (or too quickly) obtains a top pastoral position may find herself the butt of resentful feelings from both men and women clergy of her denomination. For example, a black clergywoman described what happened when she was made pastor of the largest black church of her denomination in the region soon after she had been ordained. She found herself the target of hostility, not only from black clergymen in her denomination, but also from white clergywomen, who were typically in smaller churches and/or poorer paying positions.

While competition and jealousies no doubt exist between clergywomen and men within and between denominations, overall the situation seems to be one of good professional and collegial relations between the two groups. Nevertheless, it may well be that these positive relations between men and women occur mostly in professional capacities,

denominational meetings, and perhaps, clergy support/study groups, rather than on a more purely social or informal basis. That this is the case is suggested by the fact that over half the clergywomen said they got on at best satisfactorily with other ministers' wives.[18] For most of the respondents, "satisfactorily" was checked only because the clergywomen seldom came in contact with clergy wives. Several of the clergywomen who said they got on very well with ministers' wives indicated that this was because they took special efforts to do so. A number of clergywomen also mentioned that their good relations with the clergy wives occurred because they were once non-ordained ministers' wives themselves, and hence better understood how to interact with these women. A couple of women pastors married to nonclergy spouses commented that clergy wives may have as much or more difficulty with "what to do with the male spouse of ordained persons" (as one put it) at clergy social functions.

Slightly over half of the women are members of colleague, professional, or interest groups composed predominantly or only of women. Three-fifths (61 percent) of the clergywomen believe that women pastors should join or establish such groups, mostly for personal support and sharing of professional concerns related to being a woman in the ordained ministry. Women who are opposed to or ambivalent about joining such groups primarily indicated either that this was because they feel that excluding men is "isolating" and wrong, or simply that they find support and sharing in mixed sex groups more valuable. Others indicated that the mechanics of trying to get clergywomen to meet together or with other professional women could be more effort than it was worth, or even than was possible, where travel, time, and money are considerable factors in coming together.

Clergywomen in the Disciples of Christ are most likely to be presently members of an all-woman professional support or interest group (77 percent). Those in the Presbyterian Church U.S. and the American Lutheran Church are least likely to be members of such groups (21 percent and 32 percent respectively). Location and the accompanying ease or difficulty of assembling clergy and other professional women is probably a major explanatory factor: clergywomen in the Disciples are least likely among the several denominations to be serving churches in rural areas (only 18 percent), while PCUS and ALC women are most likely to be in such areas (57 percent and 44 percent respectively).

A dilemma is indicated in these differences. While it may be more difficult to bring together women in rural churches—so difficult that it is rarely done—it is precisely these women (especially if they are young and single) who are in most need of the support of other women clergy. In fact, a number of clergywomen who were only lukewarm about the

value of such women's groups indicated that they had sufficient nearby women friends in the parish ministry and other social-service-related occupations with whom they could interact informally. Nevertheless, they realized that such groups would probably be very important for women in rural pastorates, for women who are strangers to a particular region, and especially for women who are new to the parish ministry altogether.

Quite a few clergywomen expressed the conviction that experienced women pastors should make an effort to reach out to provide support, assistance, and advice to women who are in their first pastorates. Such help is neither always forthcoming nor is it always accepted. Some clergywomen no doubt are "queen bees" who do not relish the thought of other younger clergywomen moving into "their" territory. Also, there are reports that efforts of experienced women pastors to offer friendship and assistance to newly ordained women have been rebuffed in some instances, apparently because of the latter's own insecurities and competitive feelings concerning her more experienced sister. Overall, however, there is far more sense of responsibility among these women ministers for the support of other clergywomen (particularly those new to the ministry) than there is hostility or irritation at having any such demand being placed on them. (It should also be pointed out that most of the clergymen who were respondents in this study reported that personally they would try to be supportive to a woman pastor in their area. Fully four-fifths of these men would be willing to be a clergy supervisor to a woman seminarian or intern in their church.)

Possibly as a combination of competition with other clergy and/or lack of clergy colleagues with whom they could speak frankly, a good number of both men and women clergy, but especially women, said they were able to obtain support from therapists, counselors, seminary professors, former seminary classmates, or other clergy friends who lived at a distance. It seems that the telephone can become an important instrument in providing support and reducing isolation for many clergywomen, providing of course they have some supportive colleagues to whom they can turn.

(3) Clergy Integration into the Professional Network and Formal Organization of the Judicatory

Despite the fact that women clergy tend to have been in their present judicatories a shorter time than clergymen (75 percent of the women to 40 percent of the men have been in their present judicatories seven years or less), they are at least as well integrated into the social and professional network of the clergy in their judicatories as the ordained

men are. Whether this situation is because women are inclined to be more social than men, whether it is because they have graduated more recently than most of the men from seminaries where the value of establishing peer relationship has been more heavily stressed than a generation ago, or whether it is because judicatory executives and clergymen are taking special care to incorporate new women pastors into the life of the judicatory—or some combination of such possibilities—these women pastors generally talk to slightly more other clergy regularly per month than men pastors; 56 percent of the women compared with 43 percent of the men report talking to over ten other clergy regularly (with Episcopal and ALC clergywomen being the most social in this regard as indicated previously.) Also, although two-thirds of both the men and women clergy belong to clergy support/study groups, the women were 9 percent more likely to be a member of such groups than the men. Furthermore, clergywomen are about equal to clergymen in being incorporated into the formal power structure of the judicatory; only around 10 percent of these clergy have never been a member of a judicatory commission or committee, and 76 percent of the women and 73 percent of the men are currently members of such a commission or committee.

Though women may anticipate a bit more negative impact from judicatory executives on their careers than clergymen, they are generally as happy with their *present* judicatory executives as men are, and seem to receive equal time and attention from these executives. On the average, they talk with the executive of their judicatory (that is, bishop, conference minister, executive presbyter, area minister) as often as do men; for example, 47 percent of both men and women pastors had talked with their judicatory executives three or more times in the two-month period preceding this study. Likewise, there is no difference between women and men clergy in how well they know their executive, or how supportive or helpful this executive has been to them in professional or ministerial career concerns, problems with their churches, or personal matters. Fifty-seven percent of the women and 63 percent of the men said they knew their judicatory executive at least "quite well" (about a third of these men and women said they knew the executive "very well"). Lutheran clergy, both men and women, reported knowing their bishop least well of all the denominations, probably because Lutheran bishops are in charge of much larger geographical areas typically than is true of executives in most other denominations. (This last finding would have perhaps also obtained for Methodist clergy if they had been restricted to answering how well they knew their bishop rather than the bishop *or* the district superintendent.) Presbyterian U.S. clergy (especially clergywomen) were the most likely of all

denominations to say they knew their executive very well personally. The PCUS "cousin system" described earlier obviously extends to integrating clergy not only well with one another in a presbytery but also with their executives.

Clergy were most likely to credit their executive in helping them with professional or ministerial career concerns. (The executive was "quite helpful" for 58 percent of the women and 42 percent of the men.) In contrast, 31 percent of the women and 30 percent of the men said their executive was "quite helpful" on problems with their churches, and only 21 percent of the women and 23 percent of the men said their executive had been "quite helpful" to them in personal matters. It is seldom the case that the executive was reported not to be helpful, but more that the executive was not asked for help in these latter two areas as much as in the first. While in large part due to the clergy's feeling that they have no problems in their church or in their personal lives which would be benefitted by consultation, it is also difficult to take personal or church problems to the person who is also to some extent their judge, and who can reward or punish them through giving or withholding support for their professional careers.[19]

Clergy were asked how likely they would be to turn to their denominational judicatory executive for advice or assistance in resolving a church fight or a conflict between themselves and parishioners. While two-thirds could envision at least "some possibility" of calling in the executive, only a third indicated they would be "quite likely" to discuss the situation with their executive should it arise. The remaining one-third of both the men and women said they were "unlikely" to bring matters of church conflict to the attention of the judicatory executive. Some further commented that they would only tell the executive if the conflict was very serious. As for less than crisis-proportion difficulties and conflicts within the congregation, to quote one clergywoman: "Never let the bishop know if you are having a problem!"

Whatever assistance the judicatory executive was or was not able (or allowed) to provide in resolving congregational and personal problems of clergy, clergywomen were 16 percent more likely than clergymen to report that their executive had been "quite helpful" in their professional career concerns. Across denominations, this difference favoring clergywomen (or not differing significantly from men) was most pronounced in the Episcopal and American Lutheran Church, where Episcopal clergywomen were 16 percent more likely, and ALC clergywomen 19 percent more likely, to report their executive as "quite helpful" than the clergymen in these denominations. Although these Episcopal and ALC clergywomen did not speak more frequently to the executive than the other clergywomen or men, they tend to know more

clergy to talk with on a regular basis. Conceivably, they are adept at using the power/influence structure in their denominations more effectively than their counterparts; or their outgoing manner makes them more appealing to the executives; or these women's judicatory executives themselves have taken more trouble to help the women professionally than is the case for men, and they are concerned that the women have good support networks with other clergy.

Of course, there is always the possibility that, no matter how hard judicatory executives may try, given the poor job market or particular job requirements of clergy, they simply may not be able to provide much help in clergy career concerns. However, our data certainly indicate that clergywomen are typically as well integrated into their judicatories as are clergymen. Despite some frustrations with getting the amount and kind of advice and support from professional colleagues they may need and want, clergywomen are in large measure supported and feel supported by other clergy and laity.

Summary

We have examined a variety of relationships the clergy have with members of their role set. Although both women and men pastors get on well generally with their parishioners, a fact of parish life is that conflicts and disagreements are endemic. Clergy will not be able to avoid having at least some problems with laity. Like the men, the majority of clergywomen got on at least satisfactorily with all types of laity. However, the types that gave them the most trouble were businessmen and executives and middle-aged men and women. A democratic leadership style appears to be useful for both clergymen and clergywomen in maintaining harmonious relations with businessmen and executives, who probably expect to have some decision making power in any organization to which they belong. Increased years of living appears also to be especially beneficial to clergywomen in getting along with laity who fall into these three categories.

Laypersons can be a good and important source of personal support to clergy in their parishes and in ministry generally. There are always some potential difficulties in using parishioners as best friends and confidantes, but creating a group of supportive individuals in the parish can be an effective means of ministering to a congregation and to oneself. Other clergy in the community, both of one's own denomination and others, are also potential sources of personal and professional support. Clergywomen seem as able to obtain such colleague support as clergymen, even though the former have typically been in their judicatories and in the parish ministry a far shorter time. Judicatory executives also appear to be supportive to those clergywomen, some-

times even slightly more helpful to the women than to the men in their charge. Clergywomen may encounter resentment from clergy wives, and also from other male and female clergy, but especially if they are seen as obtaining positions or other rewards for which the others believe they are not qualified (or not as justified in receiving as these others would be).

All in all, however, relations with professional colleagues are good for clergywomen. Even complaints about present or former senior ministers are not unduly skewed by the sex of the current or erstwhile assistant or associate minister. Clergywomen acknowledge that the fact they are women probably enters to some degree in misunderstandings and conflicts with laity and with senior pastors. They do not, however, perceive their gender to be as important as other differences between themselves and their role-partners among laity and clergy, such as value, style, theological, and personality differences. Also, the assistant or associate ministerial status, regardless of the sex of the person filling it, can create problems both in ministering to laypersons and to one's own sense of autonomy and competency.

On the whole, these men and women clergy seem to be opting for symmetrical relations between themselves and their parishioners. They tend to avoid clerical garb outside of church services, do not mind if their parishioners call them by their first names, and see their style as somewhat democratic in the way they try to make decisions in the church. However, this rather relaxed style of ministry and reciprocal role relations with parishioners do not connote necessarily a laissez-faire style of operating. On the contrary, both clergy men and women are very intentional about their ministerial style, and many change their dress and, perhaps, demeanor to produce a good impression on people in ways which will facilitate, rather than block, their ministry. Women, to some extent, appear to take more care in how they present themselves as clergy because of their atypical gender as a cleric. Both men and women clergy are always to some degree constrained in their appearance and behavior by the expectations of laity, but women clergy may find that they have to be somewhat more conforming in behavior and appearance than men clergy in order to expedite their ministry with laypersons in their congregations.