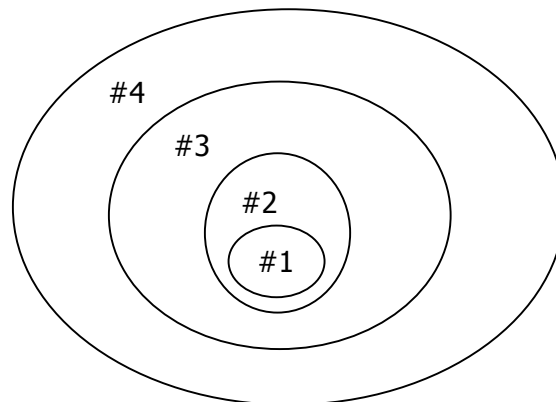


The Shape of the Parish: An Exercise

I want to begin by asking you to complete an exercise. My experience is that it provides the base you will need to understand and use the model. This is an assessment of your parish. Please follow the steps below:

1. Using the circles below -- in circle #2 put your parish's average adult Sunday attendance. Be sure to include all acts of corporate worship from Saturday evening through Sunday evening. For the most part these are the people you see frequently and regularly. They may range from weekly to every few weeks in their participation in the Eucharist.
2. In circle #3 first put the parish's adult attendance at Christmas or Easter.
 - Then subtract the number you have placed in circle #2. Put the result in circle #3
 - This makes up those people who related to the church primarily through the major holidays; also possibly through family occasions such as baptisms, weddings and burials.
3. In circle #4 -- you will not place a number here. Instead, make a few specific notes of ways in which people relate to the parish but don't ever attend the regular corporate worship of the church (may come to worship related to the occasional family obligation). It may be people who are connected through family who are members or because they are part of a group that makes use of the property or are in some way served by the parish, etc. You may be able to name some of these people.
4. In circle #1 -- write the number of those that you see as having a deep, mature faith & practice.
5. Then subtract that number from what you have in circle #2. Place that number in circle # 2 in place of the earlier number.



The numbers now in the various circles represent "the shape of the parish". Explore ways to relate what you've done in the exercise with the one page handout on the model.

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For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Ascension Press, late 2006