

Pastoral de Conjunto: Some considerations toward a spirituality ¹
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Pastoral de conjunto is an expression used by people involved in Hispanic ministry in the United States and in Latin America. Unknown among most English-speaking Christian communities, the expression leads to misunderstanding for many pastoral ministers. This does not mean scholars have ignored the theological and pastoral foundations of the term.² However, when asked what pastoral de conjunto means one is hard pressed to find an answer beyond the description of team ministry. A dense fog of ambiguity hangs over the meaning of this term.

This article attempts to share observations and to explore the notion of pastoral de conjunto as a way of being Church, what Paul calls the “body of Christ” (1 Cor 12: 12, 27), by examining its nature from the perspective of spirituality. We will examine three considerations for understanding pastoral de conjunto as the fruit of a spirituality of communion.

What is pastoral de conjunto?

The term pastoral de conjunto has its roots in the biblical experience of Church as communion. As a response to the call of the Second Vatican Council, the Latin American episcopal conferences in Medellin (1968) and Puebla (1979) emphasized “Church as communion” in their documents. The Church in the United States picked up on the theme of communion with the Encuentro processes (1972, 1975, 1985) and the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry (1987).³ The notion of pastoral de conjunto as a way of being communion is the gift of the U. S. Hispanic faith community to the whole Church. Before this gift can be received, one must know what is being given.⁴

The definition of the term eludes the average reader for it is vague and not easy to

translate. As already implied, some mistakenly interpret pastoral de conjunto as another way to describe “team ministry” or collaborative effort among pastoral ministers, groups, and organizations.⁵ The United States bishops define pastoral de conjunto as:

the harmonious coordination of all the elements of the pastoral ministry with the actions of the pastoral ministers and structures in view of a common goal: the Kingdom of God. It is not only a methodology, but the expression of the essence and mission of the Church, which is to be and to make communion.⁶

Even though it is clearly stated that it is not only a methodology, the idea of “organized pastoral planning” with goals and objectives is a dimension of pastoral de conjunto. Evangelization at any level requires “harmonious coordination” of analysis, planning, and evaluation. The problematic tendency of reducing pastoral de conjunto to a mere method turns programs into ends in themselves, forgetting that human beings have feelings, ideas, and dreams that are part of the process of evangelization. All come with their particular gifts.⁷ People are overcome by sterile pastoral methods, exaggerated work ethic, emphasis on control and diminishment of creativity, and the tyranny of the agenda that manipulates persons as objects, not subjects of their historical and ecclesial destinies. Those who control are often tempted to believe in their own self-sufficiency – not in the Spirit – for evangelizing and for creating community. Taken to an extreme, the pastoral method becomes a matter of no longer building God’s Church, but their Church.

One manner to view pastoral de conjunto is that of a “dynamic” and “effort.” Citing the sources from Vatican II, Medellín defines the term as a “ferment” in society. “It is to be a leaven and, as it were, the soul of human society in its renewal by Christ and transformation into the family of God.”⁸ A spirit and vision underscore the term. We can understand the term if we see it as a reflection of the pastoral objective.

As made clear in the definition, the objective of pastoral de conjunto is to be a community of faith, collaborating with the Spirit of God in bringing about the reign of God.⁹ The Church is reminded of this goal—a kingdom of truth, life, holiness, grace, justice, love,

and peace— when it celebrates the feast of Christ the King.¹⁰ The reign of God, to which the beatitudes point, serves as the focal point for all Christian activity.

How might we define pastoral de conjunto? Inspired by a spirituality of communion, pastoral de conjunto is an organized pastoral dynamic of faith-in-action by all believers (*sensus fidelium*) and the magisterium toward the common objective of building together the City of God. Pastoral de conjunto is an expression of the “being” and the “doing” of the Church’s essential mission in the here and now.

Pastoral action and planning must be activity of true communion at all levels of Church organization, in ascending and descending order. This activity requires the skills of deep listening and prayerful collaboration with the mystery of the Spirit already dwelling in the heart of the inner person and in the community. In other words, pastoral planning must be linked to a spirituality and the mystery of God’s revelation in people’s lives.¹¹

Consideration 1: Pastoral de conjunto is a method and a spirituality.

Pastoral de conjunto, not defined exclusively as a method, but as an “expression of the essence and mission of the Church” that is to be communion, finds the practical side of ministry often overshadowing the contemplative side. A false sense of security finds a home with methods, the concrete, and the factual whereas the mental or spiritual tend to be more personal and private. Like left-brain and right-brain activity, methodology and the ideal of communion are usually in a state of tension.

The two dimensions of pastoral organization -- the practical/active and the contemplative -- historically have been at odds with each other. The story of Jesus’ visit to the house of Martha and Mary is often cited as justification for this division of polar opposites (Lk 10:38-42). Does it? Perhaps the tension between Martha and Mary does not represent two kinds of personalities opposing each other, but rather two aspects within the single self. We need both sisters because they both live in the same house and Jesus is their

guest and intimate friend.¹² We need both Martha and Mary, the active/practical side of pastoral care and the contemplative experience. Spirituality must inform pastoral practice and ministerial experience must be integrated into a prayer life. Indeed, some writers have already linked pastoral de conjunto with a spirituality.¹³ To have one without the other will diminish the quality of the overall “dynamic” and “effort” in bringing about the reign of God.

Before we proceed any further we need to clarify what we mean by the term spirituality. Like pastoral de conjunto, this term is vague and hard to define. Popularized and a lucrative resource for big business, the word spirituality means many things beyond the Christian notion of the word. Bookstores and libraries carry titles of spirituality – like Buddhist, Islamic, and Native American spiritualities – that have been written in the past thirty years.¹⁴ How is this term used for our purposes for understanding further the notion of pastoral de conjunto?

Little consensus exists for the meaning of the term spirituality. If we link the notion with “meaning of life,” the fruit of a coherency between one’s beliefs and behavior, then we see how other religious traditions can speak of a spirituality in light of their foundations.¹⁵ For the Christian, the life and teachings of the Nazarene found in the gospels serve as that foundation. Through the Paschal rhythm of dying and rising, Jesus’ mission was to create greater communion and to bring back into the fold those who were lost. He sought the margined – the sick and lepers, the unclean and possessed, the Samaritan woman and the gentile centurion. He formed a community to accompany him on the mission and the Spirit moved them into the world. Jesus showed the path of communion with Abba.¹⁶ Pastoral de conjunto is the contemporary expression of walking the path toward building the reign of God.

The term spirituality comes from the Latin *spiritualitas* and from which we have the noun *spiritus* and the adjective *spiritalis* or *spiritualis*. These words are used as translations of Paul’s use of the Greek words *pneuma* (*spiritus*) and *pneumatikos* (*spiritualis*) and are set

over against *sarx* or *caro* (flesh) and not in opposition to *soma* or *corpus* (matter, substance). For Paul the opposition or contrast is not between the immaterial and material, but between two ways of life: one that is guided by the Spirit of God and one that opposes the guidance of the Spirit of God.¹⁷

Christian spirituality, then, can be defined as a “style of life” and as the “art of conforming one self to Jesus Christ under the action of the Holy Spirit, the art of living the Gospel.”¹⁸ The “art” is the manner in which one shapes one’s life in light of “ultimate possibilities of existence.” By turning to the Gospels, the Christian adopts a style and direction for living. Since one cannot embrace the Gospel vision in its entirety, one makes a selection of biblical themes or values and lives them in an intense manner.¹⁹ The spirituality of Eucharist is an example. Or an individual or group may follow the inspiration of a holy person, like St. Francis and his emphasis of evangelical poverty. Christian spirituality is expressed through a variety of specific spiritualities in a manner similar to the universal Church expressed through the existence of local churches.

Far from being dualistic between the spiritual and material, Christian spirituality embraces all dimensions of human existence. Thus, we can speak of *pastoral de conjunto* that has spirituality of communion as its core or “*mística*.”²⁰ If the goal of *pastoral de conjunto* is the justice of the reign of God, then a spirituality of communion and harmony must inform the pastoral practice. The spirituality authenticates a *pastoral de conjunto*. Significant biblical expressions²¹ that nourish this spirituality are hospitality (flight of the Holy Family into Egypt), welcoming the stranger, migrant, and dispossessed, accepting those on the margins of Church and society (blind, lame, prisoners), all which express the inclusive reign of God: all are welcome. The unity of such a communion is not for any enclosed group, but embraces the extended family, especially the poor – “that all may be one” (Jn 17: 21). The spirituality of communion incorporates a sense of interdependence, not control, and difference received as a gift, not a threat (1 Cor 12:12).

Religious experience is always rooted in cultural situations. A spirituality of communion, of hospitality, of gratitude parallel the cultural reality of the Hispanic experience. Hospitality and communion, for example, arise out of the cultural value of respect for the dignity of each person, a love for family and the wider community, the fiesta and celebration of God's gift of life. Christian spirituality requires a listening to and living "in the Spirit." We need to meditate on both the Gospel message and cultural voices.²² There is always the danger of "quenching" the fire of the Spirit (1 Thes 5:19). A spirituality of communion, hospitality, and harmony finds expression in the behavior of structures and how people relate and work with each other. What kinds of behavior and skills are necessary for ministry grounded in the vision of *pastoral de conjunto*?

Consideration 2: Silence and Dialogue as components in a Spirituality of Communion.

Since the objective of *pastoral de conjunto* is to collaborate with the Spirit in the building of the reign of God, a kind of silence or attention is required in order to listen to what the Spirit is saying. The Spirit inspires the community to be Church by listening and entering into dialogue. *Pastoral de conjunto*, a kind of rhythm of relationships with the self, God, and others, must embrace silence and dialogue as components of a spirituality of communion. What do these components look like?

A. Silence as attention

For many silence is a reality to be avoided. We live in a noisy society. Homes are echo chambers of television sets and stereos. Few public places are available for quiet conversation. The value of silence and the quiet environment must be rediscovered as the means for nurturing the spirit, mind, and body. The fruit of contemplative silence is the deep awareness of attention, or what the desert fathers and mothers called "single-mindedness."²³ Far from being passive, silence is an activity that breaks down our superficial sense of self-importance for focused-attention. When someone speaks to us, our attention converges on

what the person is saying. Another name for focused-attention is love.²⁴

Whenever we celebrate the Eucharist, for example, God's attention is focused on the people gathered to celebrate the mysteries of Christ's life and teachings. This divine attention is total for God's love is total, and it is directed to each person within the community of faith. Yet, our attention as participants in the ritual are distracted and incomplete, for our love, is only partial. No wonder our liturgies are overworked and churches are noisy. The practice and rediscovery of the value of silence in liturgy and in our lives can help sharpen the "edge" of our attention and, through love, be focused on God and God's presence dwelling within the other person.

Finally, cultivating the value of silence in one's life will enhance the capacity to listen to the Spirit whose love has been poured out in our hearts (Rom 5:5). It is the Spirit of God who guides us in the building of the reign. The beginning of the building-effort begins small, within the local community. The manner in which pastoral ministers collaborate together ought to be the fruit of their individual listening to the Spirit. Silence of the heart is a beginning for a life of collaborating with the Spirit and for entering into dialogue with others.

B. Dialogue: trusting and searching together

Dialogue is the second component necessary for pastoral de conjunto and the spirituality of communion. Just as the Trinity is a kind of "dialogue" so too must the Christian community be a "school of dialogue."²⁵ Always striving to create conditions for an experience of being Church, pastoral ministers must communicate and share what is on their minds and hearts. If silence develops a kind of "attention", then from silence members listen with attention to what the other is saying. This is not easy. Judgments, prejudices, and false assumptions often derail the capacity to listen. This is why dialogue often ends in the tyranny of manipulation and the basis of trust – vital to communication – erodes away. Herein lies its challenge.

Integral to a spirituality of communion is the ability to seek the truth together. Each listens to the Spirit within the depths of the self and from that position shares in community. Emphasis is on how a group searches together. Dialogue in the context of pastoral de conjunto is necessary to be Church and to identify the larger truth which is the reign of God. What is important is the dialogical praxis of searching together.

Moreover, dialogue cannot be separated from the notion of silence. Like Martha and Mary, tension exists between the apparent polar opposites of being. The essence of communication is born out of silence in the same way music comes from and dies in silence. Sound has only a momentary existence. The psalmist's chant "Sing a new song to the Lord" is precisely the manner of living in a new way, allowing one's life to be shaped artistically by the word of the Gospel and sharing that sound in concert with others. Pastoral de conjunto is one such melody amidst the distractions of the marketplace. If silence and dialogue are components in the building up of the reign of God in love and "in the Spirit," then new approaches to structures for an experience of Church are required for listening to this Spirit.

Consideration 3: A pastoral de conjunto, inspired by a spirituality of communion, demands more communication and less structures.

The most likely place where pastoral de conjunto as a way of being Church will be experienced is in the local parish.²⁶ Why do parishes exist? The purpose of a parish is to guide the faith community to an experience of the living God.²⁷ Pastoral de conjunto opens the door to an experience of God through the community when individuals treat each other with respect and dignity because God, and not structures, is the center of all relationships.

A. Less structures

The fruit of God-centeredness is the proper love for one's neighbor. To speak of "less structures" refers more to a quality than to a quantity of relatedness. The rhythm of relationships and their communication must be primary to an efficient system. In other

words, those skills and structural realities – meetings, agendas, committees, projects, responsibilities, tasks – contribute to pastoral de conjunto to the extent they enhance the quality of coordination and participation (i.e., being Church) of those involved in the project or ministry. Liturgically, “drinking from the cup” is an expression of commitment to service that promotes communion and participation.²⁸

Thus, “less structures” means a diminishment for the need to control and to manipulate the community. Often, the structure, as already mentioned, becomes an end in itself rather than a means to fuller life. Like a wood chip bent around a non-existent center, this inversion on itself is a consequence of the misuse of power, a power not other-directed, but self-centered for inflating the ego’s sense of importance. Communication begins to break down because trust, now broken, once linked the relationships. For that reason, a reflective faith with an aim toward reform must be the kind of air a system breathes in order to have new life.

Reform must always have its origin in the ground of faith and openness to the guidance of the Spirit. People thirst for a spirituality that allows the opportunity to share and to promote greater communion. Even though a different ecclesial climate appears to be emerging, faith communities seek a model based more on an experience of democracy which implies many structures of participation than on clericalism and centralization of power.²⁹ Pastoral de conjunto aims toward this democratic style and challenges any ideology contrary to it. Structures and persons in authority at any level ought to facilitate, rather than stifle, faith communities toward an experience of greater communion with God and one another.³⁰

B. More communication

When we speak of “more communication” we refer to the bonds of disclosure with the self, with God, and with others. All three are essential components. As said earlier, the

practice of silence provides an environment for one to consult an inner authority, and from that sacred space search together for the common good, the truth, the inspirations of the Spirit. One never works in isolation, but in collaboration with the Church, the community of believers. When a spirituality of communion and praxis of ministry work together, pastoral de conjunto becomes a conscious style embracing the values of coordination and participation. Structures flow from the demands of this kind of spirituality. New structures require new asceticism.

Asceticism (askēsis, or “practice”) is a term Christianity borrowed from the athletes in ancient Greece.³¹ The practices or disciplines belonging to a spirituality of communion ought to influence how parish structures, for example, operate at the level of faith, not one of habit, but a “conscious and personally lived faith.”³² An ascetical practice of a spirituality includes a change in attitude (conversion) why things are done.³³ For instance, to attend a parish committee meeting requires an acceptance that there is a certain suffering in being together. Much of the suffering is the consequence of a dying self-serving ego. One attends a gathering not because one is bored and wants to occupy time, but goes because it is important to be there for others. Likewise, showing up on time for the meeting is a form of discipline of dying to the self and putting others first.

Attendance in a meeting offers opportunities for authentic love. Dialogue is one such opportunity where one listens with attention, trying to hear what is spoken and not spoken, refraining from judgments and making assumptions. At times, one must sacrifice profound ideas, even theologically correct ideas, for the sake of consensus in decision-making. In situations of conflict and disagreement, the burden of the cross must be carried by all. The commitment to dialogue, listening, openness lightens the burden of suffering. Once a truth is discovered courage is needed to stand by that truth in the way Jesus stood before Pilate. Jesus’ confronts the question “What is truth?” with silence. He answered the question with courage because in the silence of the night he shed blood in the Gethsemani garden. The

dark solitude of prayer is our garden where we shoulder our problems and conflicts. When forces fragment communion and create disharmony, individuals and communities find solace “in the garden” where they listen to the Spirit. In deep prayer one finds the courage to stand like rock against oppressive power structures, manipulation, and self-serving clericalism.

Conclusion

Silence is sacred time for self and group evaluation. The praxis of pastoral de conjunto involves a deep relationship of conversion of the ego-self wanting to turn its back to the source of life and communion. The praxis, animated by spirituality, values the manner of working together toward a common goal, and here the value of doing ministry as a team has much significance. Being rooted in God and listening to, not stifling, the Spirit as individuals and as teams give greater clarity toward a reality of collaboration and participation that are signs and gifts of the reign of God in the future. The gift of pastoral de conjunto, the way of being Church, is offered to the English-speaking communities.

Will anyone receive the gift?

1. This article is the summary of a conference given for the Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina, called “Fire in the Mountains,” at Lake Junaluska, November 12, 2005. Published as “*Pastoral de Conjunto: Some considerations toward a spirituality*,” *Revue de Misiones*, 13/1 July, 2006, 99-112.

2. J.-J. VON ALLMEN, *Vocabulario Bíblico*. Madrid: Ediciones Marolva, S. L., 1968, 252-253. J. B. CAPPELLARO, *De Masa a Pueblo de Dios: Proyecto Pastoral*. Colección Pastoral Aplicada 102. Madrid: Promoción Popular Cristiana; Movimiento Mundo Mejor, 1982, 132-135, 150-151. The term *pastoral* comes from the Latin *pastoralis*, meaning “herdsmen” or “shepherd” who cares for a flock of sheep or cattle. The *pastor* guides and protects the flock from harm. In the scriptures, God is pastor of the people (Gn. 49:24; Ps. 23:1) and the people are God’s flock (Ps. 79:13; 95:7). Jesus is the “good shepherd” (Jn. 10:1-16) who came to gather God’s flock (Mk. 6:34; 1Pt. 2:25). He guides and defends the flock (Lk. 12:32; Jn. 10:11) and leads it to salvation (Mt. 2:6; Jn 10:9; Rev. 7:17). To have Jesus as pastor is to have peace, rest (Mt. 9:36) and the fullness of life (Jn. 10:10).

Jesus is the “chief Shepherd” (Heb. 13:20; 1Pt. 5:4) in whom the fullness of understanding *pastoral* ministry is found (Jn. 10:11). After the Ascension, he delegates his *pastoral* exercises to his ministers (servants). All ministers receive their vocation and are responsible to Christ. Within the Church, *pastors* have charge to guide the flock toward unity

and peace. (Image of bad pastors: Eze. 34; Jer. 23:1-4). Doctrinally, the Church has one head, one pastor, Jesus Christ (Jn. 10) in whom is found security, peace, comfort, and communion. His pastoral ministry is delegated to others. Like a flock, the Church is a people gathered together and “each one is called by name” (Jn. 10:3). The Church is one because it has one pastor, one “chief Shepherd.” The image of the flock guided well by a good shepherd is one of the essential promises that nourish hope in this life (Jer. 31:10; 1Pt. 2:25).

The meaning of *pastoral* is expressed in a variety of ways. Pope Gregory I wrote *Cura Pastoralis*, a manual for pastoral care. One speaks of *pastoral agents* (*agentes de pastoral*), emphasizing the minister as a “subject” rather than an “object” of one’s destiny. The expression *the pastoral* (*la pastoral*) refers not just to a task or mission, but it is faith-in-action. It is faith in the resurrected Christ; faith in the Holy Spirit who fills the world with its presence and helps those who receive the Gospel; faith in the God’s universal and salvific will for all peoples; faith in not only the transcendent, but the God who is immanent in the world and in all cultures; faith that is operative through charity.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the United States defines the concept of *pastoral de conjunto* as “a pastoral focus and approach to action arising from shared reflection among the agents of evangelization (Puebla, 650, 122, and 1307). Implicit in a *pastoral de conjunto* is the recognition that both the sense of the faithful and hierarchical teaching are essential elements in the articulation of the faith. This pastoral approach also recognizes that the Church’s essential mission is best exercised in a spirit of concord and in group apostolate (AA, 18).” (U.S.C.C.B. *The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment*. A Pastoral Letter on Hispanic Ministry. December 12, 1983, no. 11.) Since the term *pastoral de conjunto* is first used explicitly in the Medellín documents, it would be interesting research to demonstrate a possible link with the French concept *pastoral d’ensemble*.

A. M. PINEDA, “Pastoral de Conjunto” in *Perspectivas: Hispanic Ministry*, A. Figueroa Deck, Y. Tarango, T. M. Matovina (eds.). Kansas City, MO.: Sheed & Ward, 1995, 118-123. The literal translation of *pastoral de conjunto* is “organized pastoral effort” with the primary task of evangelization by all the faithful and with the magisterium of the Church. As a method of dialogue and collaboration, it is an expression and a contribution of U. S. Catholic Hispanics of the model of Church as mission.

D. M. ZAPATA, “The Being and Doing of the Church: *Pastoral de Conjunto*” in *Visión Profética/Prophetic Vision: pastoral reflections on the National Plan for Hispanic ministry/Federation of Hispanic Pastoral Institutes*, S. Galerón, R. M. Icaza, and R. Urrabazo (eds.). Kansas City, MO.: 1992, 267-276 (Spanish version: 91-100). *Pastoral de conjunto* is the key to understand the *mística* of the U. S. National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry. *Pastoral de conjunto* is an umbrella-concept enhancing the three specific objectives (missionary option, formation, and evangelization) of the National Plan. All pastoral ministry in the Church is *de conjunto* which is the BEING and DOING of the Church, that is, its life and mission. It is not just working together, but it is the lived expression of the Church as communion. (This same relationship of “being” and “doing” is found in John Paul II’s *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 15.)

X. PIKAZA, “La pneumatología de los documentos de Puebla” en *Puebla—El Hecho Histórico y la significación teológica*, O. González de Cardedal (ed.). Salamanca: Éd. Sígueme, 1981, 305-324. The author does not employ the term *pastoral de conjunto*, but rather demonstrates the interrelationship of the expressions “in the Spirit” and “in the Church.” A result of the Spirit’s presence and action in the Church is the “mystery of life-communion-interiority-mission” (316).

CAPPELLARO, *De Masa a Pueblo de Dios*, 132-135, 150-151. *Pastoral de conjunto* is the organization of pastoral efforts at all levels of Church experience on the part of persons and groups toward specific goals. It is the experience and style of the spiritual life of a Christian community that is inclusive, listens, searches, selects, and lives God’s will. *Pastoral de conjunto* implies the virtues of faith, hope, and love “in action” (151). *Pastoral de conjunto* implies new structures where persons and groups do not work in isolation from one another, but in coordination toward common objectives. For example, a parish may choose as its overarching objective the theme “We are the Church.” All parish resources and programs, like catechesis, evangelization, liturgy, preaching, highlight this common objective.

3. The term *pastoral de conjunto* appears only once as a reference to John Paul II's inaugural address in the Santo Domingo Conclusions (October 12-28, 1992) 102. Medellín, Chapter 15, "Pastoral de Conjunto," cites LG 9, 13, 17, 32; GS 40. This chapter can be accessed at <http://www.ensayistas.org/critica/liberacion/medellin/medellin17.htm>.
4. *The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment*, 16: "At this moment of grace we recognize the Hispanic community among us as a blessing from God" (1). "In committing ourselves to work *with* Hispanics and not simply *for* them, we accept the responsibility of acknowledging, respecting, and valuing their presence as a gift."
5. Two fine resources in English are by L. SOFIELD and C. JULIANO, *Collaborative Ministry: Skills and Guidelines*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1987. Chapter Four is titled "A Spirituality for Collaborative Ministry," 57-70 and L. SOFIELD and D. H. KUHN, *The Collaborative Leader: Listening to the Wisdom of God's People*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1995. "A primary concern of both the church and its leaders, therefore, is hoping all people experience that love and achieve a deeper communion with their God. As that happens, they are moved to personal acts of love, reflecting the model which Jesus revealed" (34). This is a key passage that merits further development.
6. *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*, U.S.C.C.B., 1987, 28. The U.S.C.C.B.'s Web site alters the definition: "To develop a Pastoral de Conjunto, which through pastoral agents and structures, manifests communion in integration, coordination in-servicing, and communication of the Church's pastoral action, in keeping with the general objective of this plan." <http://www.usccb.org/hispanicaffairs/plan.shtml> (accessed 12/20/05). (Proper biblio).
7. SOFIELD and JULIANO, *Collaborative Ministry*, 11, define "collaboration" precisely as "identification, release and union of the gifts of all baptized persons." The authors say further that the "concept of giftedness" is a key component in collaborative ministry.
8. CELAM, *Medellín Conclusiones*, 1968, 15:9. GS, 40; LG 38. *Letter to Diognetus*, 6: "what the soul is in the body, let Christians be in the world."
9. JOHN PAUL II, *The Church in America: Ecclesia in America*. A Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, (January 22, 1999), 66 and 68. (Hereafter *EccAm*).
10. See LG 36 and the citation from the *Preface* of the Feast of Christ the King.
11. K. SCHUTH, "The Researcher's Role in the Church" in *Origins* 35/20, October 27, 2005, 329: "Though we may be able to do a lot of things for God, the church and the world, if we are out of touch with the mystery – if our faith and our life are separated, our existence is shallow, our words and actions empty. By deepening our faith, paying attention to the pattern of God's movement, we can become true contributors to the building of the kingdom of God on earth."
12. See L. FREEMAN, "The Eucharist and Silence" at www.wccm.org [accessed 12/21/05].
13. Liceo Alemán de Santiago de Chile, <http://www.liceoaleman.cl/2002/pastoralcala/pastor.htm> [accessed 12/21/05]. Mexican Bishop Renato Ascencio Leon from Ciudad Juarez, <http://mwcahm.org/articles.shtml> [accessed 9/9/05]. *Pastoral de conjunto* is described as a *mística* or *espiritualidad* by the bishops of Uruguay, http://www.iglesiauruguay.com/mensajes_obispos.htm. The statement from the Peruvian bishops: http://www.iglesiakatolica.org.pe/cep/docum/carta_pas2.htm.
14. R. ROLHEISER, *The Holy Longing: the Search for A Christian Spirituality*. New York: Doubleday, 1999, 5.
15. S. KAPPEN, "Spirituality in the New Age of Recolonization." *Concilium* 4, (1994), p. 33, defines spirituality: "not in opposition to materiality or carnality but to mean the manner in which humans transcend themselves and reach out to the ultimate possibilities of their existence. As such, spirituality entails both an understanding of the

deepest meaning of human existence and a commitment to realizing the same.”

See also *EccAm* 10, 47, 61, especially 73.

16. *EccAm*, 68.

17. W. PRINCIPE, “Toward defining spirituality.” *Studies in Religion*. 12/2 (Spring 1983): 127-141.

18. *EccAm* 29, 44. Christian spirituality is defined by J. H. NICHOLAS, “Que faut-il entendre par ‘spiritualité?’” *La Vie Spirituelle*, 139 (1985), p. 529: “L’art de se conformer à Jésus Christ sous l’action du Saint-Esprit, l’art de vivre selon l’Évangile.” See B. MCGINN, “The Letter and the Spirit: Spirituality as an Academic Discipline.” *Christian Spirituality Bulletin*, (Fall 1993): p. 3: “*Spiritualis*, the Latin translation of *pneumatikos*, appears 22 times in the Vulgate of St. Jerome, but it was not until the fifth century that we find the noun *spiritualitas*, appearing in a letter anciently ascribed to St. Jerome: ‘Age ut in spiritualitate proficias,’ that is, ‘Act in order to grow in spirituality’ (PL 30:115A).” The use of the word *spiritualitas* is in consonance with the original Pauline sense as well as with others like Gregory of Nyssa and into the thirteenth-century.

See also E. BIANCHI, *Words for the Inner Life*. Ottawa: Novalis, 2002, p. 28: Bianchi, Italian founder of the ecumenical community in Bose, says: “There is a constant that has accompanied me in this journey in Christian spirituality, and it is the conviction that *our life has a meaning* and that it is not our task to invent it or determine it, but simply to discover it present and active in us and around us. Once we have recognized it, we are given the freedom to welcome it.”

19. G. LAFONT, *Imaginer l’Église catholique*. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1995, p. 140: “Une spiritualité est une certaine manière de comprendre l’Évangile, une sorte de sélection et de mise en ordre des valeurs qu’il contient d’où résulte un certain style de vie.”

20. The document *EccAm* is a wonderful resource for a spirituality of communion in the American context. See also JOHN PAUL II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 43, regarding the need “to promote a spirituality of communion” as a guiding principle of education and objective for all persons and groups in the Church. A spirituality of communion consists of recognizing the presence of the Trinity dwelling within the self and in others. As a result, one’s brother and sister are a “part of me,” and I am able to share in their joy and pain in profound friendship. This identification enables one to welcome what is positive in the other as gift, and not as a threat. A spirituality of communion invites one to “make room” for the other, to carry “each other’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2), and to resist any attempt to dominate the other. Without this spiritual path, all institutions and structures of communion are only “masks” of communion that serve no or little purpose.

21. H. URS VON BALTHASAR, “The Gospel as Norm and Test of all Spirituality in the Church.” *Concilium* 9/1 (1965), pp. 5-13. Balthasar reminds us that the Gospel message is the test of authenticity for Christian spirituality. Although the concept of *pastoral de conjunto* is the fruit of the social sciences, it also embraces the Gospel’s teaching of hospitality, inclusivity, and serving the poor.

22. PINEDA, “Pastoral de Conjunto,” 122-123.

23. J. CASSIAN, *The Conferences*, 9, XXXV.1; 10, VII.1; 10, X. 2; 10, XIV, 1-3. See also *Writings from the Philokalia: On Prayer of the Heart*, translated from the Russian Text ‘DOBROTOLUBIYE’ by E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer. London: Faber and Faber, 1951 (1979) 25, 27, 31, 32.

24. *Writings from the Philokalia*. Commenting on Lk 10:27 of the great commandment: “this can be achieved by no other means than concentrating all the natural powers of the soul in single desire for the Creator alone” (25). See also FREEMAN, “The Eucharist and Silence.”

25. *EccAm*, Chapter IV, “The Path to Communion,” especially 33.

26. *EccAm* 41.

27. *EccAm* 39, 41, 68, 69. Jn 10:10. See BIANCHI, *Words for the Inner Life*, 146. “Christian life is impossible without spiritual life! The fundamental responsibility entrusted to the Church is that of leading its faithful to an experience of God, a life lived in relationship with God. It is essential today to reaffirm these basic truths, because we live in a time in which the life of the Church, dominated by pastoral concerns, has come to reflect the idea that the experience of faith is based on social involvement rather than on the discovery of a personal relationship with God lived in a community context, rooted in attentive listening to the Word of God contained in Scripture, formed by the Eucharist, and expressed in a life of faith, hope and love. Reducing the Christian experience to its ethical dimension is the quickest and most direct way to empty faith of its meaning” (29).

28. See H. NOUWEN, *Can You Drink the Cup?* Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1996, 109-111.

29. *EccAm* 56; see also 45.

30. The role of the pastor in the parish is to be a “promoter of communion,” “discerns the signs of the times,” and “animates community” (Puebla, no. 653).

31. K. RUSSELL, “Asceticism,” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, M. Downey (ed.). Collegeville, Mn.: The Liturgical Press, 1993, 63.

32. *EccAm* 73.

33. CAPPELLARO, *De Masa a Pueblo de Dios*, 150. In a static culture, asceticism or self-denial consists of a strict observance of the law and conformity to one’s duties. In a culture marked by dialogue, equality, participation, and creativity, asceticism and self-denial unite relationships and methods that further progress. Self-denial is an action of fidelity to the effort to create together “history” and the history of “conjunto” by choosing methods that favor harmonious development. Sacrifice is a stance of remaining open, going beyond the inevitable sufferings of the moment, and moving toward better possibilities. This kind of asceticism is the manner of conforming oneself to God’s will that our sanctification requires, not in an individualistic sense, but in solidarity with others. In this context, pastoral methods are more than means to an end, but they represent the condition of “creating space” for the action of the Spirit which guides and renews the Church toward fuller communion as the body of Christ. See also GS 24 and LG 4.