

*A Report by the Bishops' Committee
on Women in Society and in the Church*

October, 2001

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Part I: What We Learned - Major Themes and Issues](#)

[Part II: Suggestions For Follow-Up](#)

Appendices

[Appendix A: The Consultation](#)

[Appendix B: Breakout Sessions](#)

[Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church \(1998-2001\)](#)

Introduction

On March 11-13, 2001 the Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church convened a first-ever gathering of women who hold diocesan leadership positions. The gathering fulfilled a commitment made by our predecessor Committee in its 1998 statement, *From Words to Deeds*. In that statement, the Committee pledged to educate itself about the needs and concerns of women and how their gifts could be incorporated into church life. It also promised to explore how women could be prepared for new and existing leadership roles in the church.

In the spirit of *From Words to Deeds*, this Committee, chaired by Archbishop John Vlazny, sought to translate a commitment into action. First, the Committee conducted a survey of women who hold high-level diocesan positions to hear their experiences as a woman in diocesan leadership. A report on the survey was sent to all bishops earlier this year.

The Committee then convened the consultation and set forth two goals. First, the Committee wanted to hear and critically reflect upon the experiences of women who influence diocesan decision-making. We hoped to obtain important information about how to enhance the participation of women in church governance. Second, we wanted to obtain the participants' perspectives on several issues (e.g., evangelization of young adults, justice in the workplace) where women's experience and expertise is especially needed.

For two days we listened as representatives from more than 120 dioceses discussed their experiences as women in church leadership. Although we offered some initial comments during the consultation, we wanted time to ponder what the women had told us. Now, in this report, we offer further reflections to our brother bishops and to all church leaders. Along with preceding Women's Committees, we stress the continuing priority of women's gifts and leadership. We hope that this consultation and its aftermath will lead to a more effective voice for women in church decision-making.

[Part I](#) of this report identifies the major themes that arose during the consultation. In [Part II](#) we offer suggestions for follow-up at the national and diocesan levels, drawing on recommendations made during the consultation. We also include two appendices. [Appendix A](#) describes the context for the consultation, including key bishops' statements, and gives more details about the consultation itself. [Appendix B](#) lists specific recommendations that emerged from the breakout sessions, which were a significant part of the consultation.

Part I

What We Learned - Major Themes and Issues

The consultation surfaced numerous issues and concerns, but several recurred during the plenary sessions, breakout groups, and in informal conversations. We wish to highlight several of particular significance.

1. Collaboration, especially between women and clergy. Collaboration had emerged as a major concern in the survey of diocesan women leaders. The consultation affirmed its importance. In the surveys, most women rated their experience of collaboration as good to excellent, although their written and oral comments gave a more nuanced picture. In the area of collaboration women raised these concerns:
 - a. *Different understandings of what collaboration means.* The women generally defined "collaboration" as the opportunity for genuine input into decision-making processes. Sometimes, however, they experience collaboration more as surface cooperation or consultation. This lack of consistency about what constitutes collaboration can be frustrating.

- b. ***Exclusion of women from decision-making processes.*** Diocesan decision-making structures sometimes exclude women. Some women said that decisions had been made in their areas of responsibility without their knowledge or input.
 - c. ***Ability and willingness of priests, especially the newly ordained, to work with women.*** This was a major issue throughout the consultation. Participants felt that a significant number of newly ordained priests are not prepared to work with women as colleagues in ministry. Some had experienced a lack of respect. Others said that some newly ordained priests show an excessive concern for power and authority; some cannot accept women as their supervisors. Participants expressed concern about the psycho-sexual development of newly ordained priests, especially as it affects their ability to relate to women.
2. Justice in the workplace issues. Many of these concerns centered on women's opportunity to move into church leadership positions. A major issue is ***access to further education and financial assistance*** to pay for it. This is especially important to younger women and women of color. ***Mentoring*** and ***internships*** are other ways of preparing women to assume leadership roles. Informal mentoring is common; some urged that more formal mentoring programs be instituted.

In order to avoid arbitrary and unfair decisions, women urged that dioceses have personnel policies and a scale of financial remuneration that apply to all diocesan employees. Written job descriptions and performance evaluations for all, including pastors, are important. Some women said that they or their colleagues had hesitated to speak up because they feared losing their jobs. A clear due process procedure, in writing, is needed. Finally, women said that benefits should be "family friendly," citing maternity and paternity leave as one example.

3. Recruitment and retention of women of color. Eighty-three percent of the women who completed the survey of women in diocesan leadership positions identified themselves as White. Six percent were Hispanic and five percent were African-American. The composition of the consultation reflected these demographics. Recognizing the underrepresentation of people of color in diocesan leadership positions, the Committee made special efforts to attract more participants from this group, but with limited success.

Participants urged that renewed efforts be made to recruit and retain African-

American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American women. The difficulties of doing so were noted; for example, the church must compete with other employers who can offer more attractive salary and benefit packages. Educational requirements for specific positions need to be looked at and opportunities for further education should be offered. Several women of color said that racism is still evident in the church. Some had not felt welcomed by diocesan staff; a few had experienced discrimination or resistance to their inclusion on staff.

4. Canon law and women's role in the church. The revised Code of Canon Law (1983) opened up new roles to the laity. At the same time, the Code reflects an ambiguity about whether lay people can share in the power of governance, or jurisdiction. In *Strengthening the Bonds of Peace* the U.S. Bishops urged that we take a "fresh and deeper look at the relationship between jurisdiction and ordained ministry." *From Words to Deeds* reiterated this challenge.

Participants urged continuing study about what canon law says regarding jurisdiction. Specifically, what church positions require ordination? The remainder would be open to the laity, including women. In addition, participants urged continued study to clarify whether and how laity can exercise jurisdiction and in what circumstances.

5. Continuing advocacy for women at the national and diocesan levels.
 - . **National level.** Participants commended the efforts of this Committee and previous Women's Committees to raise awareness of women's issues in church and society among bishops and other church leaders, and to promote women's leadership at all levels. They urged that these efforts continue.
 - a. **Diocesan level.** While advocacy at the national level is important, participants recognized that many issues must be dealt with at the diocesan level. In the surveys, and again at the consultation, women frequently mentioned the key role that the diocesan bishop plays in promoting collaborative ministry and in modeling how to work with women as partners in ministry. When the bishop appoints women to leadership positions he sends a clear signal to pastors and other diocesan leaders.

Part II

Suggestions For Follow-Up

Consultation participants offered numerous suggestions for follow-up during the general and breakout sessions and on the written evaluations.

In organizing these suggestions, the Committee has linked most of them to the five issues discussed in **Part I**. Some of the suggestions call for action at the national level, but most relate to the diocesan level.

APPENDIX B lists additional recommendations that emerged from each breakout session.

1. Collaboration

- Evaluate seminary formation to ensure that candidates have the commitment and the skills needed to work with women.
- Continuing education for priests should address issues related to collaboration.
- The Women's Committee, in cooperation with other Conference Committees, could offer effective models for collaboration in dioceses.
- Look for ways to show visible support for collaboration. For example, open presbyteral council meetings to lay staff members, including women.
- Study the relationship between lay women and women religious. The two groups are often regarded differently and treated differently within the church.
- Share prayer and spirituality among diocesan staff.
- Encourage a positive culture rather than a culture of negativity.
- Work on reconciliation; some women have been hurt by the actions and attitudes of clergy.

2. Justice in the workplace

- Establish formal mentoring programs, especially mentoring of younger women and mentoring of lay women by women religious. Consider establishing internships.
- Provide financial assistance for formation in specific ministries and continuing education opportunities for lay women.
- Conduct performance evaluations for all diocesan employees.
- Provide equitable financial remuneration for women and men.
- See APPENDIX B for recommendations from the Justice in the Workplace breakout session.

3. Women of color

- Pay particular attention to women of color. Specifically, provide education and mentoring opportunities; include them as consultants to USCCB Committees and in gatherings of this type.
 - Make special efforts to recruit women of color for diocesan positions; review job descriptions and emphasize experience as well as formal education.
 - Sponsor another consultation solely with and for women of color.
 - See APPENDIX B for additional suggestions from the Recruitment breakout session.
4. Women and canon law
- Identify what church positions are open to the laity; make sure that women are considered for these positions.
 - Continue to study the relationship between jurisdiction and orders.
 - See APPENDIX B for recommendations from the Women and Canon Law breakout session.
5. Advocacy
- At the national level:*
- Make the findings of this consultation available to all bishops and other church leaders.
 - Hold another national consultation in three years.
 - Hold additional consultations with women of color and lay women who are not paid but who are church leaders.
 - Promote the formation of diocesan women's commissions and offices.
- At the diocesan level:*
- Continue to appoint qualified women to church leadership positions.
 - Hold consultations similar to this one at the local and regional levels; encourage all bishops to participate.
 - Conduct the survey of women in leadership positions in individual dioceses.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: The Consultation

Background: Key Events and Bishops' Statements

The consultation was the latest in a series of actions that the U.S. bishops have taken in regard to women's roles in the church. Specifically:

1. In 1992, when the U.S. bishops did not approve the fourth draft of a pastoral letter on women's concerns, the Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for a Pastoral Response to Women's Concerns issued the report ***One in Christ Jesus***. The report concluded with 25 proposals that were forwarded to various Conference Committees. Several of these proposals, e.g., those dealing with domestic violence, young adults, and marriage preparation, have been addressed by the appropriate Committee.
2. In 1994 the U.S. Bishops approved ***Strengthening the Bonds of Peace: A Pastoral Reflection on Women in the Church and in Society***. The document discussed women's gifts, leadership, and women's equality with men. A Parish Resource Packet was developed to help parishes and dioceses implement the document.
3. Following up on ***Strengthening the Bonds of Peace***, the Bishops' Committee on Women wrote ***From Words to Deeds: Continuing Reflections on the Role of Women in the Church*** in 1998. This statement included an expanded discussion of women's gifts and leadership and introduced a section on collaboration between women and men.
4. At the request of the Women's Committee, in 1999 the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA) conducted a study of women in diocesan leadership positions. The study found that women hold nearly half of diocesan administrative and professional positions and one-quarter of the top positions.
5. While the NACPA report confirmed that women hold responsible positions in Catholic dioceses across the country, it did not explore how women influence decision-making in the local church. What helps and what hinders this process and what can the Church as a whole learn from their experiences? To help answer these questions, in 1999 the Committee realized that a qualitative research component was needed to complement the quantitative component. It decided to gather a cross-section of women who hold diocesan leadership positions to listen to and learn from their experiences.

Planning

To fund the consultation, the Committee approached The Louisville Institute, which awarded a grant for the project. Chicago was selected as the site for the consultation. A planning group was formed that included women with extensive experience in diocesan leadership positions. The group met several times between March 2000 and March 2001 to develop the program, identify speakers, and assign tasks.

In the summer of 2000, Archbishop John G. Vlazny asked all diocesan bishops to submit the names of several women in their dioceses who might be invited to attend the consultation. Archbishop Vlazny emphasized that the Committee was looking for women who held key positions in dioceses.

Bishops submitted 378 names representing 128 dioceses, many more than the Committee expected. In light of budget and space constraints, the Committee was able to invite one representative from each diocese that had submitted names. In some cases a second representative was invited in order to enhance racial, ethnic, and age diversity.

Several women attended as representatives of their organizations: National Council of Catholic Women, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, National Black Sisters' Conference, Catholic Daughters of the Americas, National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, National Association for Lay Ministry, Las Hermanas, and the National Catholic Society of Foresters.

Survey of Women in Diocesan Leadership Positions

Although the consultation could not accommodate all the women whose names had been suggested, the Committee wanted to hear the experiences and insights of as many as possible. Therefore, it developed a short questionnaire which it sent in September, 2000 to all 378 women. The questionnaire asked about respondents' positive and negative experiences as a woman in diocesan leadership. It also asked questions relating to collaboration, mentoring, and sources of support.

The survey results were analyzed by the Life Cycle Institute at Catholic University. A demographic profile of respondents showed that 40% were vowed religious and 60% lay. The respondents held a variety of positions; thirty reported that they were chancellor. Most were white and well-educated.

The survey was critically important in identifying key issues of concern to women in

diocesan leadership. The consultation provided a forum for exploring these issues in more depth. A copy of the survey results was sent to all bishops and may be accessed at www.usccb.org/laity/women.shtml.

The Consultation

In addition to the women from dioceses and national organizations, attendees included members and advisors of the Women's Committee. Two former Committee chairmen attended: Bishop John Dunne, who chaired the Committee during the development of ***From Words to Deeds***, and Bishop Joseph Imesch, the first chairman of the Committee. Bishop Imesch also chaired the writing committee for the pastoral letter on women's concerns.

The consultation was facilitated by Sister Carroll Juliano, SHCJ, and Brother Loughlan Sofield, ST, who are well-known for their speaking and writing on collaborative ministry. Mrs. Dolores Leckey, senior fellow at Woodstock Theological Center and former director of the Bishops' Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women, and Youth, delivered an opening keynote that gave a historical perspective on women's issues in the post-Vatican II Church.

The first full day of the consultation (March 12) focused on the first goal of the consultation. Ms. Leodia Gooch from the Archdiocese of St. Louis, a Committee advisor, gave a keynote presentation based on the survey findings. Ms. Sheila Kelly, Director of Human Resources for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, helped to prepare the presentation. (See ***ORIGINS***, March 29, 2001 for the complete text.) Sister Juliano and Brother Sofield followed with a talk entitled, "Women in the Church: Future Directions, Future Challenges." Time was allotted for table discussions and "open mike," when participants could raise issues and questions.

In the afternoon, participants attended two breakout sessions, choosing among: Justice in the Workplace, Recruitment of Women of Color, Implications of Working with Fewer Priests, Women in Canon Law, Spirituality and Self-Care in the Workplace, and an open discussion on the survey of women in diocesan leadership positions. On Monday evening, participants had the opportunity to have dinner in kindred groupings, such as chancellors, school superintendents, and finance officers.

Tuesday featured a panel presentation by the three Women's Committee chairmen, Archbishop Vlazny, Bishop Dunne, and Bishop Imesch, followed by open discussion. The consultation then focused on its second goal and offered workshops on Evangelization of Younger Women, Bringing about Unity in the Church, Ministerial

Formation, Spirituality and the Workplace, and Violence, Economic Justice and their Impact on Women. Throughout the consultation, prayer, liturgy, and informal opportunities for discussion played important roles.

Committee advisors and staff served as recorders during the general sessions and workshops. In addition, participants were encouraged to complete an evaluation form on which they could offer additional suggestions and comments to the Committee.

APPENDIX B: Breakout Sessions

The Breakout Sessions were an important part of the consultation. The first set, on Monday, dealt with topics related to women's employment in the Church. The second set, on Tuesday, addressed topics of general concern in the Church and in society. The primary purpose of the workshops was to elicit a thoughtful discussion of the topic. Each presenter was asked to give a brief overview and then to facilitate an open discussion. These discussions resulted in ideas and suggestions for consideration by the Bishops' Committee on Women. At each session a recorder noted the major points of the discussion, which are summarized below.

Breakout Sessions: Women's Employment in the Church

1. **JUSTICE IN THE WORKPLACE.** *Presenter: Carol Fowler, Director of Personnel Services, Archdiocese of Chicago.* This workshop focused on issues of compensation and benefits for church employees, including just wage, pension plans, and differentiation of benefits based on family status.

Recommendations:

- Encourage dioceses to institute performance reviews for pastors.
- Address the issue of portability of pension benefits by encouraging dioceses to adopt defined contribution plans, which travel with the employee, rather than defined benefit plans.
- Develop family friendly policies (for example, parental leave and maternity benefits) that go beyond legal requirements and reflect the Church's teaching about the priority of families.
- Dioceses should communicate a desire to move lay salaries closer to the marketplace rate, even if they cannot fully attain that goal. Dioceses should establish salary schedules. They should also be creative in offering other benefits to compensate for lower salaries.
- Pastors should be expected to adhere to a diocesan-wide system of personnel policies and procedures for all employees in order to avoid

arbitrary and unfair decisions. Bishops, priests and other administrators should receive appropriate training for their administrative roles.

- Two concerns related specifically to women: (1) Many women, with excellent credentials, have come into positions that were previously held by men and receive lower salaries. Dioceses need to examine the justice of these situations. (2) Women need to ask for salary increases and adjustments as men do. Women are usually less willing to do this, especially since the Catholic culture reinforces the attitude that women should not ask for more.

RECRUITMENT. Presenter: Michelly B. Merrick, Director of Human Resource Services, Archdiocese of Baltimore. The underrepresentation of people of color in diocesan leadership positions has become a major concern. This workshop looked at some of the challenges of recruiting and retaining people of color, especially women.

Recommendations:

- Educational requirements, such as advanced degrees, can be a major impediment. Job descriptions should be reviewed to determine what education is truly needed. The language used in job descriptions can present obstacles. Consider using "preferred" rather than "required" and indicate that the diocese will consider a combination of education and experience.
- Low salaries are an obstacle to working for the church. The church needs to compete with other non-profit groups, which also seek to hire qualified people of color.
- Specifically invite people into church work through aggressive, personal outreach to professionals in communities of color. Create a welcoming environment among the diocesan staff.
- People of color still experience discrimination and resistance to their inclusion on staff. Consider providing ongoing cross-cultural training for diocesan staff, for example, periodic workshops that deal with cultural sensitivity.
- To retain employees, provide opportunities for further education, internships, and mentoring opportunities.

2. **IMPLICATIONS OF WORKING WITH FEWER PRIESTS. Presenters: Amy Hoey, RSM, Coordinator of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Lay Ministry Project, and Charmaine Williams, Pastoral Planner, Diocese of Fort Worth.** This workshop focused on the June, 1999 NCCB Study of the Impact of Fewer Priests and diocesan responses to that reality.

Recommendations:

- Publicize good models of shared ministry at the parish and diocesan levels. Identify what makes them successful.
- Reflect on the meaning of parish in the 21st century and the role of small faith communities in large parishes.
- Publicize the CARA study on fewer priests; people need to understand the situation and not be shielded from it.
- Dioceses should offer joint programs for the formation of seminarians and lay ministers, put more money into them, and support lay ministers in training.
- Encourage dialogue and study about the meaning of "vocation."
- Dioceses should set clear standards for lay ministers, specifying what is expected and what is acceptable.
- There should be more careful screening and monitoring of seminary candidates; seminary programs should emphasize psychosexual development.

3. **WOMEN IN CANON LAW. Presenter: Sharon Euart, RSM, former associate general secretary, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.** This workshop showed how the 1983 revised Code of Canon Law opened the door to women's increased participation in the Church. It looked at several current issues, including the relationship between jurisdiction and orders and the need for a theological perspective.

Recommendations:

- The theological community should study the nature of orders and identify which church positions require orders. The remainder would be open to the laity.
- The Canonical Affairs Committee and Catholic University could sponsor a summer workshop to familiarize diocesan leaders with canon law.
- Canon law should not be seen as an obstacle but as a gift that enables us to meet pastoral needs.
- When it is not clear whether a lay person can perform all the functions of a particular job, one approach is to hire the lay person for the position but include only those functions and responsibilities that can be done by the laity.
- Bishops who have appointed women to leadership positions should be affirmed. They can act as mentors to other bishops.

4. **SPIRITUALITY AND SELF-CARE IN THE WORKPLACE.** *Presenter: Helen Garvey, BVM, Director of Pastoral Services, Diocese of Lexington.* This workshop looked at ways to put God at the center of our work. It discussed the importance of prayer and creating a vision.

Recommendations:

- Lay people, like priests and religious, should be given paid leave in order to make a yearly retreat.
- Take a full day for a pastoral staff retreat.
- Have Mass at least once a week for staff.
- Prayer needs to be taught as part of adult formation.
- Provide sabbaticals for lay people.

5. **SURVEY OF WOMEN IN DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.** *Facilitator: Sheila Garcia, USCCB Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth.* In this workshop, participants were invited to explore some of the implications of the report on the survey of women in diocesan leadership positions. This survey, sponsored by the Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church and analyzed by the Life Cycle Institute at Catholic University, focused on diocesan women's participation in church decision-making.

Recommendations:

- Hold regional gatherings of women church leaders similar to this national gathering; also hold other national gatherings with diverse participation.
- Continue to gather this type of information; research contributes to our understanding of these types of issues; consider longitudinal studies.
- Develop formal and informal mentoring programs, especially for younger women and women of color.
- Assess the role and influence of presbyteral councils vis-a-vis staff, because presbyteral councils often have some significant impact on bishops' decisions.
- Include a course on collaboration in the seminary curriculum; place seminarians with pastors who are collaborative.
- The cultural bias (sexist) of some foreign-born priests needs to be addressed.

Breakout Sessions: Women in the Church and in Society

1. **EVANGELIZATION OF YOUNGER WOMEN.** *Presenter: Kate DeVries, Young Adult Ministry Office, Archdiocese of Chicago.* This workshop looked at strategies for recruiting, welcoming and evangelizing women and men in their twenties and thirties. It discussed how to involve young adults in parish life through personal invitation, listening, and support.

Recommendations and key observations:

- Many younger women are leaving the Church because of issues around sexuality, authority and male dominance.
- Young adults lack a knowledge of basic Church teaching.
- Young adults are critical of poor homilies, ordinary music, and lack of hospitality. Sometimes they feel patronized.
- Young adults need wisdom figures and mentors.
- Social justice issues are important to this age group; they believe they can make a difference.
- More competitive salaries would make lay ministry a more attractive option for young adults.

2. **BRINGING ABOUT UNITY IN THE CHURCH.** *Presenter: Joann Hillebrand, immediate past president, National Council of Catholic Women.* With NCCW's experience in the Catholic Common Ground Initiative as a starting point, participants considered practical ways to help bring about healing, reconciliation, and unity in the Church.

Recommendations:

- Make an effort to unite all people, not just women, and overcome unfounded assumptions that groups have about one another.
- Encourage bishops to appoint the most competent persons (lay ministers or deacons) as parish leaders in accord with Canon 517.2.
- Invite all women's organizations in the church to gather at the diocesan and/or regional level to work on issues of common concern.
- Promote more serious dialogue about gay and lesbian issues in society and in the church.

3. **MINISTERIAL FORMATION.** *Presenter: Sr. Ana Maria Pineda, RSM, Director of Pastoral Ministries Institute, Santa Clara University.* Workshop participants discussed the formation of candidates for ministry that includes sensitivity to women and to the multicultural nature of the church.

Recommendations:

- Seminaries should be in the local communities so that seminarians are formed by all the people of faith.
- Priests, deacons, and lay ministers should be given some educational opportunities together so that they can develop relational skills.
- The priestly formation program should address the unresolved issues that candidates from broken or dysfunctional families often bring with them.
- All seminarians should take clinical pastoral education (CPE) and do internships outside their own culture.
- All ministers should receive appropriate training that enables them to work in particular communities (e.g., predominantly African-American, Hispanic, rural).
- Communities should be helped to prepare for the priest who is coming to them.
- The Church should explore how it responds to gay candidates.
- Church leaders should educate themselves about the gifts that different cultures bring.

4. **SPIRITUALITY AND THE WORKPLACE.** *Presenter: Dr. Claire Wolfeich, Professor of Theology, Boston University.* The growing number of women in the workplace is a characteristic of both the Church and society. This workshop discussed the impact of the workplace on women's spirituality and how spirituality is shaped by work.

Recommendations:

- Women must ask themselves where their call is affirmed and who are their models for holiness. Women in the secular workplace can disconnect faith and work and still find models for spiritual growth, but for women working in the church this is more difficult.
- Guilt can be a trap for many women. We need models of spirituality--for women and men--that integrate humility, selflessness and justice.
- Women in diocesan leadership positions need a safe place where they can discuss difficult situations without breaking confidentiality. Dioceses

could offer a chaplain or spiritual director who is available to staff for confidential discussions.

- Women need to make sure that their identity is not too closely tied to work and to balance their primary vocation with complementary activity.
- Dioceses can promote peer support groups for lay ministers.
- Diocesan staff should be offered a list of spiritual directors and retreats, with paid leave for the latter.

5. VIOLENCE, ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND THEIR IMPACT ON WOMEN.

Presenter: Donna Hanson, Secretary for Social Ministries, Diocese of Spokane.

The presenter used specific stories to illustrate the impact of violence and economic policies on women in this country and overseas.

Recommendations:

- Catholic women must find ways to hear and respond to women who are most vulnerable, especially younger women and the poor.
- Catholic women must find ways to celebrate what we as Church are doing for women and to make our voices heard in society.
- The ongoing dialogue between pro-life and pro-choice women in Boston is an important example about the need to stay in the dialogue, even as we maintain our integrity on these difficult issues.
- An individual person can "Do 5": (1) Allocate five hours per month for direct service; (2) Read five articles or books or watch five videos per year about justice topics; (3) Give five minutes per week for systemic change; (4) Donate \$5 per day/week/month/year; (5) Invite five friends to learn about one's passion for justice.

Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church
(1998-2001)

Members

Archbishop John G. Vlazny, Chairman

Bishop Thomas G. Doran

Bishop R. Pierre DuMaine

Bishop Gilberto Fernandez

Bishop Curtis Guillory, SVD

Bishop Howard Hubbard

Bishop John J. McRaith

Advisors

Ms. Leodia Gooch, Archdiocese of St. Louis

Ms. Donna Hanson, Diocese of Spokane

Ms. Joann Hillebrand, National Council of Catholic Women, Diocese of Joliet

Ana Maria Pineda, RSM, Pastoral Ministries Institute, Santa Clara University

Ms. Nancy Werner, Diocese of Sioux Falls