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## FACTORS AFFECTING THE VIEWS OF BISHOPS AND PRIESTS ABOUT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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*The attitudes of bishops and priests toward Catholic schools are critical for the school's success. This article discusses a recent nationwide survey of Catholic clergy that measured the support of bishops and priests for Catholic schools, with a special emphasis on determining factors that affected such support. Overall, a high level of support for Catholic schools is reported by the majority of the clergy surveyed. Factors influencing that support include type and location of ministry, number of years ordained, and one's own Catholic school background.*

In *Mixed Messages: What Bishops and Priests Say About Catholic Schools*, O'Brien (1987), executive director of the Chief Administrators of Catholic Education, a division of the National Catholic Educational Association, reported on the first national survey of the perceptions of bishops and priests about the value and effectiveness of Catholic schools. Earlier researchers in Boston (Sullivan, 1982) and San Francisco (Schipper, 1982) had studied the sentiments of priests toward Catholic schools. O'Brien's study added the perspective of bishops to that of the priests.

To accomplish his task, O'Brien adapted a questionnaire that Sullivan had used. O'Brien found that bishops and, as Sullivan had found, priests were very strong in their affirmation of the value of Catholic schools. Virtually all bishops and a large majority of priests agreed that the need for Catholic schools was at least as great at that time as it had been in the past. However, to all statements concerning the various dimensions of the value of Catholic

schools—their need, their role in the mission of the Church, their preparation of students for roles in the Church and society—the agreement of priests was less than the agreement of the bishops.

O'Brien identified some factors that seemed to influence the sentiments of the respondents, particularly those of the priests. The priests' assessment of the value of Catholic schools varied according to the number of years they had been ordained and whether or not they themselves had attended Catholic elementary or secondary schools. As Sullivan and Schipper had also found, priests ordained from 11 to 20 years and those who did not attend Catholic schools reported lower agreement to many statements. In addition, O'Brien found the ratings of the priests often varied by the location of their ministry, that is, the area of the diocese in which their parish was located, be it inner city, urban, suburban, or rural.

Compared with the time of O'Brien's study, a more positive perception about the viability and future of Catholic schools existed in 1996. National enrollments, which had started to increase in 1992 after decades of decline, continued to rise. The demand for a Catholic school education increased in many areas, new schools have been built, and existing schools have been expanded. The decade from 1985 to 1995 saw the establishment of 120 new Catholic elementary schools and 14 new secondary schools, mostly in the southeast, southwest, and western parts of the country (Meitler Consultants, 1997). In addition, a series of well-publicized research studies (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987) and reviews (Convey, 1992) describing the favorable results concerning Catholic schools, as well as the accompanying good publicity in the popular media, certainly contributed to an increased optimism about the schools.

It is in this context of increasing optimism concerning Catholic schools and their future that this study revisits the sentiments of bishops and priests. In addition to comparing and contrasting the views of bishops and priests about Catholic schools, the purpose of this study is to ascertain whether the factors identified in previous studies, time ordained, location of ministry, and Catholic school background, continue to influence the views of priests. Additionally, the study examines the relationship between perceived demand for Catholic schools and the sentiments of bishops and priests. The issues addressed in the study are limited to assessments concerning the worth of Catholic schools, their quality, whether adequate access is being provided, and parental involvement in governance. In an attempt to expand upon O'Brien's study, pastors are distinguished according to whether their parishes had schools, cooperated in the sponsorship of schools, or did not have schools.

## METHOD

### SAMPLE

In May 1996, a questionnaire was sent to all bishops and approximately 10% of the priests in the United States, using a database provided by the publishers of *The Official Catholic Directory* (OCD). The OCD separates the dioceses of the United States into 13 geographical regions. The sample of priests was determined by using a random selection process to identify 10% of the priests within each of the 13 geographical regions in each of the following three categories, as specified in the OCD database: pastors of parishes with schools (696), pastors of parishes without schools (1,053), and other clergy (1,263). In all, questionnaires were mailed to 400 bishops and 3,012 priests.

**Table 1**  
**Sampling Plan and Response Rates for Bishops and Priests**

Group	N Distributed	N Returned	% Response
Total Bishops	400	184	46%
Diocesan Bishops	180	119	66%
Other Bishops	220	65	30%
		(36 Auxiliary Bishops) (27 Retired Bishops) (2 Not Classified— Insufficient Info)	
<hr/>			
Total Priests	3,012	1,026	34%
		(60 returned as undeliverable)	
Pastors of Parishes with Schools	696	328	47%
Pastors of Parishes without Schools	1,053	354	34%
		(212 cooperate in sponsorship of schools) (142 no relationship with schools)	
Other Clergy	1,263	344	27%
		(200 Associate Pastors) (24 Teachers/Administrators) (64 Other Ministries) (56 Retired Priests)	

Table 1 shows the sampling plan and response rates for each group. Slightly less than half of the bishops (184 or 46%) returned a completed

questionnaire, including almost two thirds (119) of the diocesan bishops, 36 auxiliary bishops, 27 retired bishops, and 2 bishops who did not provide sufficient information to permit classification.

The response rate of the priests was lower than that of the bishops. Slightly more than a third of the priests (1,026 or 34%) returned a completed questionnaire. About two thirds (682 or 66%) of these were pastors. Of these, 328 are in parishes with schools, 212 are in parishes that cooperate in the support of schools and 142 are in parishes without a school affiliation. The 344 other clergy consist of 200 associate pastors, 24 teachers or administrators, 64 priests in other ministries, and 56 retired priests. The postal service returned as undeliverable 60 questionnaires sent to priests (2%).

Priests from 165 dioceses returned completed questionnaires. Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents according to the 13 geographical regions. Priests in the Midwest (regions 6, 7, 8) had the highest return rates (around 40%), while those in the Mid-Southwest (region 10) and Far West (regions 11 and 12) had the lowest (less than 30%). The ten dioceses yielding the highest number of respondents were New York (46), Chicago (35), Boston (23), Los Angeles (22), Newark (22), Detroit (20), Brooklyn (19), Philadelphia (19), Cincinnati (19), and Minneapolis/St. Paul (16).

**Table 2**  
**Distribution of Respondents by Region**

Region	N Return	Bishops		N Return	Priests	
		% of Total Return	% Return of Diocesan Bishops by Region		% of Total Return	% Return of Priests by Region
1. NEW ENGLAND	13	7.1%	63.6%	93	9.1%	32.2%
2. NY	14	7.6%	75.0%	123	12.0%	33.7%
3. PA & NJ	17	9.2%	84.6%	131	12.8%	32.0%
4. SOUTHEAST	16	8.7%	61.1%	88	8.6%	31.5%
5. KY, TN, AL, MS, LA	13	7.1%	61.1%	61	5.9%	35.1%
6. OH & MI	20	10.9%	69.2%	99	9.6%	40.9%
7. WI, IL, IN	22	12.0%	75.0%	134	13.1%	40.0%
8. ND, SD, MN	9	4.9%	70.0%	43	4.2%	39.8%
9. NE, IA, KS, MO	14	7.6%	60.0%	72	7.0%	37.9%
10. AR, OK, TX	11	6.0%	58.8%	48	4.7%	27.7%
11. CA, NV, HI	18	9.8%	85.7%	73	7.1%	26.6%
12. WA, OR, ID, AK, MT	9	4.9%	63.6%	18	1.8%	22.8%
13. WY, UT, CO, AZ, NM	7	3.8%	63.6%	35	3.4%	37.2%
(Missing)	1	0.5%		8	0.8%	
Total	184			1,026		

Table 3 shows a respondent's average age and the likelihood that he had been a pastor of a parish with a school, been assigned to a parish with a school at some point in his ministry, attended a Catholic elementary school, and attended a Catholic secondary school. The average age of bishops is 65 while that of priests is 55. Over half of the bishops (61%) and the priests (55%) are current or former pastors of parishes with schools, while about a fifth of the bishops (19%) and the priests (22%) have never been assigned to a parish with a school. In addition, 82% of the respondents had attended a Catholic elementary school and about 70% had attended a Catholic high school.

The associate pastors constitute a heterogeneous group. Some have never been pastors for a variety of reasons, including age and experience. Others (22%) have been pastors, more than half (59%) of them in parishes with schools. In addition, a third of priests in other ministries (20% in parishes with a school) and 86% of retired priests (80% in parishes with a school) had previously been pastors.

**Table 3**  
**Selected Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Category</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Average Age</b>	<b>Ever Been Pastor of School Parish</b>	<b>Ever in Parish With School</b>	<b>Attended Catholic Elementary School</b>	<b>Attended Catholic Secondary School</b>
Diocesan Bishop	119	62.7	54%	76%	82%	69%
Auxiliary Bishop	36	63.8	72%	89%	86%	75%
Retired Bishop	27	78.9	78%	89%	78%	81%
Pastor with School	328	55.2	100%	100%	85%	70%
Cooperating Pastor	212	56.2	45%	54%	85%	74%
Non-school Pastor	142	57.2	34%	52%	77%	63%
Associate Pastor	200	48.5	13%	85%	78%	69%
Other	88	52.8	20%	74%	77%	66%
Retired Priest	56	76.5	80%	95%	96%	84%
All Bishops	184	65.1	61%	81%	82%	72%
All Priests	1,026	55.3	55%	78%	82%	70%

## QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire for bishops and the one for priests contained demographic items appropriate to each group and a common set of 64 sentiment items. About two thirds of the items were the same or similar to items used in previous studies (O'Brien, 1987; Schipper, 1982; Sullivan, 1982; Tacheny, 1988). The respondents used a 5-point Likert rating scale with descriptors from *Strongly Agree* (5) to *Strongly Disagree* (1) to respond to 62 of the sentiment items. The other two items employed a multiple choice format to determine perceptions of the most important purpose of a Catholic school and how demand has changed in the previous five years.

Factor analysis was employed to identify homogeneous clusters of items that constituted the major variables in the analysis. A principal axis factor analysis of the 62 sentiment items resulted in four distinct factors that utilized information from 37 items. The items along with their factor loading and the percentage of bishops and priests agreeing to each are given in the Appendix (Tables 8 to 11). The four factors are:

- **Worth:** 17 items that measure the need for Catholic schools and their importance (Table 8)
- **Quality:** 9 items that measure the perceived effectiveness of the schools (Table 9)
- **Access:** 7 items that measure financial and other support needed to ensure access of families to Catholic schools (Table 10)
- **Governance:** 4 items that measure support for parental participation in governance (Table 11)

The internal consistency reliability of each factor, as measured by Cronbach's Alpha, ranges from .7485 (Governance) to .9481 (Worth), all substantial indexes, particularly in light of the number of items in each factor.

## RESULTS

### AMONG BISHOPS

Table 4 shows the mean scores on each factor for the three groups of bishops. The high mean scores indicate substantial agreement by the bishops to the issues addressed by the factors. The groups of bishops had significantly different mean scores only on Worth ( $F=4.90$ ,  $p<.008$ ), with diocesan and retired bishops showing higher levels of agreement than auxiliary bishops regarding the importance of Catholic schools. No differences among the groups of bishops occur for the Quality, Access, and Governance factors.

**Table 4**  
**Factor Means (Standard Deviations) for Categories of Bishops**

<b>Category</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Worth</b>	<b>Quality</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Governance</b>
Diocesan Bishop	119	4.30 (.35)	4.07 (.30)	4.22 (.54)	4.10 (.61)
Auxiliary Bishop	36	4.11 (.53)	3.95 (.43)	4.34 (.46)	4.06 (.51)
Retired Bishop	27	4.40 (.28)	3.99 (.38)	4.40 (.44)	4.09 (.56)

### **AMONG PRIESTS**

Differences among the groups of priests occur on all four factors (Worth,  $F=9.09$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Quality,  $F=5.04$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Access,  $F=7.04$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Governance,  $F=2.24$ ,  $p=.048$ ) (see Table 5). Analysis of pairwise contrasts using the conservative Scheffé procedure (not shown) reveals that the three groups of pastors differ significantly on all four factors, with pastors of parishes with schools generally having the highest level of agreement followed by pastors of parishes that cooperate in the sponsorship of schools, and finally by pastors of parishes that do not have schools. The exception to this pattern occurs on the Governance factor, where pastors of parishes with schools are the most reluctant to give parents voice in school affairs.

**Table 5**  
**Factor Means (Standard Deviations) for Categories of Priests**

<b>Category</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Worth</b>	<b>Quality</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Governance</b>
Pastor with School	328	3.94 (.62)	3.98 (.51)	4.12 (.61)	3.79 (.70)
Cooperating Pastor	210	3.63 (.72)	3.83 (.57)	3.89 (.75)	3.95 (.59)
Non-school Pastor	142	3.48 (.76)	3.73 (.52)	3.58 (.81)	3.92 (.62)
Associate Pastor	197	3.85 (.68)	3.88 (.54)	4.08 (.64)	3.81 (.63)
Other	88	3.76 (.70)	3.70 (.64)	4.13 (.69)	3.89 (.69)
Retired Priest	55	3.93 (.78)	3.88 (.55)	4.18 (.77)	3.94 (.53)

Use of the Scheffé procedure also indicated that associate pastors have the same levels of agreement as pastors of parishes with schools on all factors and significantly higher agreement than pastors of parishes without



schools on Worth and Access. The interpretation of the data from associate pastors, however, is complicated by the fact that some had been pastors in the past. For example, the lowest agreement scores on Worth are from associate pastors ordained between 21 and 40 years who had never been pastors and from those younger associate pastors ordained less than 30 years who formerly were pastors. On the other hand, young associate pastors ordained less than 20 years who had not yet been pastors are very supportive of the worth of Catholic schools, as are older associate pastors who formerly were pastors.

Retired priests have the same profile of agreement as pastors of parishes with schools, except on the Governance factor, where retired pastors evidence higher agreement. All categories of priests have higher agreement than pastors of parishes without schools on the Access factor.

## BETWEEN BISHOPS AND PRIESTS

Table 6 shows the means and standard deviations on the factors for all bishops and all priests. As a group, the bishops have higher levels of agreement than do the priests on all factors (Worth,  $t=13.75$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Quality,  $t=5.66$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Access,  $t=6.26$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Governance,  $t=4.81$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

**Table 6**  
**Factor Means (Standard Deviations) for Bishops and Priests**

Category	N	Worth	Quality	Access	Governance
All Bishops	182	4.28 (.39)	4.04 (.35)	4.27 (.51)	4.09 (.58)
All Priests	1020	3.78 (.71)	3.86 (.55)	3.99 (.72)	3.86 (.64)

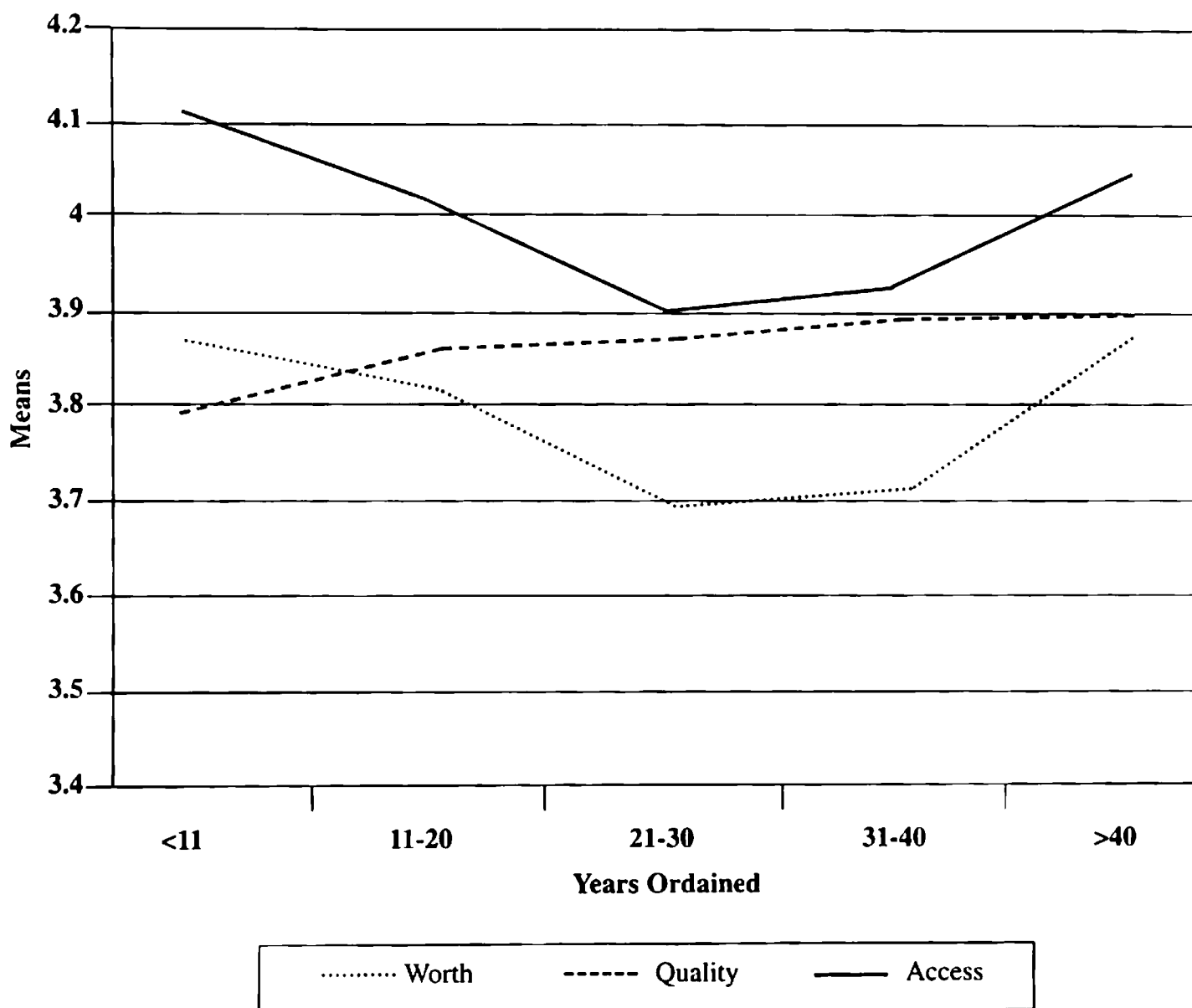
When diocesan bishops are compared with pastors of parishes with schools, significant differences exist on three of the four factors. Diocesan bishops are more supportive than pastors of parishes with schools on Worth ( $t=7.72$ ,  $p<.001$ ), Quality ( $t=2.36$ ,  $p=.019$ ), and Governance ( $t=4.27$ ,  $p<.001$ ), but not on Access ( $t=1.63$ ,  $p=.104$ ) (see mean scores in Table 4 and Table 5). These differences are smaller than those between all bishops and all priests.

## TIME ORDAINED

Correlations between each factor and the number of years that a priest had been ordained reveal small but significant curvilinear relationships for ensuring Access to Catholic schools ( $r=.13$ ,  $p=.0001$ ) and their Worth ( $r=.12$ ,  $p=.0006$ ), a small positive linear relationship for Quality ( $r=.07$ ,  $p=.027$ ), and no relationship for Governance ( $r=.05$ ,  $p=.09$ ). The convexity of the curvi-

linear relationships shown in Figure 1 indicates that priests ordained fewer than 21 years and those ordained more than 30 years have higher levels of agreement to both Access and Worth than do priests ordained between 21 and 30 years. This latter group of priests are from the same cohort as those in O'Brien's (1987) study who also had the lowest level of agreement, providing a degree of corroboration between O'Brien's study and this study.

**Figure 1**  
**Relationship Between Factors and Years Ordained as a Priest**



## LOCATION OF MINISTRY

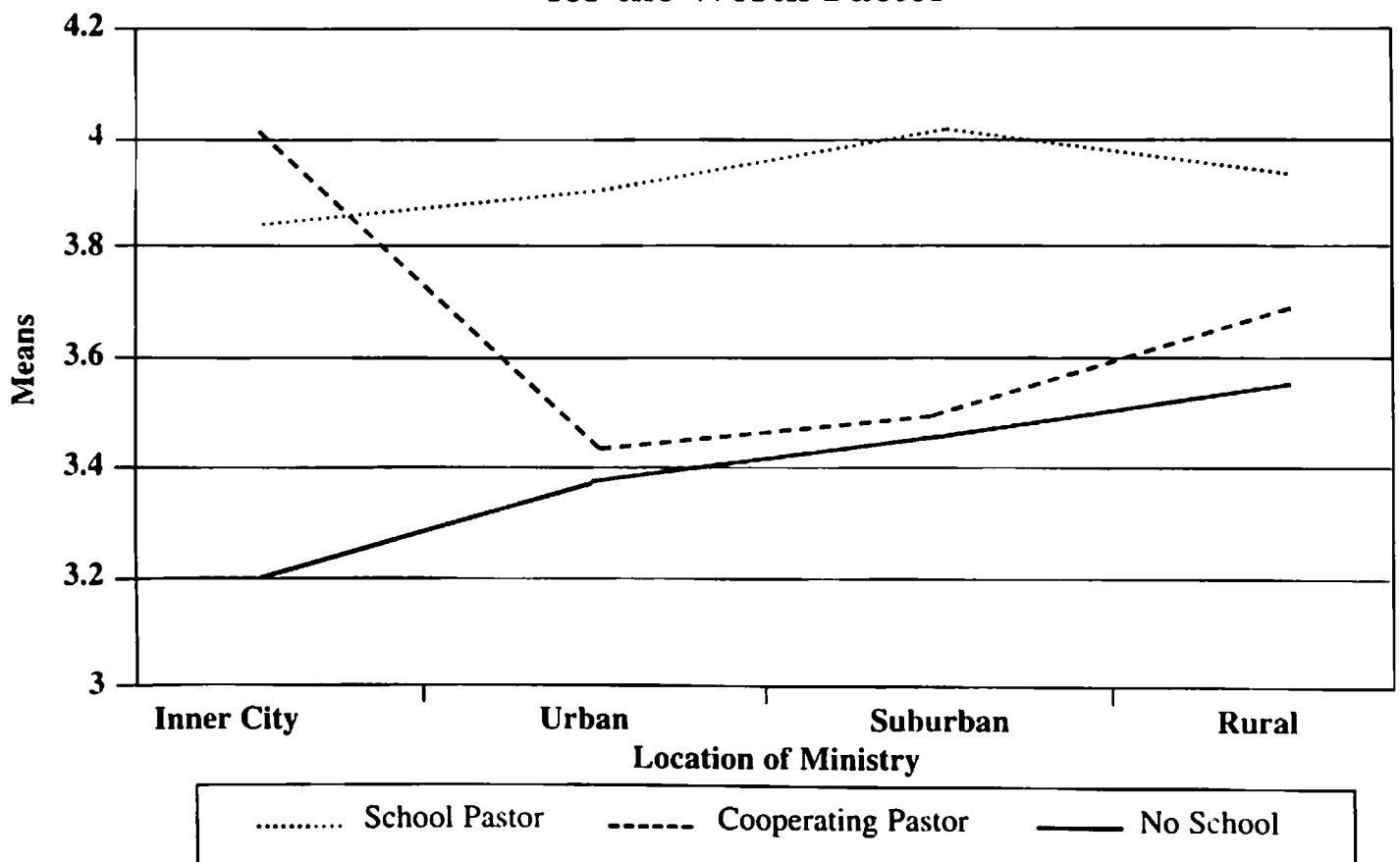
Table 7 shows the mean scores on the factors for priests by the area of the diocese in which their parish is located. Retired priests are not included in this analysis. The only significant difference by location of ministry occurs on the Access factor ( $F=3.16$ ,  $p=.024$ ), with priests from inner city parishes showing significantly more agreement than priests from suburban and rural parishes.

**Table 7**  
**Means (Standard Deviations) on Factors for Priests**  
**by Location of Ministry**

Category	N	Worth	Quality	Access	Governance
Inner City	118	3.79 (.68)	3.87 (.56)	4.14 (.66)	3.93 (.62)
Urban	235	3.76 (.67)	3.84 (.53)	4.05 (.64)	3.83 (.68)
Suburban	293	3.79 (.73)	3.91 (.51)	3.96 (.73)	3.80 (.69)
Rural	310	3.74 (.72)	3.84 (.59)	3.89 (.76)	3.90 (.59)

Of particular interest, however, is the interaction between location of ministry and type of pastor that is evident on the Worth factor ( $F=2.27$ ,  $p=.035$ ). As Figure 2 shows, the interaction occurs because the similarity in agreement regarding the value of Catholic schools between pastors of cooperating parishes and other pastors that occurs in inner city parishes is different than in parishes located in other areas. Pastors of parishes in the inner city that cooperate in the sponsorship of schools have the same high assessment of worth as do pastors of parishes with schools; however, pastors of parishes in other areas that cooperate in the sponsorship of schools have lower assessments of worth than do pastors of parishes with schools.

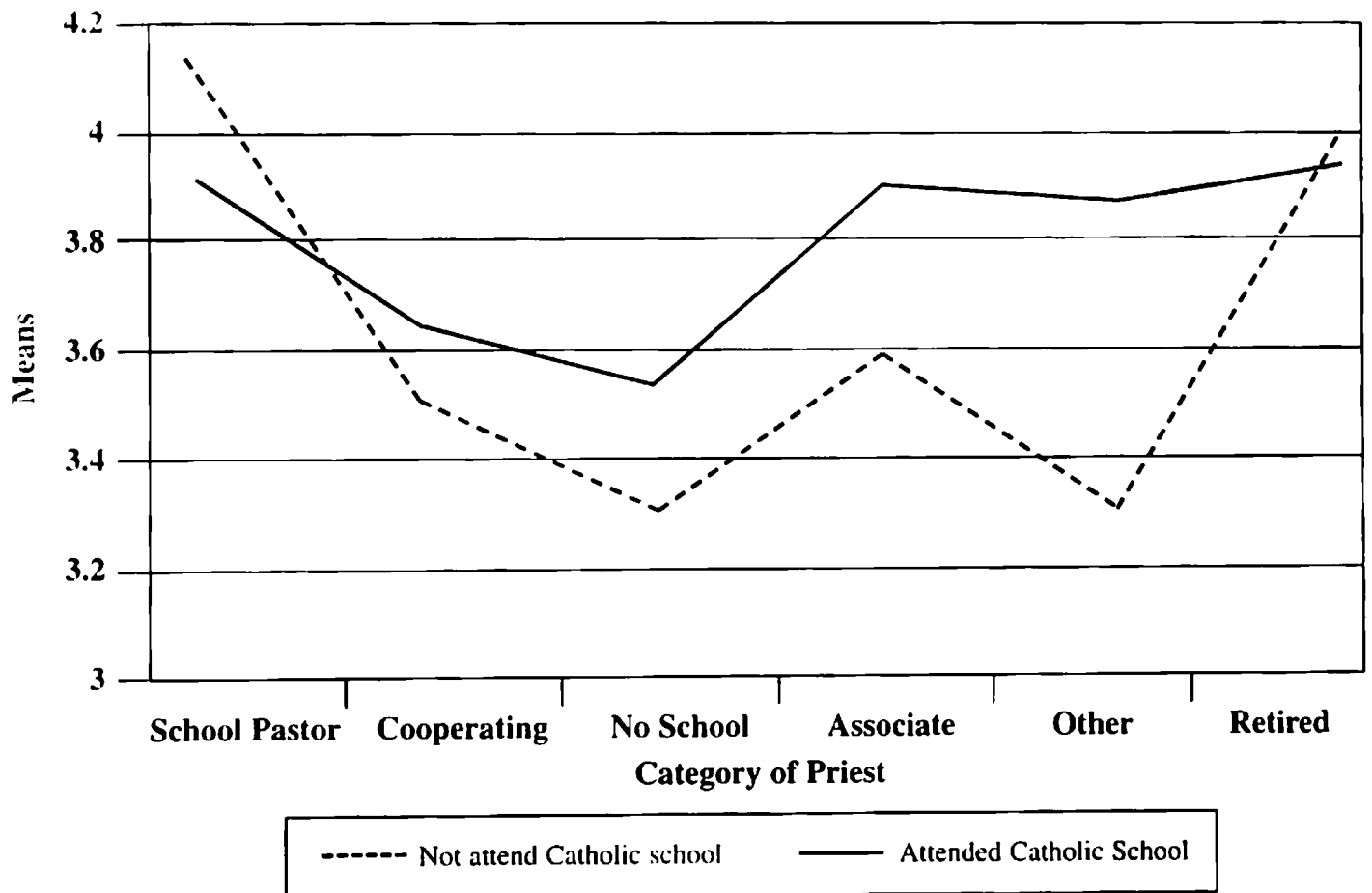
**Figure 2**  
**Interaction Between Location of Ministry and Type of Pastor**  
**for the Worth Factor**



## CATHOLIC SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Priests who had gone to Catholic schools (88% had gone to a Catholic elementary or secondary school) do not differ from priests who had not attended Catholic schools on their assessment of Quality ( $F=0.69$ ,  $p=.405$ ), Access ( $F=0.05$ ,  $p=.815$ ), and Governance ( $F=0.43$ ,  $p=.511$ ) factors. A significant interaction between the category of priest and his Catholic school background does occur for the Worth factor ( $F=2.86$ ,  $p=.014$ ). Inspection of Figure 3 reveals that prior attendance at Catholic schools contributes to more positive assessments of Worth for associate pastors and priests in other ministries; however, no differences occur for the other groups of priests on this factor.

**Figure 3**  
**Category of Priest by Attendance at Catholic School for the Worth Factor**



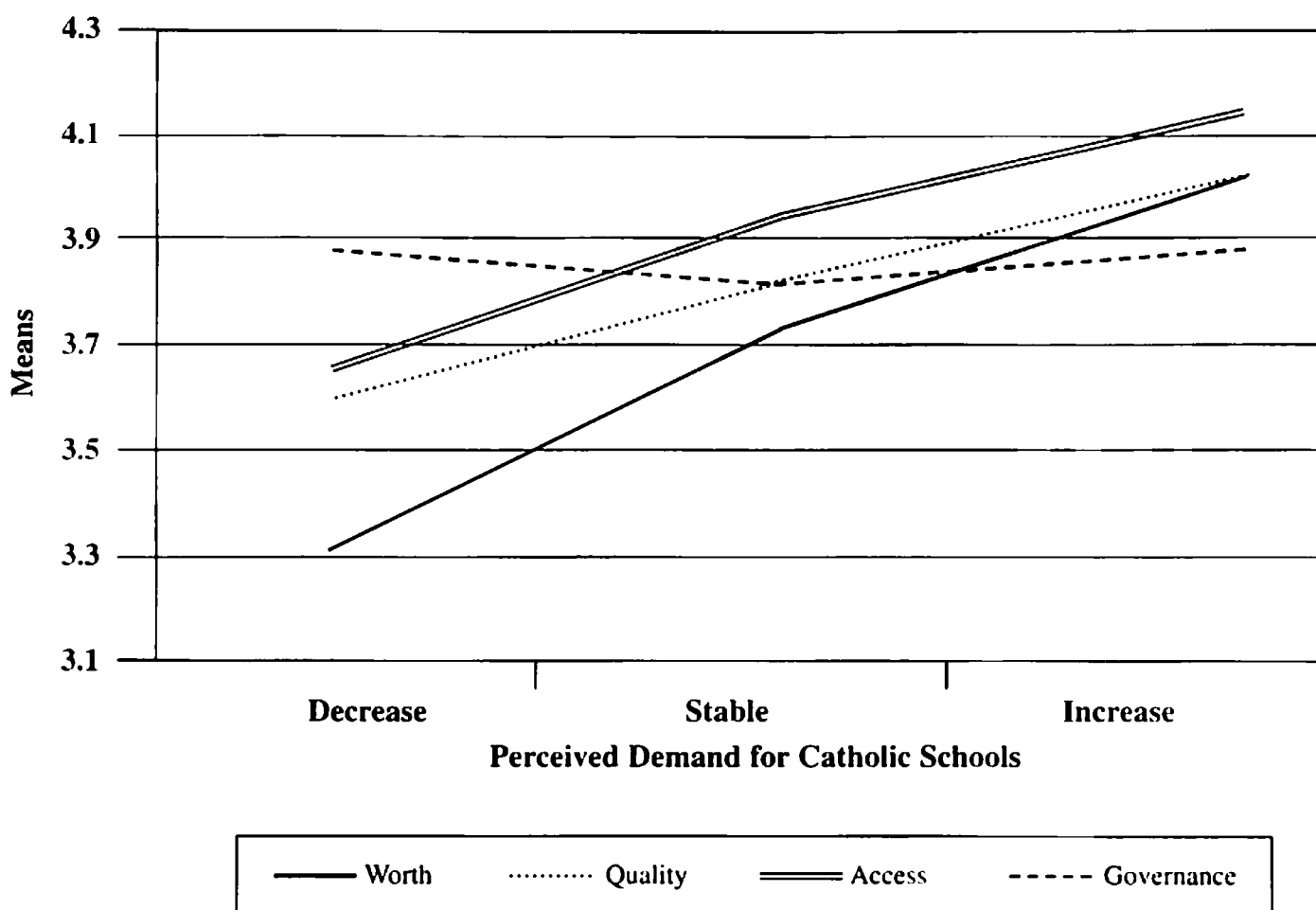
## RELATIONSHIP WITH GROWTH

Almost two thirds (63%) of the bishops indicated that demand for Catholic schools in their diocese had increased between 1991 and 1996. Just under a third (31%) indicate the demand was stable and 6% checked a decrease in demand. Diocesan bishops ordained after 1985 are more likely than those ordained before 1985 (71% compared with 61%) to indicate that the demand for Catholic schools had increased in their diocese during the past five years.

About 3% of all diocesan bishops indicated that the demand had decreased during that period. Bishops who reported that the demand for Catholic schools had increased are more likely than other bishops to have higher levels of agreement with issues concerning Worth ( $r=.22$ ) and Access ( $r=.15$ ).

Approximately 45% of priests reported increased demand for Catholic schools, 36% indicated demand had remained stable, and 19% that demand had diminished. The relationships between perceived increases in demand for Catholic schools and Worth ( $r=.36$ ) and Access ( $r=.27$ ) are even stronger for priests than for bishops (see Figure 4). In addition, priests who reported increases are more likely to score higher on the Quality factor ( $r=.28$ ) than priests who reported stable or decreasing demand.

**Figure 4**  
**Mean Factor Scores by Perceived Demand for Schools by Priests**



## DISCUSSION

Overall, bishops and priests have very positive sentiments toward Catholic schools. Bishops are united in their assessment of Catholic schools, averaging 93% agreement to the items on the Worth factor, 88% agreement to those on the Quality factor and the Access factor, and 86% agreement to those on the Governance factor. Priests are less united than bishops but still very positive, averaging 74% agreement to the Worth items, 79% agreement to the

Quality items, 78% agreement to the Access items, and 76% agreement to the Governance items.

Assessments of Worth, Quality, and Access clearly differ among the priests according to their type of ministry. These differences are most evident for pastors, where a key variable is whether their parishes have schools. Pastors of parishes with schools and retired priests generally have the highest assessments, followed, in order, by associate pastors, priests in other ministries, pastors of parishes that cooperate in the sponsorship of a school, and, finally, by pastors of parishes without schools. It is critical to note that priests directly involved with Catholic schools are among the most supportive of them, as are many of the younger priests who are likely, in due time, to become pastors of parishes with schools. The less favorable sentiments of priests who are pastors of parishes without schools are not surprising since these men often self-select themselves away from a parish with a school or they are not assigned to parishes with schools by bishops precisely because they are less supportive of Catholic schools.

Assessment of Worth, Quality, and Access also differ among the priests according to the number of years ordained. Priests ordained between 21 and 30 years have the lowest assessment of Worth and Access, compared with priests ordained less than 21 years and those ordained more than 30 years. On the other hand, a different pattern emerges for the Quality factor, where a priest's assessment increases according to the number of years he has been ordained.

Location of ministry is an important predictor of priests' assessment of Access, but not of their assessment of Quality and Governance. The more removed in terms of distance the ministry of a priest is from the inner city, the less supportive he is of issues pertaining to supporting Catholic schools financially, including sharing of resources to help non-parishioners attend Catholic schools. Location of ministry is also an important predictor of Worth for pastors. The assessment of the Worth of Catholic schools is the most negative by pastors of inner city parishes that do not have schools. The most positive assessments of Worth are from pastors of parishes with schools in all regions and pastors of inner city parishes that cooperate in the sponsorship of schools.

Unlike other studies, previous Catholic school experience has only a limited effect on priests' sentiments. Having gone to a Catholic elementary or secondary school seems to contribute to differences in the assessment of Worth, but only for associate pastors and priests in other ministries and not for other priests; however, previous attendance at a Catholic school does not affect priests' overall scores on Quality, Access, and Governance.

Priests residing in areas where Catholic schools are growing have a higher assessment of Worth, Quality, and Access than do priests residing in other areas. No relationship exists between perceived growth and assessment of

Governance, however. The relationships between a priest's perception of growth in his area and his assessment of Worth, Quality, and Access are strong and positive. Bishops in growth areas also have a higher assessment of Worth and Access than do bishops in other areas; however, the relationships, while still significant, are lower than those for priests. The weaker relationships between perceived growth and the bishops' assessments may be due to their more homogeneous views concerning Catholic schools compared with the views of the priests.

Overall, these findings bode well for the future of Catholic schools. The support of bishops and priests, particularly pastors, is critical to the schools' success. Although moderated somewhat by type and location of ministry, length of time ordained, and one's own Catholic school background, a sufficiently high level of support for schools is exhibited by the majority of the bishops and priests in this study. If there is any area for concern, it is the somewhat weaker support for Catholic schools, particularly in the assessment of their Worth, by some pastors of parishes without schools and some priests who have not had a Catholic school background themselves. On the other hand, those who are chiefly responsible for exercising the leadership necessary for the schools' success, bishops and pastors of parishes with schools, evidence very high levels of support for Catholic schools.

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## APPENDIX

**Table 8**

### **Factor Loading and Agreement of Bishops and Priests for the Items on the Worth Factor**

**Items on the Worth Factor  
(Cronbach's Alpha=.9481)**

	<b>Loading</b>	<b>Bishops</b>	<b>Priests</b>
The need for Catholic schools is at least as great today as in the past.	.8250	96.7%	84.0%
Catholic schools are worth what it costs to operate them.	.8026	92.9%	70.7%
Maintaining Catholic schools is an effective use of diocesan and parish resources.	.7777	95.6%	68.6%
Catholic schools are an essential part of the Church's educational ministry.	.7723	95.1%	86.5%
In addition to the family, Catholic schools are the best means for the religious formation of the young.	.7681	96.2%	78.6%
*Improved parish religious education programs should eventually replace Catholic schools in most parishes.	.7519	2.7%	20.8%
Catholic schools play an important role in the formation of future parish leaders.	.7095	95.7%	76.2%
New Catholic schools should be built when growth in the population warrants their establishment.	.6805	91.3%	71.6%
The Catholic school is one of the best means of evangelization in the church today.	.6712	89.7%	65.7%
*Supporting a Catholic school drains money from the parish that it should spend on other ministries.	.6180	10.9%	33.8%
*Catholic and public schools are not different enough to justify the continuation of most Catholic schools.	.5979	2.2%	11.0%



Catholic schools are good sources of religious and priestly vocations.	.5934	80.4%	61.1%
I enjoy (would enjoy, did enjoy) being the pastor of a parish that has a Catholic school.	.5708	95.1%	69.4%
*Parish religious education programs (CCD) are just as effective as Catholic schools in educating young Catholics in the faith.	.5639	4.3%	16.0%
Where they exist, Catholic schools strengthen the bonds of unity within a parish.	.5605	84.8%	64.8%
*Catholics who go to public schools generally turn out to be just as good Catholics as those who attend Catholic schools.	.5602	11.5%	35.1%
Catholic schools have a positive impact on the adult religious behaviors of their graduates.	.5525	92.9%	72.2%

\* Denotes an item with negative valence whose scale was reversed when scored.

**Table 9**  
**Factor Loading and Agreement of Bishops and Priests for the**  
**Items on the Quality Factor**

<b>Items on the Quality Factor</b> <b>(Cronbach's Alpha=.8884)</b>	<b>Loading</b>	<b>Bishops</b>	<b>Priests</b>
Most Catholic schools that I know seem to teach Catholic doctrine reasonably well.	.7427	85.9%	73.3%
The Catholic elementary schools that I know have effective programs of religious formation.	.6896	84.2%	75.6%
Most Catholic schools that I know seem to have well-prepared and effective teachers.	.6893	91.3%	84.4%
Most Catholic schools that I know seem to have a strong Catholic identity.	.6482	87.5%	77.4%
The Catholic high schools that I know have effective programs of religious formation.	.6403	77.6%	63.9%
Most Catholic schools that I know seem to have well-prepared and effective principals.	.6338	93.5%	82.6%
Most Catholic schools that I know seem to establish a good foundation of moral and ethical values.	.6248	88.0%	80.9%
Most Catholic schools that I know seem to have clear goals and priorities.	.6146	88.5%	90.1%
Generally, I believe that the Catholic schools in the diocese have high quality.	.5048	98.9%	90.1%

**Table 10**  
**Factor Loading and Agreement of Bishops and Priests for the**  
**Items on the Access Factor**

<b>Items on the Access Factor</b> <b>(Cronbach's Alpha=.8677)</b>	<b>Loading</b>	<b>Bishops</b>	<b>Priests</b>
Every parish should provide some financial support for Catholic schools.	.7120	82.0%	71.6%
In areas where there is only one Catholic elementary school and several parishes, each of the parishes should financially support the school.	.6467	95.1%	82.8%
The financial support of Catholic schools is the duty of all Catholics whether or not they have children in the schools.	.6228	91.3%	71.4%
Some of the surplus of affluent parishes should be shared with financially struggling parishes that support Catholic schools.	.5376	78.7%	74.7%
A parish without a school should financially assist Catholic schools that enroll its students.	.5301	94.6%	87.3%
The maintenance of Catholic schools in poor areas should be a diocesan priority.	.5170	93.5%	82.4%
The diocese in collaboration with the parishes should ensure that Catholic schools are accessible to families in all parts of the diocese.	.4898	80.8%	75.7%

**Table 11**  
**Factor Loading and Agreement of Bishops and Priests**  
**for the Items on the Governance Factor**

<b>Items on the Governance Factor</b> <b>(Cronbach's Alpha=.7485)</b>	<b>Loading</b>	<b>Bishops</b>	<b>Priests</b>
Parents should have a substantial voice in the governance of Catholic schools.	.7131	83.7%	71.8%
Parents must be given a substantial role in the development of policy for Catholic schools.	.7062	84.8%	68.1%
All Catholic schools should have school boards/councils.	.6082	92.9%	87.1%
When a school serves several parishes, a representative board/council should be responsible for the school's governance.	.5614	84.2%	78.1%

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