

**SOCIAL
RENEWAL
CONCLUSIONS**

Some conclusions are clear. The task of social renewal requires a comprehensive practical vision and a plan of community reformulation at the most local level which is supported by the local population and the public at-large. It also requires the cooperation of many groups and factions, both locally and nationally, and a large amount of long-term funding. Finally, experience indicates that the task requires a core of essentially non-partisan, locally-based leadership which has the training, vision and stamina to undertake an extended mission of this magnitude and importance.

**LOCAL
CHURCH
KEY**

The key to the task of social renewal lies with the local church in every community. Her scholars and theologians have recovered the ancient image of the Church as mission to the world, the servant of mankind. Her laymen and clergy have bridged ancient schisms through local ecumenical projects and activities. Her Scriptures and heritage of worship and prayer have instilled hope and faith in a future which others have often painted in bleak despairing terms. Locally, her congregations are one of the few remaining social institutions which still embody a broad cross-section of the occupations and skills, wealth and power and ages and wisdom of the community. In her has been vested a residue of good will -- though often reduced in vision -- unique to society. These qualities, the image of mission, the practice of non-partisan cooperation and the stance of faith have prepared the Church to undertake the task of social renewal.

**RESEARCH
ASSEMBLY
RESULTS**

This presupposition about the Church as the key to social renewal lies behind the decision of 4,000 local churchmen and community leaders from across the North American Continent to conduct and participate in four Summer Research Assemblies of The Ecumenical Institute during the years 1970-73. These month-long Assemblies drew together a vision and practical models which the Institute had uncovered in twenty years of practical research and experimentation with local churches of all denominations and ten years with community reformulation in the urban culture of the inner city. They recovered what it meant for the local church to care comprehensively for the individual, the family and those community institutions which the Church is called to serve.

**ECUMENICAL
PARISH
PROJECT**

On the basis of this research, vision and commitment, the Ecumenical Parish Project was launched January 1974 in 50 cities throughout North America. It consists of one integrated systems model of community reformulation for implementation in each location. This systems model consists of (1) a Parish Commitment System, (2) four Local Involvement Systems and (3) two Continental Support Systems. Together, they form the seven design systems of the Project.

TEN
YEAR
PROJECT

The Ecumenical Parish Project will be carried out over a period of ten years. It has three phases. The Initiation Phase, which is the focus of this proposal, will last three years. This will be followed by an Implementation Phase lasting six years and an Evaluation Phase of one year. During the Initiation Phase, three proven models of the Institute will be implemented simultaneously in each location. The 5th City community reformulation model will be linked with the Uptown 3 model. Together they are designed to foster individual responsibility and to release institutional structures to care comprehensively for the local community. The basis for the reduplication of both these models rests with the parallel renewal of key local congregations whose vision and commitment are necessary to produce the emergence of local leadership and an intensified concern for community reformulation. For this reason, the replication of the Local Church Project -- now in its fourth year of tactical implementation -- is crucial to any sustained effort. Together, these three projects form the Project Prototype System, one of the two Continental Support Systems of the Project model.

PARISH
COMMITMENT
SYSTEM

The key to the Ecumenical Parish Project is the creation of a committed core of local leadership. Without it, no long-term effort is possible. "Grassroots people know they have 10 strikes against them before they start," Mrs. Lela Mosley, 5th City's Program Coordinator, pointed out in a recent Chicago Tribune report. "It could take 40 years to rebuild the inner city. We have the model and a long timeline." People with such commitment are present in every community. Acting in isolation from one another, however, their effect is often dissipated as year-after-year their vision remains unrealized. With this in mind, the Parish Commitment System is designed to sustain committed people in each target community and to enable the emergence of capable and responsible community leadership prepared to stand over the long haul. This entails (1) creating a Local Church Galaxy as a sign of service, (2) calling forth a secular group, the Parish Guild, to deal directly with community problems and (3) coalescing a leadership core to catalyze the participation of the total community.

LOCAL
INVOLVEMENT
SYSTEMS

The Parish Commitment System initiates and sustains four Local Involvement Systems: (1) a Community Impact System for awakening local citizens to the practical vision and possibility of their local situation; (2) a Leadership Training System for providing the images and methods which allow emerging community leaders to use their experience and wisdom in the task of community reformulation; (3) a Corporate Research System for analyzing the depth problems and formulating the practical vision of the community into long-term plans; and (4) a Model Demonstration System for

enabling local citizens to take responsibility for the concrete models of community reformulation and participate creatively in their actualization. These Systems bring the Ecumenical Parish Project to the point of take-off, to the point at which the efforts of a committed core of local leadership can be sustained through the Parish Commitment System. In other words, these are the four means by which local community leadership is mobilized, trained, prepared and thrust into the concrete task of community reformulation. Like a breeder reactor, they create the initial leadership element in the community which then, through the Parish Commitment System, fosters additional leadership and catalyzed the entire community into action over the ten-year life of the Project.

**CONTINENTAL
SUPPORT
SYSTEMS**

Behind the Parish Commitment System and the Local Involvement Systems stand the two Continental Support Systems. These two Systems insure that one Ecumenical Parish Project will be created in 50 locations. Of the two, the Project Coordination System provides the coordination rationale for program implementation, evaluation and modification on a continuing basis. It is absolutely necessary to the success of the Project for the participating communities to consense on the continuing form of the Project during Research Assemblies, to exchange experience and insights, and to have available the consultation services, materials and accumulated data of the Institute's staff. At the same time, the Project Prototype System offers both the sign and direction of successful community reformulation models. This System weaves the 5th City Project, the Local Church Project and the Uptown 5 Project into one replicable system, which can be constantly tested against the realities of their communities. Through both continental coordination and project prototypes, the common thrust of the Project can be maintained.

**NEEDED
RENEWAL
INSTRUMENTS**

The problem of renewing society at the local level is undeniably complex. It can not be attacked successfully today either piecemeal, in isolation from the local community or on a short-term basis. Instead, there must emerge from every local community a comprehensive, long-term practical vision which is undergirded by concrete models and carried on the backs of a committed core of local leadership. There are no short cuts, no easy answers and no way to avoid the necessity of raising up a new style of leadership at the local level. Yet it is equally clear that the task can be accomplished only if the appropriate instruments are chosen. The Ecumenical Institute believes, upon the basis of hard experience and experimentation, that these means are embodied in the seven design systems which compose the Ecumenical Parish Project.

REQUEST FOR FUNDING

MARGIN OF VARIABLES

The day-to-day operation of our prototype demonstration projects has informed us that in the execution of the Ecumenical Parish Project Systems we can anticipate both unexpected setbacks and unplanned for opportunities. In the Local Church Experiment we had not planned for the wide variety of levels of achievement that individual churches have demonstrated. We can anticipate that some Ecumenical Parish sites will far outstrip others in the degree to which they show signs of reformulation activity and results. The eventual results of reformulation will also vary considerably from community to community. The commonness of the Project lies not in the production of identical community institutions and agencies in each parish, but rather in the procedures and methods used to increase their effectiveness. Some revision and modification of these methods and procedures will also occur as we receive feedback from participants in the fifty parishes during the evaluation sessions of the Summer Research Assemblies. Finally, we have placed our primary trust in the wisdom of grassroots churchmen rather than experts from outside. This is a calculated risk, of course, but all our previous work in the Local Church Experiment, the 5th City Project and the Uptown 5 Project indicates that these individuals are finally the ones you can count on to continue caring for their communities when everyone else has left.

ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE QUALIFICATIONS

Twenty years of practical church renewal work and ten years of community reformulation work in 5th City have prepared The Ecumenical Institute for the task of the Ecumenical Parish Project. The wisdom of thousands of local churchmen has been poured into the design of the project through ten Summer Research Assemblies, funded in part by major foundations, corporations, denominations, and individuals. The degree of success of the Local Church Experiment has surprised us; a denominational official in Minneapolis has proposed the replication of the Galaxy in that city from four churches to three hundred over the next few years. The conclusions we can draw from this success and that of such projects as the preschool and housing rehabilitation in 5th City are clear. Many of our church renewal and community reformulation methods and procedures have been proven effective in the field. It is possible to design and coordinate a renewal project which can then be successfully imitated by other groups. Renewed local churchmen are the backbone of the local community; they have the faith, the commitment, and the vision to insure that the

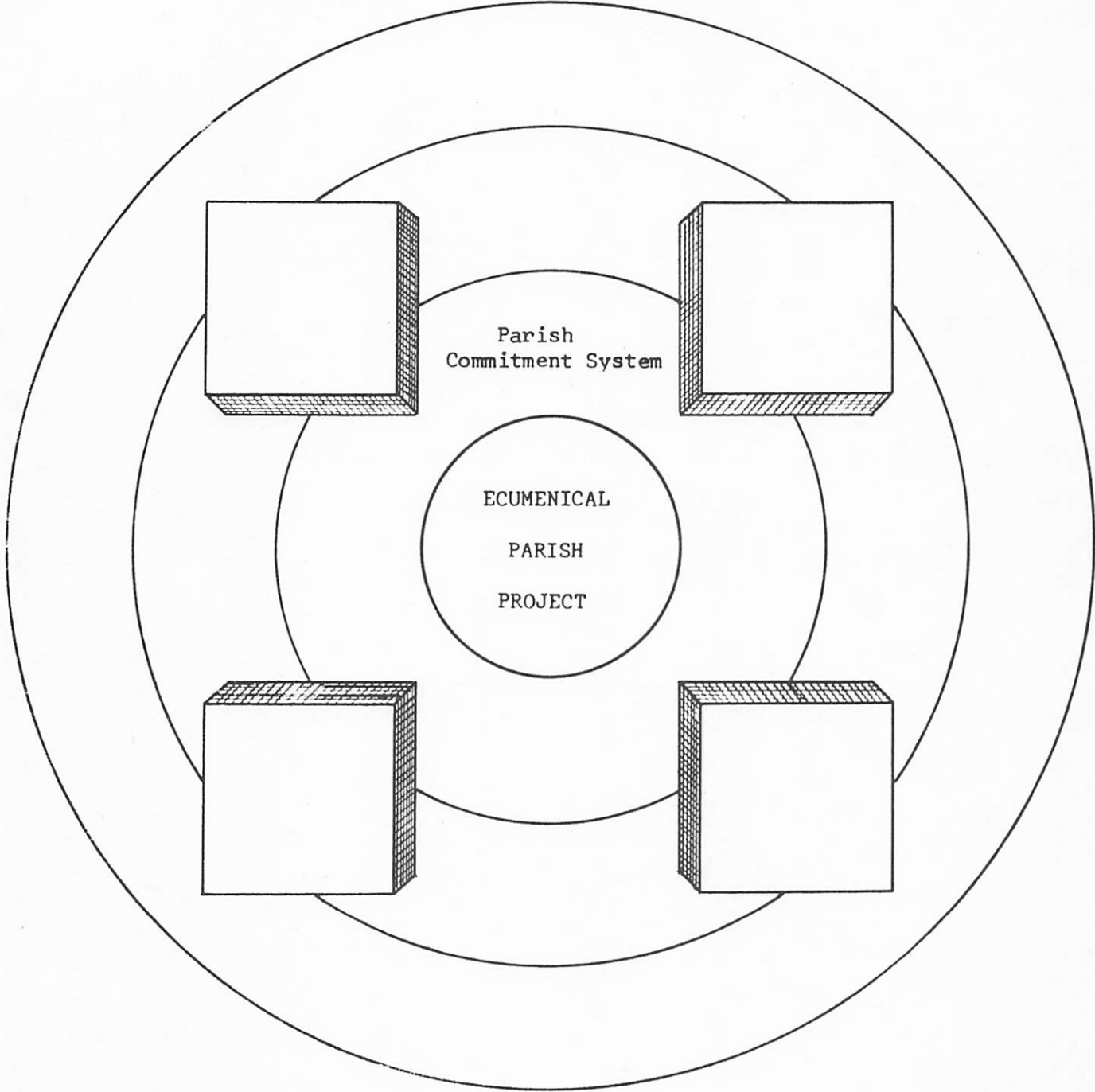
values and institutions of their communities are reformed. These churchmen, working with concerned persons outside the institutional church, are committed to rebuilding local communities on behalf of the future of every human being.

SHARED
SOCIAL
CONCERN

The Ecumenical Institute deeply appreciates the affirmation the Lilly Endowment Inc. has shown our work in local congregational renewal through its funding of the Local Church Experiment. We share with the Lilly Endowment Inc. a deep concern over the future of our religious and community institutions, and an abiding faith in the ability of churchmen to care effectively for the world we have been given to serve.

SPECIFIC
FUNDING
PROPOSAL

We hope the Lilly Endowment Inc. will choose to express its continued support of the mission of the church through the funding of the initiation phase of the Ecumenical Parish Project. This phase covers the first three years of a ten year project. Funding for the project is being sought through program income, and the support of government agencies, corporations, foundations, concerned individuals, church bodies and denominations. The Ecumenical Institute requests \$750,000 for 1974, \$500,000 for 1975, and \$250,000 for 1976 from the Lilly Endowment Inc. in order to defray in part expenses from July, 1974, to July, 1977, for the initiation phase of the Ecumenical Parish Project -- a project in fifty cities exemplifying the role of the church in caring for the local community.



Parish Commitment System

PARISH COMMITMENT SYSTEM

BRIEF

Citizens care about the erosion of their communities. Yet the complexity of urban issues has paralyzed their will to involve themselves in solving community problems. This paralysis can be overcome by intensifying the effectiveness of those committed to creating community problem-solving structures for local participation. The proposed means of catalyzing such participation are the coalescing of a Leadership Core, creating a Local Church Galaxy, and initiating a Parish Guild. This Parish Commitment System will generate new disciplined leadership. The overall effect of this system is the creation and sustaining of the four Local Involvement Systems.

Parish Commitment System

PARISH COMMITMENT SYSTEM

LOCAL RENEWAL PARTICIPATION

Local citizens know simple solutions will not solve complex community issues. Block clubs, Model Cities programs, and the attempts to bring small industry back into the inner city show that creative solutions are being sought. The premature demise of most renewal programs indicates, however, the key to sustaining long-term citizen involvement in such projects is yet to be found.

PARALYZED COMMUNITY CONCERN

Citizens care about the erosion of their communities, about rising crime rates, and the alienation of their youth. Yet the very complexity of urban issues paralyzes their will to be involved. For example, it seems absurd to participate in local drug abuse centers unless effective steps are being taken to eliminate the conditions which encourage drug use. What they require are community structures and programs which allow them to participate in isolating and curing the underlying ailments which are sapping the vitality of their family and community life.

INTENSIFYING GRASSROOTS EFFECTIVENESS

The building of such structures for community participation is an unglorious task which requires deep personal commitment. People with such commitment are present in every community. Since these people tend to act in isolation from one another, their effect is often dissipated. As year after year their vision remains unrealized, they collapse or grow cynical. Structures which intensify the effectiveness of these people are needed to overcome the paralysis in local communities today.

PARISH COMMITMENT STRUCTURES

In each of the fifty cities, the Ecumenical Parish Project will use committed persons who have been trained in methods of community reformulation through participation in Ecumenical Institute training programs. These persons will act as a catalyst in getting the four Local Involvement Systems functioning in the target community. The four systems will in turn not only get citizens involved in the reformulation process, but will reveal both religious and secular persons who are making the long-range commitment to be the corporate leadership of the community. These persons will participate in a Local Church Galaxy, a Parish Guild, and/or the Leadership Core in order to nurture and sustain their commitment.

Parish Commitment System

STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

The three strategies of the Parish Commitment System which create the forms for enabling and sustaining committed people in each target community are: 1) coalescing a Leadership Core to catalyze the participation of the total community; 2) creating a Local Church Galaxy to be a sign of service; and 3) initiating a Parish Guild, a secular group to deal directly with community problems.

1. The procedures for coalescing a Leadership Core are:
 - a. Forming the initial catalytic core from people who already have demonstrated their commitment through participation in the Local Church Project or Local Training Center programs.
 - b. Identifying those community citizens who have decided to become the committed corporate leadership of the parish.
 - c. Formalizing this decision of community citizens through participation in the Leadership Core.
2. The procedures for creating a Local Church Galaxy are:
 - a. Having the existing Galaxy in each city visit, recruit, and witness to the churches in the target community.
 - b. Securing the decision of four churches in the target community to become a Local Church Galaxy.
 - c. Creating congregational cadres in the new Galaxy churches.
3. The procedures for initiating a Parish Guild are:
 - a. Presenting businessmen, local residents, and agency representatives with the possibility of forming a Guild.
 - b. Developing an ongoing Guild dynamic of regular meetings, Research Problem-Solving Units (groups of citizens who identify solutions to local problems) and Task Forces (groups which implement solutions to local problems).
 - c. Familiarizing the Parish Guild with the Operating Design of the Task of the Guild document and doing initial tactical activities.

Parish Commitment System

RESULTS

Leadership Core procedures will result in the following:

- At least 6 persons from each target parish will participate in the Leadership Core.
- The Leadership Core will have reported at least once to the community on the plans created in the Problem-Solving Units.
- The original Galaxy in the city will be prepared to undertake community reformulation in its own parish.

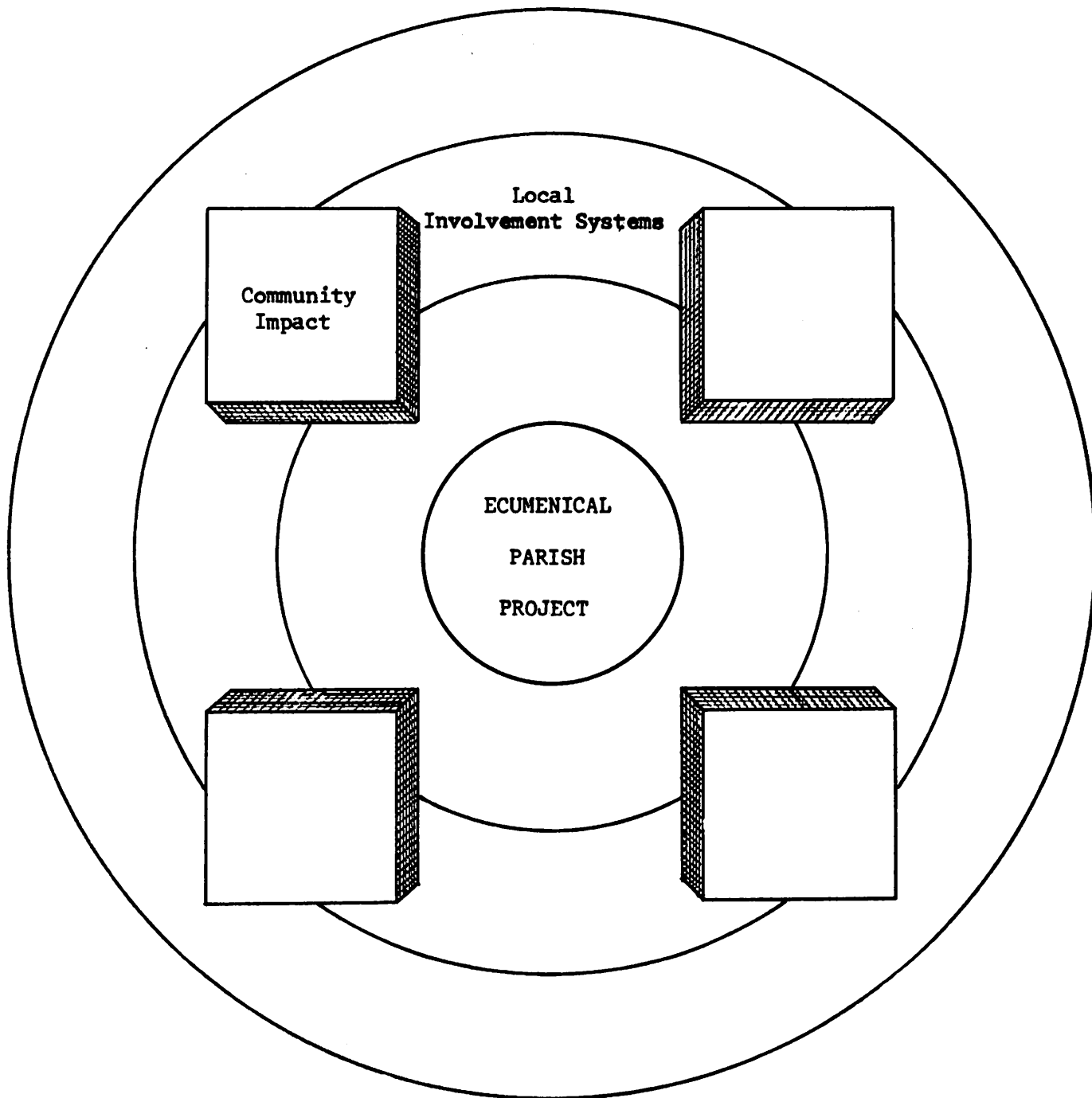
Local Church Galaxy procedures will result in the following:

- 4 churches in each parish operating as a Galaxy.
- Congregational cadres in each of the four participating churches in the parish.
- Weekly tactical activities by the leadership of the four participating churches.

Parish Guild procedures will result in the following:

- A Guild that meets regularly and sees itself as responsible for dealing with the problems of the community.
- A quarterly schedule of Problem-Solving Units planned by the Guild.
- A quarterly schedule of Task Forces planned by the Guild.

A sense of seriousness generated by the discipline of the Leadership Core will occasion an emergence of indigenous corporate leadership acting on behalf of the total community. A leadership which deals with local problems as they relate to the larger urban and global contexts will begin to recreate the community's understanding of local autonomy. The Church's wisdom in the use of symbol will help to recover places of awe and reverence in the parish, and the community story. These activities along with the structural reformulation work of the Parish Guild will rebuild the community identity. The creation of Impact, Research, Training, and Demonstration Systems by these committed leaders will give local people ways of involving themselves in solving community problems.



Local
Involvement Systems

Community
Impact

ECUMENICAL
PARISH
PROJECT

Local Involvement Systems

COMMUNITY IMPACT SYSTEM

BRIEF

In the second half of the 20th century, men like John Kennedy and Martin Luther King stirred men with new visions for the future. Yet, Church and society alike have struggled to transform a deep concern for mankind into practical solutions to social problems. The Community Impact System articulates a vision of care for all men by providing events which create a practical, yet creative picture of the future. This vision is given in Awakening Courses for laymen and clergymen; Community Gatherings which create a self-consciousness about the community and its possibilities for reformulation; and Parish Renewal Signs which project an image of possibility already present in the community. When actualized, the Community Impact System will expose residents in each of the parishes to new images of authentic care, integrity, and fulfillment in service to others; a 20th century articulation of basic Christian understandings; practical responsibility for the local church and community; and a sense that there is new life in the community. The Community Impact System provides the sophisticated instruments which will motivate churchmen and community residents, instilling new hope and vision as a springboard for responsible action.

Local Involvement System

COMMUNITY IMPACT SYSTEM

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS COLLAPSE

Individuals in communities across the world are seeking ways to transform concern for obvious problems into practical solutions. In the 1960's, man's hope for a new society was expressed in such activities as the civil rights movement and the Peace Corps. His yearning for a new family was reflected in the young people's search for a unique life style. His desire for a new church issued in the myriad of local projects where he could act out Christian concern for his neighbor. Great social movements collapsed, however, into violence or apathy. The youth movement resulted in an aimless, hedonistic style. Church projects seemed inadequate for today's complex problems.

UNFOCUSED SOCIAL VISION

The problem today is not that citizens are unconcerned. They are concerned about their world, their family and their neighborhood. This concern has not yet been focused in a commonly held hope and vision for the future. In the absence of a vision of practical social change, people have no way to direct their concern corporately toward building a better world.

ARTICULATION OF THE VISION

A broad consensus on the real possibilities for a revitalized church and society is necessary to articulate clearly and concretely the vision local men see for society and its institutions in the future. This articulation will in turn provide the motivation and images which enable groups to create those practical solutions to social problems and move society toward their vision of renewal.

LOCAL COMMUNITY IMPACT

The Community Impact System will hold Awakening Courses, create Community Gatherings, and initiate Parish Renewal Signs. By directing impact efforts at both the religious and secular portions of the community, a common basis of understanding and common images of the future will be created. From these understandings and images, the particular vision for that community will be forged.

STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

The three strategies to interest citizens in the fifty locations of the Ecumenical Parish Project and to motivate their participation are: 1) holding Awakening Courses for clergymen and laymen; 2) creating Community Gatherings which intrigue the residents with new activity; and 3) initiating Parish Renewal Signs which address people with indications of new life in the community.

1. The procedures for Awakening Courses are to schedule and recruit strategically:
 - a. Living Effectively in the New Society (LENS), a secular think-tank for focusing individual concern.
 - b. Religious Studies I, a seminar in basic theology for laymen.
 - c. Parish Leadership Colloquy, a seminar in theology and practical church renewal for clergy and parish workers.
2. The procedures for creating Community Gatherings are:
 - a. Holding a Local Community Convocation, a day-long, introductory community workshop and motivation tool.
 - b. Conducting cultural forums as a joint effort of the churches in the parish, engaging noted speakers on issues of vital interest to the community.
 - c. Catalyzing community celebrations particularly tailored to the characteristics of the local community.
3. The procedures for initiating Parish Renewal Signs are:
 - a. Accomplishing "overnight miracles," such as creating a children's playlot in six hours.
 - b. Publicizing the common community story through posters, billboards, and art forms, with particular emphasis on the grid and symbolic name of the parish.
 - c. Honoring community services, agencies, and individuals by creating events around their unique characteristics or particular achievements.

RESULTS

Awakenment Courses procedures will result in the following:

- 2 LENS thinktanks per year in each parish with a minimum of 50 participants each.
- 3 Religious Studies I seminars per year in each parish with 25 participants each.
- 1 Parish Leadership Colloquy per year in each parish with 25 attending.

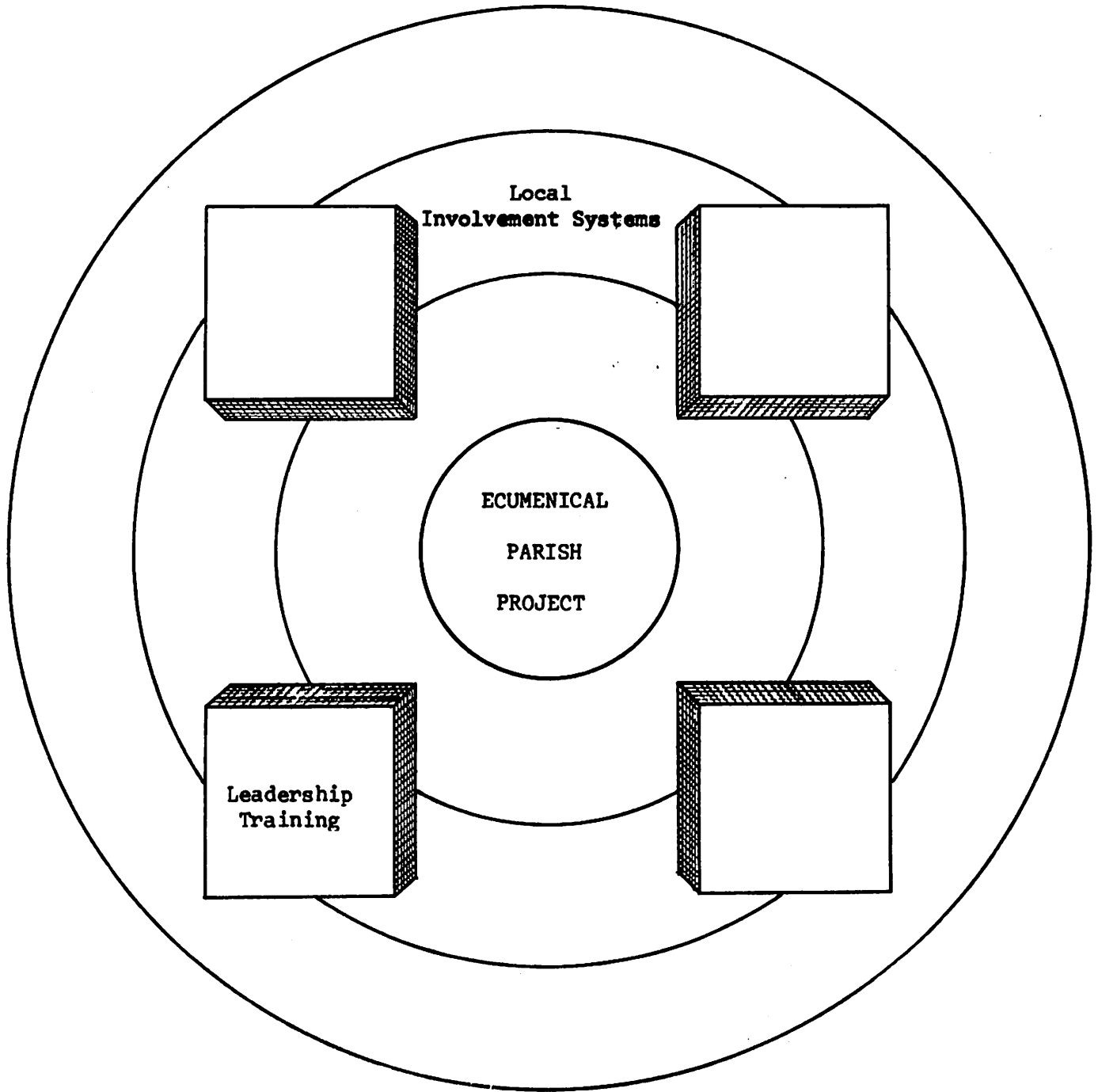
Community Gatherings procedures will result in the following:

- 1 Local Community Convocation per year in each parish with 100-200 participants each.
- A series of cultural forums in each project location.
- 2 community-wide celebrations per year in each parish.

Parish Renewal Signs procedures will result in the following:

- 3 overnight miracles per quarter in each parish.
- The parish story told and retold in several imaginal ways, and every resident impacted by the parish grid and symbolic name.
- Each parish will create and actualize a plan for honoring existing leaders and organizations.

Participants in the programs will be exposed to a new vision of the future and methods needed to actualize that vision. Their ethical and moral value systems will be impacted by images of care, integrity, motivity, and fulfillment found in service to others, as well as a contemporary articulation of the basic Christian faith. They will look at their community from a different perspective as they discover a new vitality and life around them. This explosion of images and activity will elicit the decision to take on long-term community leadership and provide the foundation for a network of cooperating community structures.



Local
Involvement Systems

ECUMENICAL
PARISH
PROJECT

Leadership
Training

Local Involvement Systems

LEADERSHIP TRAINING SYSTEM

BRIEF

Urban renewal efforts in the past have often assumed that outside expertise could best provide the skilled leadership necessary for significant change. The eventual withdrawal of that outside leadership resulted, however, in the collapse of community projects because of the vacuum in local leadership. The Leadership Training System creates a solid base of local leadership by providing images and methods which allow newly motivated and emerging community leaders to use their experience and wisdom in the task of community reformulation. Intentional planning of leadership growth; providing short, intensive training programs; and providing longer, in-depth training will elicit and intensify the leadership skills and qualities of local men and women. When actualized, the Leadership Training System will result in a core of trained leaders ready to take full responsibility for the direction and scope of their community. The success of the Ecumenical Parish Project depends on indigenous leadership who bring their own intimate knowledge and concern to reformulating their community.

Local Involvement Systems

LEADERSHIP TRAINING SYSTEM

LOCAL COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

The operating philosophy that expertise from outside of the community was the crucial element in "getting the job done right" has been the one element most frequently present in recent urban renewal efforts. The bitter experience of collapse after the outside expertise was no longer present, coupled with a new awareness of the capacity of local people to do the job, has raised the question of how to equip local people to assume leadership roles.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP VACUUM

The abundant problems of our cities -- family disintegration, school failures, rising crime, vandalism -- have been thoroughly analyzed by sociologists. In an effort to respond to these problems, millions of dollars have been poured into the cities and little has changed. Training and sustaining local leadership for problem-solving has seemed an impossible task. One searches for someone who might be effectively solving social problems and finds almost no one. Looking outside to find help reveals the frustration local people experience in trying to deal with community issues.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP METHODS

The major hope for extricating our cities from this dilemma is to enable emerging leaders within a community to experience themselves as capable of handling the job they know has to be done. Relying on the wisdom already possessed by community citizens, local leaders require methods to unlock that knowledge and to motivate local people to engage in the task of comprehensive community reformulation.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMS

Through Institute programs, courses, and in-depth training experiences, local leaders form a vision of their community's future and acquire the underlying discipline and methods to implement that vision. Jeremiah uses the image of making one a "pillar of iron." This step fortifies grass-roots people with the necessary skills to stand as "Iron Men" in executing responsibility for their community.

STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

The three strategies to provide each of the fifty locations of the Ecumenical Parish Project with a core of disciplined and motivated leaders are: 1) planning the program for Leadership Development of selected persons; 2) developing Methods Prowess; and 3) providing structured Training Experiences.

1. The procedures for planning the Leadership Growth of community citizens are:
 - a. Compiling a list of prospective leaders from graduates of Community Impact System events and from contacts made in the community.
 - b. Laying out a plan for each individual, including courses and leadership opportunities.
 - c. Creating occasions where individuals assume leadership roles and are honored for their performance.
2. The procedures for developing Methods Prowess are:
 - a. Holding weekly clergy gatherings and occasional business and community luncheons which expose potential leaders to spirit methods which are key to motivation.
 - b. Conducting advanced training seminars for church and community leadership which equip them with methods of rationally organizing data and solving problems.
 - c. Using a social methods curriculum in every community meeting, PSU, or Task Force which will prepare potential leaders in methods of corporate action and consensus.
3. The procedures for providing structured Training Experiences are:
 - a. Sending clergy and lay leaders from churches in the fifty parishes to the Basic Training School to be introduced to the tactical system of the Local Church Project.
 - b. Encouraging and assisting present and prospective neighborhood leadership to attend the Social Methods School to be trained systematically in practical methods of community reformulation.
 - c. Selecting and assisting both religious and secular people from the fifty parishes who have made long-range commitments to the community to participate in the in-depth eight-week Global Academy.

RESULTS

Leadership Growth procedures will result in the following:

- 10 community leaders in each parish who will be a core of self-starters.
- 20 community leaders in each parish who can be called upon to perform all necessary leadership tasks.
- 20 community leaders in each parish who can be called upon to perform most tasks.

Methods Prowess procedures will result in the following:

- 15 church leaders in each parish regularly participating in clergy gatherings and 15 businessmen attending business luncheons to introduce them to the Parish Project.
- 50 individuals in each parish through advanced training seminars.
- 200 individuals in each parish exposed to social methods by participating in community meetings.

Training Experiences procedures will result in the following:

- 20 religious leaders in each parish trained through the Basic Training School.
- 20 community leaders in each parish trained through the Social Methods School.
- 6 community and religious leaders in each parish trained through the Global Academy.

A reservoir of graduates of such training experiences in each parish will bring a sense of confidence and competence to the community. There is no way finally to guarantee a specific number of community leaders, but experience does show that such training will produce a solid core of strong individuals committed to the long-range reformulation of their community. Such a core will help release the wisdom and skills of others so that comprehensive community reformulation may be carried out.