

Checklist 2: Focus on Religious Institutions

The following list of issues is for people who serve in theological seminaries, judicatory offices, and other religious non-parochial organizations. If that's where you spend most of your time, these questions may help you discover areas in which you may need to consider change.

Make a check in the space provided to the left if you think this issue is a real concern for your institution.

- 1. Membership losses worry us. Membership is slipping, and contributions that sustain our work are diminishing.
- 2. Population changes complicate our life. We need to be active and visible in areas where we are not; and we need to pick up our tents and pull out of some areas where we are currently working.
- 3. The sense of connection has eroded within the organization, among people in the various geographic areas we serve, and between the organization and those whom we serve.
- 4. Money is a worry.
- 5. Our relations with other regions and our national office are not very useful or satisfying.
- 6. We operate as if we were in separate silos, with very little sense of the whole. People work in their departments on their piece of the action, at times unrelated to what others are doing or to the overall vision. Horizontal communication is poor.
- 7. We do not know whether we are serving the needs of our constituents.
- 8. Volunteers are hard to recruit and even harder to motivate.
- 9. Professional development, if it happens at all, is self-directed, with no consideration of the leadership needs of the whole.
- 10. We often spend inordinate amounts of time on parts of the system that are not functioning well, neglecting the healthier parts.
- 11. We need to develop programs and educational systems that will help both clergy and laity in our changing world.
- 12. We don't keep up with or use technology well.
- 13. People in our organization are polarized about change, some championing the need for change while others want to keep things as they are.

If you have checked even one of these issues as a current concern of your organization, you may find it helpful to check your impressions with those of others—your board, faculty or key division leaders, or staff people.

Next, go down the left margin (right next to your check marks), and indicate with an asterisk all the issues you consider seriously troubling. If you like, put two, three, or even four asterisks to indicate the intensity of your concern.