The '70s: Building Professionalism

The highlights of the decade of the 1970s, according to *A Twenty-Year History*, were:

- The value and need of improved training; the recognition that especially more theological grounding was needed, as well as special training for special settings;
- Developing professional standards for certification and better programs to meet those standards;
- The need for accreditation of training programs and establishing policies and procedures;
- Accepting women as professionals and as members (pastoral associates);
- Regionalization;
- The beginning of relationships with other organizations, especially with ACPE and the possibility of mutual recognition of training and certification.

The decade ended with the prospect of independence and more authority for NACC; NACC sought its own office space and an NACC-hired executive director. Also, in June 1979 the Council on Ministry in Specialized Settings (COMISS) was founded.

NACC Grandparents adjust their microphones prior to reminiscing about the NACC's early days at the 30th anniversary celebration in St. Louis in 1995. From left are Msgr. Harrold A. Murray; Sr. Julie Houser, CSJ; Sr. Rose Carmel McKenna, SCL; Fr. Richard Tessmer; Sr. Cyrilla Zarek, OP; and Fr. Frank Garvey.
Reflection

By Sr. Julie Houser, CSJ
NACC Grandparent

I recently watched the NACC Grandparents' video, made on the occasion of the NACC's 30th anniversary. Having been a part of that sharing, I was greatly enriched, enabling me at the time, a comparative newcomer to the organization, to rub shoulders with the giants of its early founding. My participation with the NACC has linked me with some of its earliest leaders, who gave so much talent, expertise, courage and creativity to the association. I listened again to the early leaders with an increased reverence for their dedication and I gratefully appreciated my limited involvement in these developmental steps of the NACC.

My introduction to the organization occurred during the Washington, DC, conference in 1975, where I joined with Msgr. Joe Dolan to share our New York experience of a shared ministry to the sick. This type of presentation and its topic were new to the organization. Only two years previous to this conference, women members had been voted into the NACC as Pastoral Associate members, yet several outstanding female leaders had already provided decisive influences on the NACC. Needless to say the array of black suits and roman collars exceeded any other membership grouping. Yet, despite its young history, there was a ready openness in these members to welcome and move with the Spirit. In retrospect now, I realize more than ever that our organization has been evolving, each time toward greater openness and response to the Spirit. I feel privileged to have associated with many of these early giants in our organization. Had we not had such notable and committed individuals at critical times in our history, the NACC's level of professionalism and its unique identity might not exist today.

Once introduced into the NACC in 1975, I continued to feel a part of this family, becoming one of the first elected female members of the Board of Directors. It was a very decisive time in the NACC, a time in which relationships with the Bishops' Conference were being determined. I was privileged to be part of these deliberations, moving the NACC from its offices in Washington to Milwaukee.

Once moved to Milwaukee, the newly independent organization benefited from the expertise, hard work and self-sacrifice of its leadership. I was privileged to be part of the education committee. Other committees established standards for certification and a certification process.

When the NACC divided into regions, modeled after the Bishops' regions, the local members took an active part in developing each re-
gion. In New York, representatives from each of the eight dioceses came together in New York City to formulate plans and organize the structure of its organization. Our first regional convention in Valatia, NY, was a huge success, in spite of the limited organization and preparation period. This regional process became very strong, making the membership in the state one in which new faces and close relationships and grassroots members took on a national awareness. Joe Dolan was the first Regional Director, which was most appropriate as he had been one of the NACC's founding influences.

The regional organization provided a framework for the decentralization of the chaplain certification process. As the first regional certification chair in New York State, I was privileged to facilitate and train interview teams, establish upstate and downstate coordinators and process large numbers of applicants in record numbers. Yet time would show that this process ultimately became too costly to sustain, and the NACC moved into another chapter of its history, and its continuing improvement. As the certification process has further evolved to its present scope and expertise, the NACC moves on in a most professional manner. No matter how professional its development, the NACC will still be a warm and closely bonded organization of our peers. With each new group of CPE students, I encourage each to become a student member in his/her respective professional organization. When attendance at national meetings has been possible, these students have attended and caught the NACC spirit.

Sr. Julie Houser, CSJ, is Program Director and Supervisor of the Clinical Pastoral Education Program at Brooklyn Catholic Charities, Brooklyn, NY.

Fr. Frank Garvey and Sr. Julie Houser, CSJ, talk about old times at a gathering of NACC-certified CPE Supervisors at the annual conference in San Diego in 1999.
REFLECTION

By Rev. Francis J. Garvey
President, 1979-1981

In 1965, I met in New York City with Msgr. Hal Murray and others to discuss the forming of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains. Since Msgr. Murray was with the United States Catholic Conference in Washington, we decided to have an office and Executive Director with the USCC. I forget the name of the first Executive Director, but I know Fr. David Beaten followed him, then Fr. Paul Henry, Fr. Tim Toohey, Fr. Edward Dietrich, Sr. Helen Hayes, and Fr. Joe Driscoll.

I met in St. Paul, MN, in 1965 with some other CPE organizations to discuss developing a CPE training program for the NACC. I became one of the first USCC CPE supervisors in 1967. I was also a supervisor with ACPE. My program at the Willmar State Hospital, in Willmar, MN, was one of the first dually accredited sites. I was an active supervisor for 32 years.

I was appointed to the USCC Board of Examiners in 1975, a three-year term. During that time Fr. David Baeten, Sr. Pat Watkins, and I wrote the first USCC Certification and Accreditation Manual at a meeting in Green Bay, WI.

I was elected President-elect in 1978 and was installed at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. We met quarterly at the office in Washington, DC.

In 1979 I was installed as President at our annual convention, held in Key Biscayne, FL, and the following year was installed in Salt Lake City, UT. I attended many meetings around the country. One of them was the first meeting of various religions and CPE groups (about 40) in 1980 held in New Orleans to begin dialogue on how we might share and recognize each other’s certification — a dialogue that is still going on. At the first meeting we could not even agree on what we meant by endorsement.

During my year as President in 1980 we had several meetings in Washington with Archbishop Kelly, then Executive Director of the USCC, and his assistant Msgr. Leonard, about moving out of the USCC building and getting our own office. This was something they wanted. Hence, we made the decision to move, but where? The Archdiocese of Milwaukee invited us to set up an office in St. Francis Seminary, which had space available. We accepted their offer. Fr. Paul Henry, the NACC Executive Director, resigned. I flew to Chicago and met Fr. Tim Toohey at the airport, and over lunch I convinced him and hired him to become the new
Executive Director. What a gift. Father Toohey made the move from DC to Milwaukee, set up the computer with membership, and everything we do today. The problem was that when I asked Father Toohey to be the Executive Director, he had been elected about one week before as President-elect to replace me and was installed at our annual convention in Milwaukee. The Board of Directors, as we were called in those days, made a motion and passed that I would serve as President for another year. This is why I was the only one to serve two terms.

In the '70s and '80s we held at least one supervisor workshop each year, under the leadership of Sr. Cyrilla Zarek. We had excellent speakers and lots of social life. In 1979 or 1980, at one of these workshops in San Antonio, TX, we began dancing, which then became part of the annual convention, especially for the next two years when the conventions were held in Milwaukee.

It was also in the 1980s when I, Sr. Cecile Schueller, and Father Toohey set up the NACC Certification Program, which since 1967 was under the USCC Board of Examiners.

Over the first 30 years I attended almost every annual convention. In 1973, we made the decision to accept women into the NACC. This was a major decision for us priests.

At the 30th convention, I shared my story of flying to Philadelphia for the annual convention — the problem was I got the wrong date and arrived one week early!

Rev. Francis J. Garvey is Pastor of the Church of Our Lady in Manannah, MN.

REFLECTION

By Rev. Richard Tessmer
NACC Grandparent

Over the years, NACC has certainly fulfilled the challenge which I offered in my keynote address at the 1972 convention in Louisville. My title was "The Future Chaplain Following the Model of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King." In the following years, our association was in the forefront of helping the profession of chaplaincy evolve to what it is today.
NACC has successfully taken the risk of changing the paradigm in the delivering of spiritual care. In the early days, we promoted the formation of departments of pastoral care in order to raise chaplaincy to the level of other professions. We also developed standards for the certification of chaplains and the accreditation of education programs to help chaplains (especially priest chaplains) to integrate sacramental and spiritual ministry. NACC helped priests recognize their need for specialized training for ministry to the sick, and also promoted the integration of men and women on ministry teams in hospitals. Finally, our association developed workshops and conferences to promote more professional pastoral care.

Some members and leaders wished to separate the association from the USCC; others wished to remain in union in order to maintain a clear sense of Catholic identity. Thus, the heated conflict between officers, board members, chairs of commission and the Executive Director. The conflict was partially settled at the Nashville Convention in 1984, when the association voted to remain in union with USCC.

The internal conflict was acted out externally in years of discussion with USCC and its Commission on Certification and Accreditation. Through the years there were many heated discussions and painful feelings and decisions. The struggle ended when USCC granted NACC the right to certify in 1985.

However, it needs to be said that through all these growing pains the leadership and members of NACC remained faithful to the wisdom and grace of the Holy Spirit. The Lord’s ministry bore much good fruit.

As we look back on the history of our association, we can identify at least six key passage moments: separation from CHA; the founding of NACC; regionalization; the development of Standards for certification and accreditation; and change in the form of governance, and recentralization.

The past thus becomes the first step into the future.

Rev. Richard Tessmer, who died in January 2005, served in ministry at Alexian Brothers Medical Center in Elk Grove Village, IL, for 30 years. He wrote this reflection as a starting point for the 40th Anniversary Committee.
Reflection

By Rev. Ralph J. Karl, OMI
President, 1974-1975

Congratulations to the NACC on their 40-year anniversary. Who would believe that when we met in Cleveland 39 years ago that we would start an organization that would serve God’s people so faithfully and also serve the Catholic clergy. For years we had been the stepchild of the Bishops Health Committee, meeting in Washington, DC, twice a year. As a member of the Board of that committee, we decided to hold a convention just for the priests instead of the whole Catholic Health Association, Catholic hospital administrators, Catholic Welfare delegates, etc. It was a bold step, as most chaplains had to depend on the health care facilities for funding. Now, forty years later, we have been self-sufficient and expanded to include not only the priests but also deacons, sisters, and caregivers.

Why I saved the minutes of the original meetings and the many years I was on the Board is a mystery. As one of the founding fathers (no pun intended), I was very proud of the programs we had. On the first certification board, writing out the specs, going from city to city establishing centers, and the long-drawn-out battles with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education kept us very busy. It was during my term as president that we "allowed" sisters into the organization. The Houston convention was hardly over before we took the heat on that one.

Another program was to write a chaplains’ handbook. If you look at the first book we published, you will see that most of the authors of the chapters were Board members. In order to make certain all the classifications were covered, we divided the work among the Board members. Now it’s past history, but it was a real challenge. We were fortunate to have such dedicated priests on the Board. Sometimes look at the authors of the first chaplains’ manual and see the giants that started the NACC.

Once again, congratulations on our forty years of service to God and those serving His people.

Rev. Ralph J. Karl, OMI, is a retired priest at Sts. Simon and Jude Parish in West Jefferson, OH.
As I look back over more than 48 years of ministry, I notice the milestones that mark the route: four academic degrees, three professional licenses, and a list of pastoral credentials that include NACC, ACPE, APC, College of Chaplains, etc. Other milestones include years as a parish priest; hospital chaplain supervisor; university professor and then dean; and these last and happily continuing years of ministry among the homeless and underserved of Washington, D.C.

The route certainly had its ups and downs, its challenges and rewards. But as I look back, all these accomplishments mean so much less to me now. What has survived the test of time, what continues to matter in my life, are the people I met along the way. That’s why I’m writing this piece to my colleagues and friends in NACC, so many of whom have not just touched my life but actually changed its direction, not once but many times. The following list describes some of where I was 48 years ago and some of the new directions I’m still struggling to reach. For me, it’s been a never-ending pilgrimage. That’s why I’m sincerely grateful to the many in NACC who helped me, much and often, to continue my search.

From I toward we
From head toward heart
From sought toward seeker
From teacher toward learner
From action toward reflection
From feeding toward being fed
From black and white toward shades of gray
From wishing for more toward enjoyment of less
From one with answers toward one with questions
From knowing with certitude toward leaping with faith
From prayers of “please” toward prayers of “thank you”
From speaking with authority toward listening with compassion
From talking about God in the pulpit toward finding God in the pews.

Rev. Douglas A. Morrison is Deputy CEO and Corporate Compliance Officer of Unity Health Care, Inc., providing health and human services to underserved persons in Washington, DC.
Almost 35 years of NACC people and events flood my memory. Gratefully, I share some of them.

In the very early '70s, Rose Carmel McKenna and I met at a pastoral associates' workshop in Milwaukee. Rose shared her hope that the NACC would become a model of collaborative ministry within the church. Her heavy emphasis was "including women — lay and religious."

While Rose inspired the vision, it was Dick Tessmer and Flo Smithe who made the vision a reality for me. Dick was a member of the association when it was all priests. Flo was among the first laywomen to join the association. Dick and I did training programs together. I also served on the original Certification Commission with Dick. Flo and I, along with Fr. Frank Keenan, served on a certification team together for years. Out of the relationships with Dick and Flo grew friendship that endures, and I am grateful.

I am also grateful for the experience of serving as coordinator of education. In that capacity I worked with two Executive Directors, Fr. Paul Henry and then with Fr. Tim Toohey. It was Tim who engaged in the mammoth task of moving the national office from Washington to Milwaukee, and I helped him. What a venture — adventure!

Tim was wonderful to work with, and work we did (worked wonders, really). Our original new headquarters consisted of one large, long room in Henni Hall at St. Francis Seminary. In spite of limited space and small staff, Tim’s tireless efforts paid off in laying a firm foundation. Again, it was wonderful to work with Tim and to be part of this historic move, and I am grateful.

I am also grateful for being on the original Appeals Panel with Deacon Rod Accardi. I remember asking Rod if he thought we really needed this panel. Then the appeals started arriving. There was indeed a need. Rod’s leadership, however, along with the investment of other panel members made this detailed, time-consuming task interesting and rewarding. For the people with whom and for whom (the appellants) I served, I am grateful.
I am grateful for celebrating our 10th, 20th, and 30th anniversaries and for attending most of the annual conventions in between. I am grateful for knowing special people who contributed so much to the spirit of the association and are now reaping their eternal reward — people like Helen Hayes, Joe Dolan, Bernie Nugent, Monica Flynn, Pat Brown, and most recently, Dick Tessmer. I do look forward to our 40th. I look forward to celebrating not only our past history, but also our history-in-the-making.

Sr. Cyrilla Zarek, OP, is working part time in the Pastoral Care and Education Department of Loyola University Medical Center, Maywood, IL, as the initial visitor to patients.

Reflection

About Sr. Rose Carmel McKenna, SCL
NACC Grandparent

Sr. Rose Carmel McKenna, SCL, an Emeritus Certified Supervisor, of Leavenworth, KS, died November 4, 2003. This book would not be complete without a few words about her and by her. She provided national leadership in the professionalism of spiritual care departments. Back when the NACC comprised only priests, Sister Rose Carmel led the movement to have lay persons and vowed religious recognized, certified, and endorsed as chaplains in the health care setting. She was known especially as a strong supporter of women in ministry.

Sister Rose Carmel was certified as a Supervisor in 1979. As a grandparent of the NACC, she took part in a panel on the history of the NACC at the 1995 annual conference.

In 1999 she was honored in her region, Region IX, at its annual fall conference. According to an article published in Vision, February 2000, "Director Jane Smith acclaimed her as an outstanding educator of chaplains, a long-term influential committee member, and a leader in achieving a status for women in an organization founded by priests for priests."

"Jane documented her comments with testimonial letters or oral presentations by bishops, priests, and organization colleagues both of the
past and for the future. Most Rev. George K. Fitzsimmons, Bishop of the Salina diocese, sent priests from Salina to be trained in the program for hospital chaplains developed and directed by Sister Rose Carmel. He expressed his appreciation for the program."

In the special section of the June 2000 Vision devoted to a celebration of the 35th anniversary of the NACC, Sister Rose Carmel wrote that the NACC is a strong national organization but expressed concern about the elimination of the regional structure. "The regions provide a means of education and solidarity for people who cannot attend the national meetings."

She wrote that she hoped "that the NACC will continue to improve its certification and education processes. And that the position of women, especially the sisters, will receive more recognition."

1970s Issues and Organizational Notes

1970

Issues: Abortion; broader medical ethics discussion; accreditation by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) sought; growing purpose of NACC; Chaplain as person; death and dying — patient and family.

Organizational Notes: Regional meetings begun; first Pastoral Institute on the West Coast; NACC now includes chaplains for general health care, for mental health, for the mentally retarded and for the elderly; Most Rev. Vincent Leonard, DD, Bishop of Pittsburgh, becomes Episcopal Advisor.

1971

Issues: Relation of chaplain to the diocese; more medical-moral issues.

Organizational Notes: Recognition from Catholic Hospital Association (CHA), from American College of Chaplains, and from the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE); first workshop held for supervisors; level of Acting Supervisor set; Most Rev. John Reiss, DD, JCD, Auxiliary Bishop of Trenton, NJ, becomes Episcopal Advisor.

1972

Issues: Professional competence; appointment/ hiring of chaplains; learning how to serve the retarded and the drug-addicted; continuing issues in medical ethics.

Organizational Notes: USCC reorganized, and NACC put under Department of Social Development and World Peace.
1973

Issues: Relationship to other professional organizations; status of "pastoral associates" in NACC.

Organizational Notes: NACC membership accepts religious sisters, brothers, laity and deacons into full membership; certification as Pastoral Associates urged; committee for Continuing Education formed; appeal sent to federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare and rejected — resubmission permitted; regional meetings occurring all over the country.

1974

Issues: Continuing education urged; regionalization discussed; relationship to ACPE strengthened.

Organizational Notes: New logo prepared and adopted; title "Emeritus" created for those "now inactive in the health care ministry, but who have rendered long and exceptionally meritorious service as a member of NACC."

1975

Issues: Relationship with other groups, especially regarding certification (ACPE, AAPC, APHA, and AMHC).

Organizational Notes: NACC incorporated and constitution amended; "Executive Committee" changed to "Board of Directors"; Pastoral Care Survey completed by Fr. Joseph Ciolek; Most Rev. Maurice Dingman, DD, Bishop of Des Moines, IA, becomes Episcopal Advisor.

1976

Issues: Regionalization; possible affiliation of the American Catholic Correctional Chaplains Association (ACCCA) with the NACC; need for statement on pastoral care in health care field.

Organizational Notes: Rev. Paul Henry, OSFS, succeeds Rev. David Baeten as executive secretary.

1977

Issues: NACC relations with USCC. USCC reorganized, and NACC put under Department of Social Development and World Peace.

Organizational Notes: NACC begins to give CEU's for its educational programs.

1978

Issues: Continual upgrading of ministerial competence; organizational matters in relationship to USCC and future concerns.

Organizational Notes: Formal regionalization tabled because of NACC's size. Most Rev. P. Francis Murphy, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore, becomes Episcopal Advisor.

1979

Issues: Regionalization; possible independence and more authority for NACC.

Organizational Notes: USCC to reorganize. NACC becomes voting member of Joint Council on Research in Pastoral Care and Counseling; NACC seeks own office space and an NACC-hired Executive Director.