

WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED

Transforming the Parish
through
Communities of Practice

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Core idea: We learn to be Christian and to live as Christians in the world by participating in communities with other Christian practitioners.

- ▶ How do we learn the really important things in life?
 - ▶ a look at **situated learning**.
- ▶ Where do adults gather in our parishes and faith communities?
 - ▶ a consideration of what is meant by **Community of Practice**.
- ▶ How do we become people and parishes ever more effective to the work of evangelization?
 - ▶ explore the potential of communities of practice to be faith formation and parish transformative.

REFERENCES

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger.
***Situated Learning: Legitimate
Peripheral Participation***, New York:
Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Etienne Wenger. ***Communities of
Practice***. Cambridge University Press
1998.

Jane E. Regan, ***Where Two or Three are
Gathered: Transforming the Parish
through Communities of Practice***.
New York: Paulist Press, 2016.



► Situated learning...

1. learning is grounded in the actions of everyday situations rather than around discrete packages of information organized by an instructor
2. knowledge is acquired situationally and transfers to similar situations;
3. learning is 'problem' driven rather than content driven, and
4. learning is always multi-modal, involving the full person and developing skills across multiple domains.

Situated learning

- ▶ situated learning in comparison to classroom learning
 - ▶ even with application, lacks the 'authentic' nature of genuine practice.
 - ▶ drills vs. scrimmages
- ▶ learning as participating in communities of practice.

LIFE AT ST. ODO THE GOOD

- Catechists
 - RCIA team
 - Eucharistic ministers
 - Pastoral staff
 - Social Justice Committee
 - Parish Council
 - Tuesday AM Bible Study
- ▶ pray
 - ▶ talk, discuss, debate, argue, gossip
 - ▶ talk about their faith
 - ▶ keep track of decisions
 - ▶ accomplish set tasks
 - ▶ talk about the parish
 - ▶ remember when...
 - ▶ have coffee

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A sustained gathering of people whose interactions are marked

by mutual engagement, shared enterprise and common repertoire,

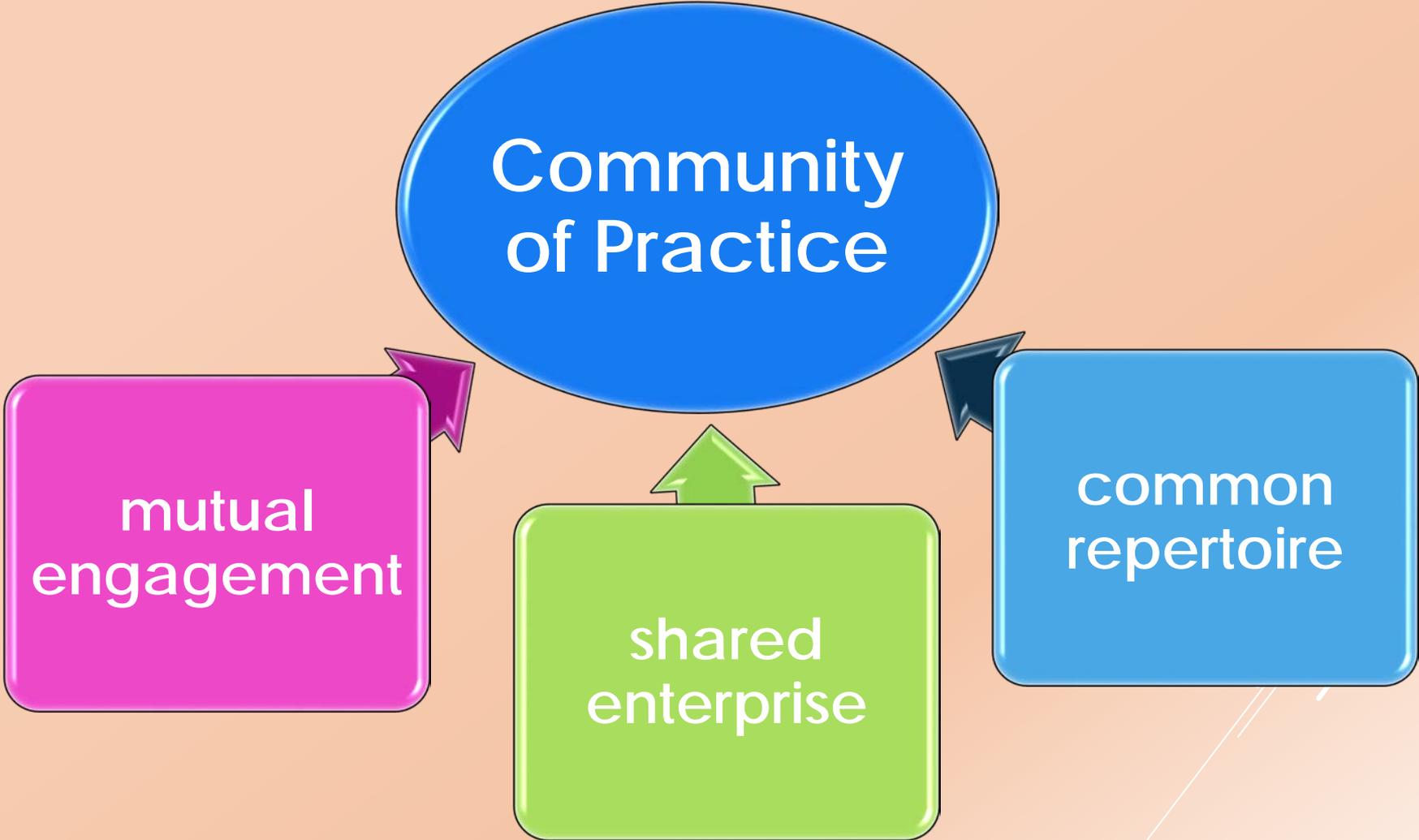
where the collective learning involved in surviving/thriving as a community

leads to practices that enhance group identity and further group goals.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AT ST. ODO THE GOOD POTENTIALLY

- Catechists
- RCIA team
- Eucharistic ministers
- Pastoral staff
- Social Justice Committee
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- Tuesday AM Bible Study

Community of Practice



mutual
engagement

shared
enterprise

common
repertoire

a shared enterprise

- The community itself defines the enterprise.
- The nature and direction of the enterprise becomes clear in the doing.
- These lead to shared commitment & accountability.

a shared enterprise

Evangelizing Parish

CoP's
Enterprise

Task

a shared enterprise

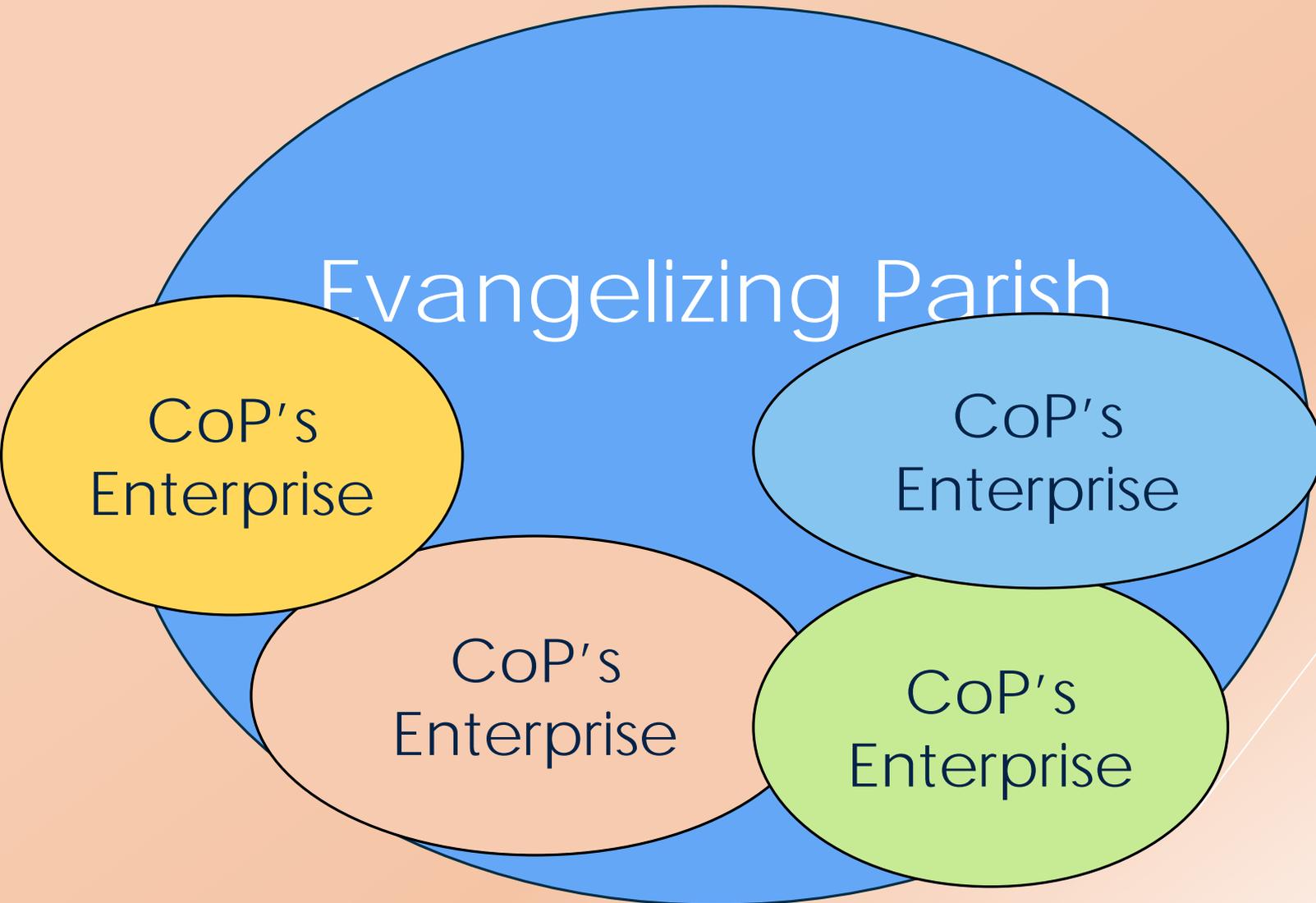
Evangelizing Parish

CoP's
Enterprise

CoP's
Enterprise

CoP's
Enterprise

CoP's
Enterprise



mutual engagement

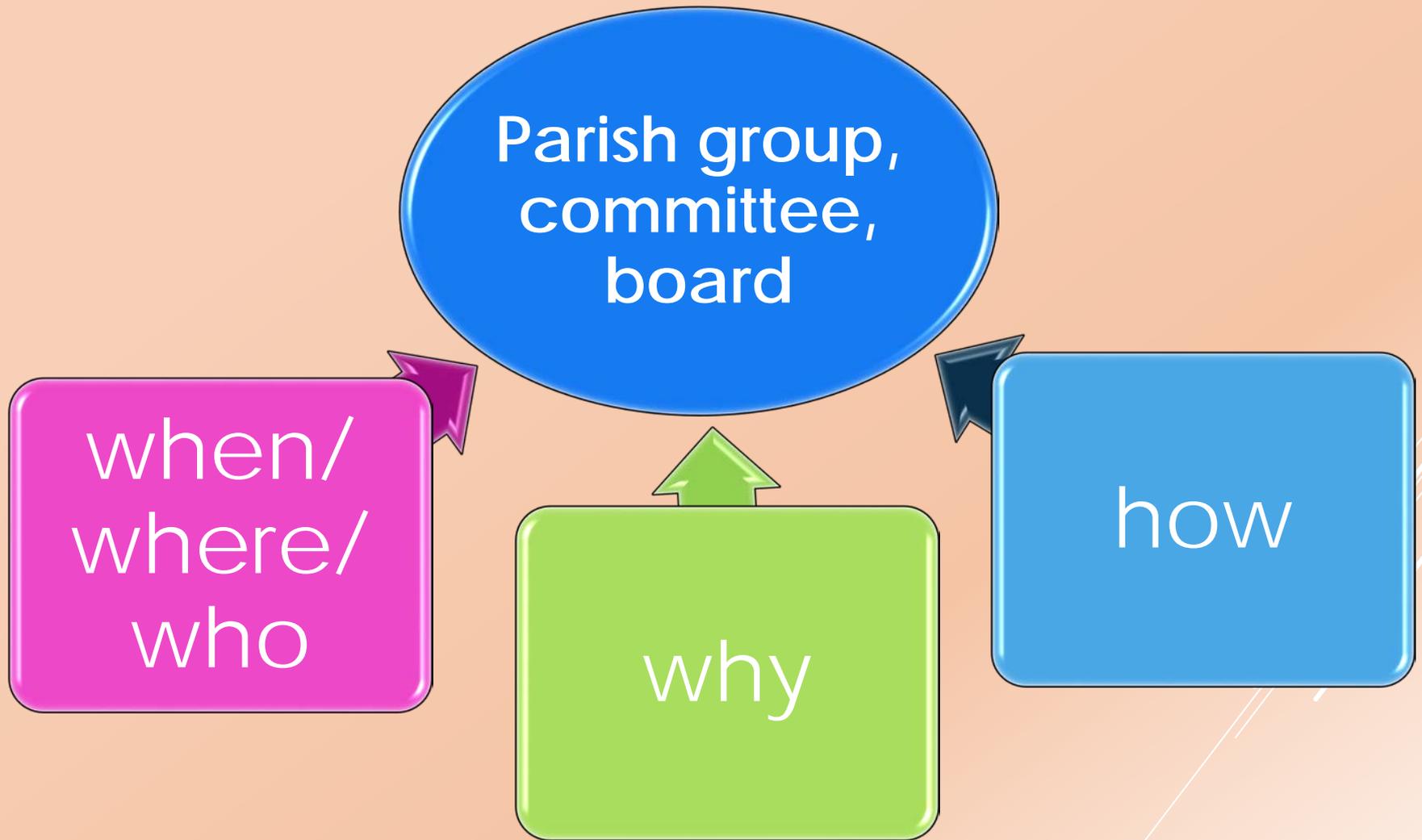
- Commitment to the enterprise
- Mutuality based on recognition of gifts and talents of all who participate
- Complementarity of focus
- Maintaining the group is an important part of any community.

common repertoire

Of an RCIA team...

- reflect on scripture
- ask questions; pose responses
- experience rituals/OCIA Book
- maintain the wisdom of the group
- establish traditions
- adjust to changing circumstances
- foster balance between memory and openness
- celebrate with larger parish

- ▶ What are the communities of practice in your life – related to your interests, your roles, your faith?
- ▶ In what ways might these three categories help you understand, access, and enhance these groups, making them more effective in what and how you learn and see yourself?
 - ▶ mutual engagement
 - ▶ shared enterprise
 - ▶ common repertoire



LotWfC

each team meets bi-weekly. Most come having read the Sunday readings in advance

enhancing their own engagement with liturgy and that of the children of the parish

check in; do reflection on the Gospel; discuss last time's session; talk about possible themes for the children; decide on process; divide up tasks; have coffee

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A sustained gathering of people whose interactions are marked

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where the collective **learning** involved in surviving/thriving as a community

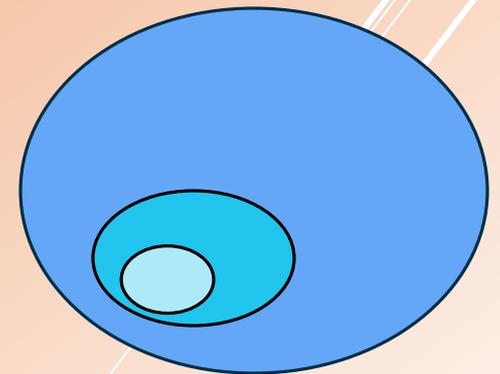
leads to practices that enhance group **identity** and further group goals.

LEARNING AS PARTICIPATION IN COP

**Practice = engagement in
shared enterprise**

Becoming competent as

- ▶ **third grade catechist**
- ▶ **person engaged in the faith
formation of the parish**
- ▶ **evangelizing Christian**



IDENTITY IN COPS

Taking on the identity inherent to the shared enterprise through mutual engagement



Become one engaged with the Word

- ▶ as a lector
- ▶ as a parishioner
- ▶ as a person of faith

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AT ST. ODO THE GOOD ~~POTENTIALLY~~

- Catechists
- RCIA team
- Eucharistic ministers
- Pastoral staff
- Social Justice Committee
- Parish Council
- Tuesday AM Bible Study

COP AS CONTEXT FOR ENHANCING FAITH

Being intentional about...

- embracing faith dimension of each parish group
- recognizing role of welcoming and belonging
- facilitating collaboration across communities
- providing opportunity for people to discern gifts.

Intentional about

articulating and embracing the faith dimension of each of the parish's communities of practice.



FAITH DIMENSION

- ▶ Description of the CoPs charge include the call to be evangelizers and to foster the faith of its members.
- ▶ Integrate prayer, reflection and faith conversations into the regular work of the CoP.
- ▶ Connect the CoPs with the faith life of the parish.

Intentional about

recognizing the communities of practice as the essential resource in welcoming new parish members and renewing established ones.

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WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

- ▶ Recognize that welcoming new members is essential to the health and vitality of the CoPs.
- ▶ Be deliberate about how the new members are integrated into the group.
- ▶ Establish a system of mentorship between new and established members.
- ▶ Cultivate milieu in which members move in and out of CoPs in healthy and constructive ways.

Intentional about

facilitating effective collaboration
between communities of practice
within the constellation (and
beyond it)

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EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

- ▶ Regularly re-affirm the shared enterprise in which all parish CoPs are engaged: to be and become ever more effective agents of evangelization
- ▶ When planning events involving more than one CoP, engage more than just parish leadership in the conversation.
- ▶ Recognize and capitalize on the role of “brokers” in facilitating engagement across CoPs
- ▶ Plan events – informational, formational, and social – that involve multiple CoPs with overlapping enterprises.

Intentional about

incorporating a process of discernment in order to engage people's gifts most effectively.

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DISCERNING GIFTS

- ▶ Affirm the scriptural foundation of gifts given for the good of the community.
- ▶ Help people gain insight into the process of discernment and its application to their lives
- ▶ Provide means and opportunities for all parish members to become familiar with and explore a variety of ministry opportunities.

LEANING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION...

- ▶ name the vibrant CoPs that already exist and support them
- ▶ look at the groups with which you work – think of them in terms of shared enterprise, mutual engagement, common repertoire
- ▶ work at making clear the shared enterprise and common repertoire that unite the communities within campus ministry
- ▶ be intentional about connecting people with vibrant CoPs

SO WHAT?

- ▶ Helpful insights?
- ▶ Concerns that need consideration?
- ▶ Questions that should be posed?