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**WOMEN IN DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:  
PROGRESS REPORT, 2003**

*A Study conducted for the Committee on Women in Society and in the Church  
By  
The National Association of Church Personnel Administrators  
February, 2004*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 1998 the Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church issued *From Words to Deeds* in which it encouraged the appointment of women to church leadership positions. To help gauge progress towards this goal, the Committee asked the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA) to report on the employment of women in diocesan leadership positions. The NACPA survey included over 50 executive, management, administrative, and professional positions in arch/dioceses around the country.

In 2003, the Committee asked NACPA to update its report. Again, more than 50 diocesan leadership positions were surveyed. Both the 1998 and the 2003 surveys are available on the website ([www.usccb.org/laity/women.htm](http://www.usccb.org/laity/women.htm)).

The following are key findings from the 2003 report:

- Over the five-year period between 1999 and 2003, the percentage of women in diocesan leadership rose slightly, to just under 48.4%. This compares to 46.6% during the 1995-1998 period.
- The percentage of women in diocesan leadership positions compares favorably with the U.S. workforce. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2002 women made up 51% of the executive, administrative, managerial and professional workforce. In that same year, women held 48.9% of diocesan administrative positions.
- During the 1999-2003 period, women held on average 26.8% of the top (Level One) positions. These include the chiefs of pastoral services, finance, personnel, education, and community services. This compares to 25.5% during the 1995-1998 period.
- Large dioceses (over 350,000 Catholics) are less likely to employ women administrative staff. They average 45% between 1999-2003. Medium-sized dioceses averaged just under 50% while small dioceses (fewer than 150,000 Catholics) averaged 52%.
- The South and West are the strongest employers of women administrators, averaging 53%, up slightly from the earlier period. The Central and Midwest showed substantial increases over the previous period, averaging 47% and 46% respectively. The Northeast had the smallest percentage—42%—but this was a significant increase over the 38.2% of the 1995-98 period.

<http://www.usccb.org/laity/wom2003rpt.htm>

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The Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church issued *From Words to Deeds* in 1998 to summarize its perspective on changes in the role of women in the US church. In the document, the Bishops encourage the fuller incorporation of women into the life and leadership of

<http://www.usccb.org/laity/wom2003rpt.htm>

the Church. The Bishops articulate several goals to that end including one that focuses on the appointment of women to church leadership positions. Five years have elapsed since the document was written. In light of the Bishops' commitment to review progress towards the goals, sufficient time has passed since 1998 for an interim estimate of how fully women are being incorporated into US Church leadership positions.

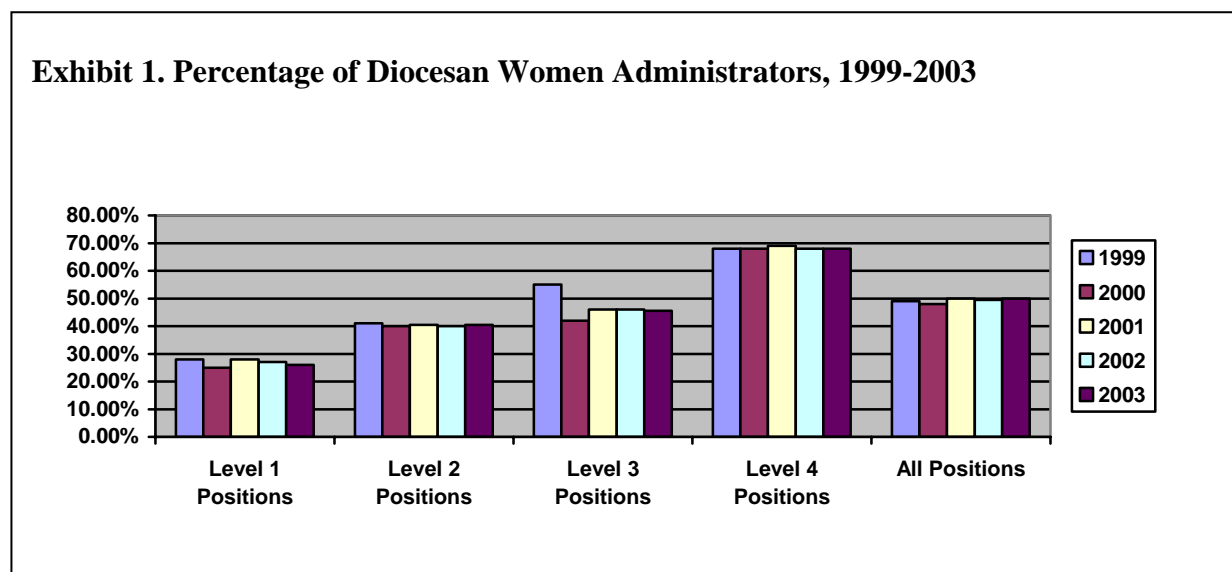
To help it gauge progress at the diocesan leadership level, the Bishops' Committee asked the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA) to share information it gathers annually concerning the employment of women in positions of leadership in dioceses and archdioceses. Since 1990, NACPA has compiled data on the gender of persons in diocesan executive, administrative and professional positions as part of an annual survey of salaries paid to diocesan staff members. This data, from over half of the US Catholic dioceses each year, will be used to estimate the portion of women in leadership positions in US Catholic dioceses.

This assessment will first examine patterns of diocesan employment of women in leadership positions during the five years since *From Words to Deeds*, then compare this most recent five year period to earlier time periods, then examine the current patterns of diocesan employment of women and finally seek out comparisons with employment of women in society at large. For purposes of this study, leadership positions will be characterized as administrative and include executive, management, administrative, and professional positions. The NACPA survey covers over 50 of these types of positions, including some held by priests in some dioceses.

<http://www.usccb.org/laity/wom2003rpt.htm>

### **Survey Results: 1999 - 2003**

The survey statistics for 1999 through 2003 record women holding just over one-quarter of top diocesan positions, 40% to 55% of middle management positions and two-thirds of non-supervisory professional positions. These statistics come from the approximately 60% of US Catholic dioceses that participated in the survey during these years. Exhibit 1 displays these diocesan workplace demographics in graphic form. The table in Exhibit 2 details the specific numbers underlying the Exhibit 1 graph. The position levels shown on both exhibits are defined fully in Attachment 1 at the end of this report, but can be briefly sketched as follows: Level 1 corresponds to top positions, Levels 2 and 3 to middle management positions, and Level 4 to non-supervisory professional positions.



Over the five-year period between 1999 and 2003, women filling diocesan administrative posts edged upward slightly, reflected mainly in slight growth in Level 3 and Level 4 positions. Viewed as a whole, employment of women in diocesan administration closed in on the 50% mark during these years. The employment picture for Level 1 positions appeared least stable, with women's employment in slight decline after reaching a high of just under 30% in 2001. Overall, 2001 proved to be the best year for women's employment in diocesan leadership positions at most of the levels and overall. Employment of women in that year reached 49.3% of administrative positions in dioceses.

By reviewing the numbers behind the Exhibit 1 graph, this slight growth phenomenon becomes clearer, as can be seen on Exhibit 2.

<b>Exhibit 2. Diocesan Administrative Workforce Statistics, NACPA Survey 1999-2003</b>							
<b>Year</b>	<b>Responding Gender</b>		<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>All Survey</b>
	<b>Dioceses</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Positions</b>	<b>Positions</b>	<b>Positions</b>	<b>Positions</b>	<b>Positions</b>
	102	All Employees	398	907	611	540	2,456
	58%	Women	111	378	339	357	1,185
		% Women	28%	42%	55%	66%	48.2%
2000	103	All Employees	383	1019	761	585	2,748
	59%	Women	90	397	399	387	1,273
		% Women	23%	39%	52%	66%	46.3%
2001	105	All Employees	394	1062	789	667	2,912
	60%	Women	112	429	439	455	1,435
		% Women	28%	40%	56%	68%	49.3%
2002	109	All Employees	409	1128	821	746	3,104
	62%	Women	112	448	460	499	1,519
		% Women	27%	40%	56%	67%	48.9%
2003	106	All Employees	410	1062	861	710	3,043
	60%	Women	109	431	478	477	1,495
		% Women	27%	41%	56%	67%	49.1%

Exhibit 2 displays total diocesan administrative positions and focuses on numbers and percentages of women administrators reported by participating dioceses during the period from 1999 through 2003. The exhibit reports women administrators at the lowest levels during 2000, while 2001 turned out to be the best year for women's employment in diocesan leadership positions. These fluctuations can be traced to turnover and to differences in the composition of reporting dioceses. (More about the latter in a moment.)

The percentage of women occupying positions at various levels of diocesan employment can be better understood by reviewing the types of positions that make up each level in diocesan offices. Exhibit 3 provides an overview of positions and levels. It lists the fifty-four specific positions covered by the survey during the 1999-2003 period. In completing the survey, individual dioceses determine the placement of positions into the levels. As a review of the exhibit will show, the independent decisions of dioceses result in largely consistent placement into levels

with a number of positions falling into more than one level, depending on the structure of particular dioceses.

<b>Exhibit 3. Specific Positions in Survey, Common Levels, Gender Composition, 2003</b>				
<b>Survey Position Titles</b>	<b>Most Common Level(s) in Organization</b>	<b>Total Positions in Survey</b>	<b>Positions Held by Women in 2003</b>	
			<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Pastoral Services Positions</b>				
Chief Pastoral Services	1	35	15	43%
Director Liturgy/Worship	2, 3	77	37	48%
Director Youth Ministry	2, 3	83	39	47%
Director Family Life	2, 3	83	56	67%
Director Ethnic Ministry	2, 3	93	53	57%
Director Campus Ministry	2, 3	28	11	39%
Director Evangelization	2	26	12	46%
<b>Administrative Positions</b>				
Chief Operations Position	1	70	5	7%
Chief Financial/Administrative Services	1	91	12	13%
Chief Personnel Services Position	1	23	8	35%
Director, Computer/Information Tech	2, 3	55	20	36%
Computer Specialist/Technician	3, 4	58	19	33%
Programmer Analyst	3, 4	23	11	48%
Director, Construction/Facilities	2, 3	41	4	10%
Building/Grounds Superintendent	3, 4	59	5	8%
Executive Secretary to Bishop	3, 4	97	92	95%
Director, Cemeteries	2	37	1	3%
Archivist	3, 4	52	24	46%
Director, Pastoral Planning	2, 3	29	17	59%
Director, Human Resources	2	59	30	51%
HR Generalist/Coordinator/Asst. Dir.	3, 4	28	25	89%
Employee Benefits Coordinator	3, 4	44	43	98%
Director, Insurance Programs	2, 3	26	13	50%
Director, Finance	2	54	21	39%
Manager, Payroll	3, 4	33	26	79%
Accounting Manager	3, 4	65	47	72%
Accountant	4	102	79	77%
Parish/Internal Auditor	3, 4	48	25	52%
Manager, Printing Services	3, 4	15	3	20%

<b>Exhibit 3. Specific Positions in Survey, Levels, Gender Composition, 2003</b> continued				
<b>Survey Position Titles</b>	<b>Most Common Level(s) in Organization</b>	<b>Total Positions in Survey</b>	<b>Positions Held by Women in 2003</b>	
			<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Education Services Positions</b>				
Chief Education Services	1	37	17	46%
Superintendent of Schools	1, 2	91	53	58%
Assoc. Supt./Curriculum Specialist	2, 3	113	93	82%
Director Religious Education	2, 3	85	51	60%
Religious Education Consultant	3, 4	113	86	76%
Media Services Coordinator	3, 4	24	17	71%
Director of Lay Ministry Formation	2, 3	56	33	59%
<b>Community Services Positions</b>				
Chief Community Services	1	38	12	32%
Dir, Peace & Justice (Cath. Soc.)	2, 3	46	28	61%
Asst. Dir, Peace & Justice (Soc. Action)	3, 4	22	11	50%
Director, Rural Life	2, 3, 4	7	4	57%
Executive Director, Catholic Charities	1, 2	84	34	40%
<b>External Affairs Positions</b>				
Chief External Affairs Position	1	28	8	29%
Chief Editor/Manager of Newspaper	2, 3	74	28	38%
Staff Writer	4	91	58	64%
Director, Development/Stewardship	1, 2	84	29	35%
Director, Annual Giving	2, 3	37	20	54%
Director, Planned/Estate Giving	2, 3	23	7	30%
Director, Communications/PR	2	60	30	50%
<b>Clergy Services Positions</b>				
Director, Permanent Diaconate	2, 3	47	5	11%
Director, Deacon Formation	2, 3	22	2	9%
Director, Vocations	2, 3	66	7	11%
<b>Tribunal Positions</b>				
Director Tribunal (JCL,JCD)	1, 2	83	18	22%
Canon Lawyer (JCL,JCD)	3, 4	93	25	27%
Tribunal Auditor	4	85	66	78%
<b>TOTAL POSITIONS IN SURVEY</b>		<b>3,043</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>49%</b>

In addition to describing the positions in this study, Exhibit 3 displays the percentages of women incumbents in survey positions for the most recent survey (2003). The percentages of women are relatively high for pastoral, educational and human resources positions and for Level 4 positions in general. Lower percentages of women occupy finance, clergy services, facilities and external affairs positions as well as tribunal positions requiring a canonical degree.

One way to summarize the slight growth occurring over this period is to compare the averages of the five-year period to the workforce composition in the final year of the period, as shown on Exhibit 4. This shows the 2003 composition of women's employment at higher levels than the five-year average (but ever so slightly -- under one percent), both for all positions and for positions in Levels 2 through 4. Only Level 1 positions exhibited a composition slightly below the average for the period

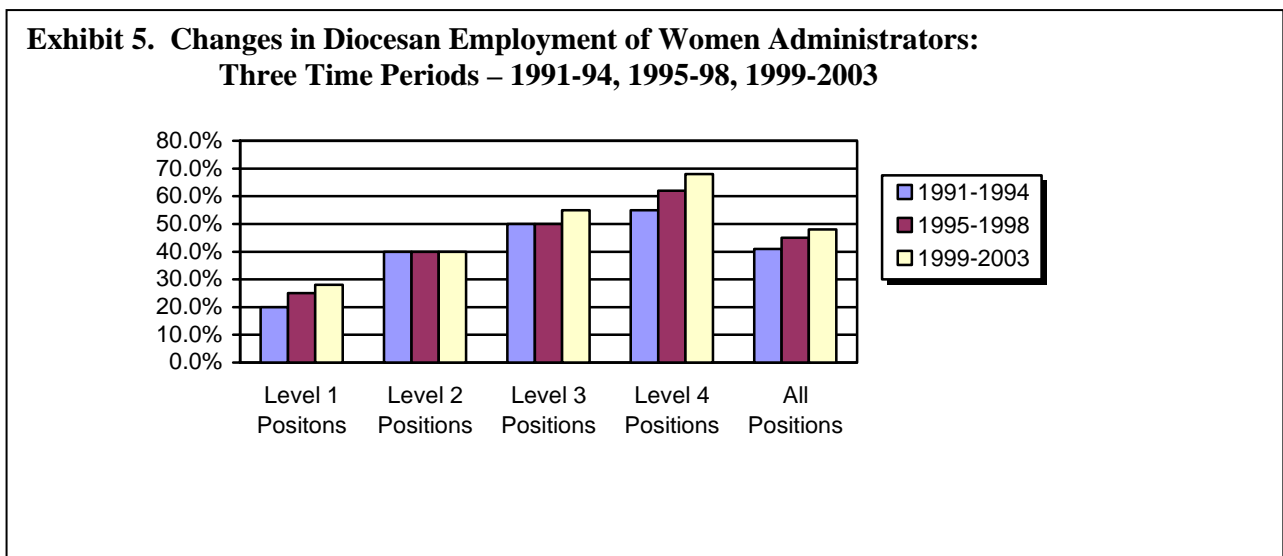
<b>Exhibit 4. Women in Diocesan Leadership Positions – 2003 Percentage of Women Compared to 1999-2003 Average</b>					
	<b>Level 1 Positions</b>	<b>Level 2 Positions</b>	<b>Level 3 Positions</b>	<b>Level 4 Positions</b>	<b>All 54 Positions</b>
<b>% Women in 2003</b>	26.6%	40.6%	55.5%	67.2%	49.1%
<b>1999-2003 Average</b>	26.8%	40.3%	55.0%	66.9%	48.4%

**Comparisons: 1991 – 1994, 1995 -1998, and 1999-2003**

More substantial growth can be detected when longer periods of time are compared. As indicated earlier, NACPA has gathered information about the percentage of women occupying diocesan leadership positions since 1990. NACPA published analysis of the period from 1991 through 1994 in 1996. The Bishops' Committee sponsored review of the 1995-1998 period in 1999. These earlier studies make possible a comparison of three multi-year periods. Such a comparison yields a better sense of change in the employment of women in diocesan positions. When the three periods, 1991-94, 1995-98, and 1999-2003 are compared, we find increases over time in the top Level 1 positions, the Level 3 middle management positions, and the non-



supervisory professional Level 4 positions. Only Level 2 positions show no statistical change during the three periods. These results are displayed graphically on Exhibit 5 below.



As indicated above, NACPA gathers this information about the composition of diocesan workplaces as it conducts its annual salary survey. In such surveys, there is occasional need to change some of the positions surveyed. Concerning this report, one position was dropped from the survey in 1999. Thus, the databases for the most recent period contain 54 positions while the 1995-98 period databases had 55 positions. The dropped position, Director of Purchase in, was eliminated from the survey because of low response rates from dioceses. It had the lowest responses rate in the survey (averaging 5 per year) and all occurrences were in Levels 3 and 4. Thus, dropping the Director of Purchasing position had little effect on the workplace composition statistics. Analysis of the earlier period using the 54-position database with the Director of Purchasing position excluded, produced only a .01% change in each year.

### **Comparisons by diocesan Size and Geographical Region**

The responses of diocese participating in the survey can be examined to identify patterns that may occur in workforce demographics due to the size of dioceses or their geographical region. Exhibit 6 displays analysis of responses by diocesan size. The Catholic population within a diocese is used to determine diocesan size categories. Large diocese serve Catholic populations

over 350,000. Medium sized dioceses serve between 150,000 and 350,000 Catholics. Small dioceses serve Catholic populations under 150,000.

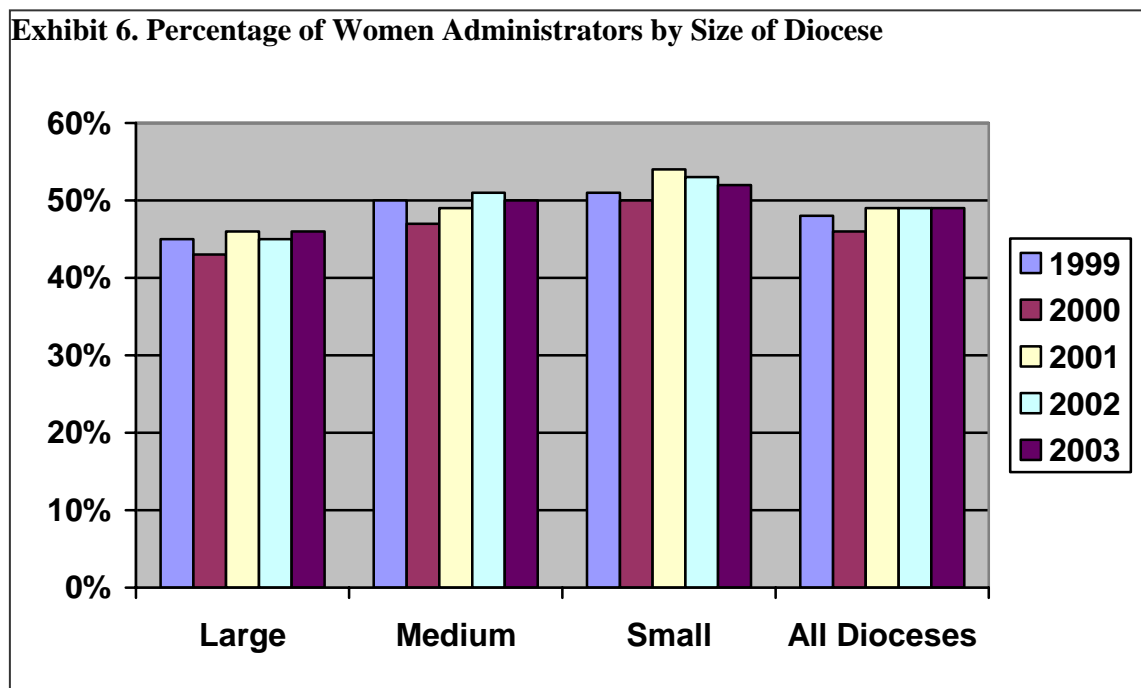
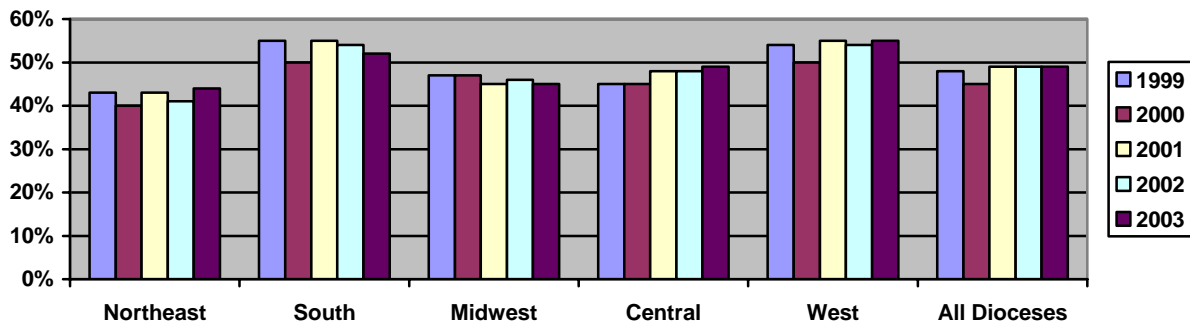


Exhibit 6 shows small differences based on size. As in previous studies of diocesan workforce demographics, the large dioceses report somewhat smaller percentages of women administrative and professional staff, averaging 45% over the five years between 1999 and 2003. The medium-sized dioceses averaged just under 50% while the small dioceses averaged 52% over the same period.

Turning to regional analysis of the database, Exhibit 7 shows the South and the West to be the strongest employers of women administrators, averaging 53% during the most recent period, up slightly from the previous period. The Central region showed a substantial increase in women administrators over the previous period, averaging 47% during the current period. The Midwest followed closely at 46%. Finally, the Northeast reported the largest increase in women administrators from the previous period but still had the smallest ratio of women administrators at 42%. Definitions of the regions can be found in Attachment 2 at the end of this report.

**Exhibit 7. Percentage of Women Administrators by Region**



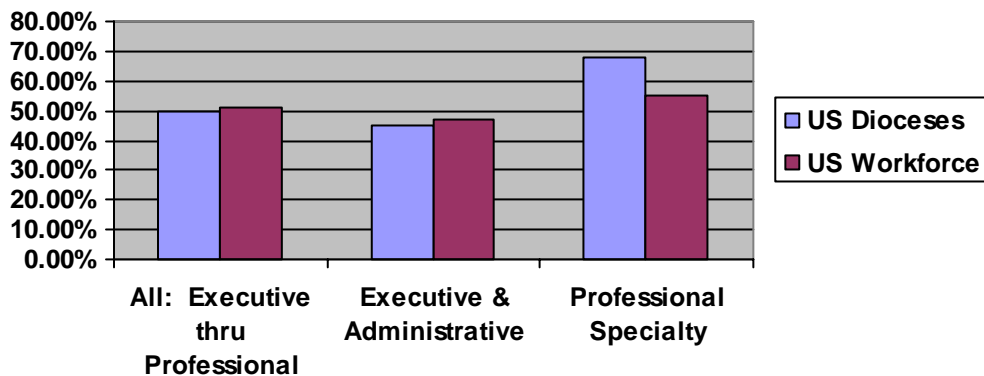
### **Comparison With US Workforce**

How does the diocesan workplace compare to society-at-large? The US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) regularly produces information about the US workforce that helps answer this question. The BLS reports annually on the number and percentage of women in the workforce. In 2002, women made up 51% of the executive, administrative, managerial and professional employment categories of US workers. These categories correspond roughly to the diocesan administrative levels 1 thru 4 under review in this report. At 49% in 2002, the percentage of women in diocesan administrative positions compared favorably with the US workforce figure. Exhibit 8 displays this comparison graphically.

The BLS database is rather detailed, allowing comparison with several of the levels of administrative positions in diocesan workforces. A grouping of executive, administrative and managerial positions corresponds roughly to diocesan employment levels 1 through 3. When comparing national and diocesan workforces for these types of positions, diocesan employment of women at 44% lags somewhat behind the US workforce at 46%. Comparison of non-supervisory professional positions presents a different picture. Professional specialty positions in the BLS data correspond to diocesan Level 4 positions. The two-thirds occurrence of women in

diocesan level 4 positions exceeds the 55% of women in BLS professional specialty positions in the US national workforce.

**Exhibit 8. Comparison: Women Executive, Administrative & Professional Employees in Diocesan and US Workforce, 2002**



#### **Methodological Information About the Annual Survey**

In recent years, NACPA's annual survey has polled dioceses about the fifty-four specific positions shown on Table 3 and the four organizational levels described in Attachment 1. Several clarifications should be noted about the survey results.

- While the NACPA survey focuses primarily on obtaining lay or lay equivalent salaries, most survey respondents report positions held by priests and religious as well as by lay personnel. Thus the information reported represents most of the incumbents in the surveyed positions from the responding dioceses, whether priests, religious or laypersons.
- Not all professional, ministerial and administrative positions in dioceses are included in the NACPA Survey. Only those displayed in Table 3 are included. They were chosen because of the likelihood that they exist in many dioceses. The survey positions appear to provide good representation at each organizational level.

- The survey is designed to include most diocesan administrative positions under the Bishop. It includes Chancellor, where that position functions as Chief of Staff or as one of the positions listed on Table 1. It is not possible to isolate the Chancellor position as such, however, since it functions very differently from diocese to diocese.
- The number of dioceses participating in the survey varied between 102 and 109 during the 1999 through 2003 period. Diocesan participation averaged 105 responses, which represented 60% of US dioceses. The actual dioceses responding to the NACPA survey has varied somewhat from year to year. But a core group of 65 dioceses responded in all five years and an additional 47 dioceses responded in three or four of the five years. In all, 136 dioceses participated in the survey at least once during the five-year period.
- Individual dioceses determined the placement of positions into the levels shown in the tables. The independent decisions of dioceses resulted in largely consistent placement into levels with a number of positions falling into different levels, depending on the structure of the diocese.

## **Descriptions of Levels as Utilized in NACPA Salary Surveys**

The common organizational levels referenced in Table 3 are defined more completely below. Dioceses use these definitions in assigning their positions to specific levels.

### **Descriptions of Levels as Utilized in NACPA Salary Surveys**

Dioceses differ in organizational structure. Some do not have positions at all of the levels described below.

Level 1: Positions at this level typically report directly to the Arch/Bishop and oversee a major segment of the Arch/diocesan central offices including several major offices or departments. Level 1 positions oversee Level 2 positions, themselves responsible for offices with staffing. Examples of Level 1 positions include the chief position responsible for the entire diocesan education program, including schools and religious education, or the chief position responsible for administrative and financial affairs in a diocese. The Chief of Staff position, which supervises most other diocesan positions, sometimes filled by the Vicar General or Moderator of the Curia would be placed here.

Level 2: Positions at this level report either to the Bishop, to the Moderator of the Curia, Chief of Staff, or a Level 1 position. They supervise other staff including Program Directors, Associate Directors and professional staff as well as support staff positions. Level 2 positions direct large or major offices and are typically responsible for budget, staff supervision and program content for their offices. Examples of positions at this level include the positions responsible for the diocesan finance office or the diocesan religious education office.

Level 3: Positions at this level report directly to Level 1 or Level 2 positions. One or more Level 4 positions may report to this level. Level 3 positions are responsible for managing a small or medium sized program or for supervising a portion of a large office and are typically responsible for program content and staff supervision. Positions at this level include Program Directors who may supervise secretarial staff or Associate Directors responsible for supervising other professional staff.

Level 4: Positions at this level report directly to a higher level administrator and do not supervise other professional staff but may supervise support staff positions. Level 4 positions are professional staff members, responsible for operating as technical experts in an area of specialization and/or for managing a small or medium sized work unit comprised primarily of support staff positions. In many dioceses positions at this level include religious education consultants, curriculum specialists, accountants and computer programmers.

### Geographical Regions

The geographical breakdown by regions used in this report is as follows:

Northeast	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont (USCCB Regions 1-3)
South	Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington DC, West Virginia (USCCB Regions 4-5)
Midwest	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin (USCCB Regions 6-7)
Central	Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas (USCCB Regions 8-10)
West	Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming (USCCB Regions 11-13)