

Continuation of the Interview with Alina Martinez

5. In what areas do you chiefly interact with individual churches?

Mainly Human Resources, Benefits and Payroll aspects, however this is often extended to other business aspects as well.

6. You have shown a real willingness to go to the churches and meet church administrators and clergy in their offices. What sort of work do you do that takes you ‘to the churches’?

Unlike the corporate world, church employment does not come with targeted, modeled, new-employee training. Neither is it customized for one particular church’s size, budget or campus. In the church there no “one size fits all” model. Consequently, I found that there is a real need for individual interaction, for individual trainings or for specific Q & A sessions.

Many of our churches have budgets on the smaller side. They employ part time staff who are challenged to accomplish more things than can easily be done within the time span of a part-time job.

Cookie cutter manuals that may incorporate much more than many of our churches need, *have not been practical* for most of our churches and their staff. Realistically, our churches need to receive easily understood answers to their specific questions and their *situation of the day*, i.e., answers tailored to their needs. For this reason, I am willing to go to each church. I see my contribution as supporting and empowering others to do their job maybe easier, maybe more informed.

Though my role at the Diocesan Office has been focusing on Human Resources, when I started visiting with churches, I soon found out that the needs are greater. Consequently, topics can range from budgets to 101 benefits and helping with informed decisions for such; compensation and retirement; financial & membership reporting on parochial reports, accounting, Human Resource requirements and/or planning or any number of other needs.

And some of these are quite distant from general business management. For example, I happened to be in a church office one day, having a discussion with a new Parish Administrator, on her first week on the job, when a couple appeared inquiring about getting married in the church. I was glad to assist the new person in answering the couple’s questions and to share what I had learned when I was in a similar role as to the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ of getting married in an Episcopal church.

7. How do you view your work for the churches and the Diocese as part of your personal calling as a Christian?

I can state beyond any doubt that I identify with the work that I do so much that it is a part of who I am—it’s not only “what I do”. God pours gifts in all of us, gifts that we can choose to use to further the Gospel and the Christian Mission. I am grateful that He gave me analytical skills and that I made that choice, that lifetime commitment to use my gifts to further the works of the Church. Maybe I would have not known this--- had I not worked in the church. So, through my work, I feel I have gained some spiritual wisdom.

8. If you had one word to share with our readers in churches across the Diocese---what would it be?

Focus on the **vision!**