

Chapter 5: Design Thinking in the Catholic Church's Organizational Structures: Responding to the Wicked Problem of the Sex Abuse Crisis

Stephanie Ann Puen

The sex abuse crisis in the Catholic Church has raised so many questions regarding the church's leadership and theology. An urgent response is required in order to ensure that justice is achieved and to ensure that the abuse does not continue. This essay hopes to contribute to this response by offering a possible tool and methodology that can help identify actionable plans to reshape the organizational culture and climate of the Catholic Church by using the concepts of design thinking and wicked problems.¹ Design thinking is a methodology used by organizations in responding to wicked problems—problems that are complex and difficult to solve, due to a variety of factors. Wicked problems are called wicked because they are multi-causal and multi-factorial. They are notoriously difficult to address and solve, and any attempt to solve them is likely to yield unintended consequences.² The methodology of design thinking has been used in changing structures and operations in corporations as well as in non-profit organizations.

The concept of wicked problems, as well as the methodology of design thinking, helps to understand the nature of complex issues in the sex abuse crisis, and why they are difficult to solve. This paper argues that this methodology can help respond to the sexual abuse crisis—a wicked problem. By helping flesh out the roots of the problem and their

¹ An example of work that brought organizational studies to bear on the institution of the Catholic church is *Church Ethics and Its Organizational Context: Learning From the Sex Abuse Scandal in the Catholic Church*, ed. Jean M. Bartunek, Mary Ann Hinsdale, and James F. Keenan (Lanham, MD: Sheed and Ward, 2006).

² Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4 (1973): 160.

relationship to one another by framing the sex abuse crisis as a wicked problem and by changing management and iteration when generating solutions in response to what has been identified as causing or exacerbating the sex abuse crisis, transparency and accountability can foster transparency in the structures of the Catholic Church

Sex Abuse Crisis as a Wicked Problem

The many different facets of the sex abuse crisis in the Catholic Church have the characteristics of what systems thinking and design thinking might call wicked problems. A wicked problem is wicked because of its complexity, making it notoriously difficult and messy to solve. The wicked problem involves “stakeholders who can’t even agree on the problem, much less the solution; and [people] who are reluctant to change behaviors and take risks, who are often rewarded for compliance rather than performance.”³ Wicked problems are often compared to tame problems. Tame problems are easy to solve and, once solved, are already finished with no other implications or repercussions.

Design theorists Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber outline certain characteristics of the wicked problem, and this paper will highlight three in particular that can help us understand the sex abuse crisis. First, the way wicked problems are described varies. Choosing which way to frame the wicked problem is dependent on who is part of the group responding to the problem and will determine what possible solutions will be generated. Second, there is no immediate way to test whether a solution to a wicked problem will be helpful or not and what the full array of effects will be. Third, because there is no way to test solutions, each attempt to respond to the wicked problem is significant and will drastically change the constraints and factors in the wicked problem that will need to be considered in the next attempt to resolve the problem. I explore each of these three characteristics in the context of the sex abuse crisis.

³ Jeanne Liedtka, Randy Salzman, and Daisy Azer, *Design Thinking for the Greater Good: Innovation in the Social Sector* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 4.

The first characteristic is that “the existence of a discrepancy representing a wicked problem can be explained in numerous ways. The choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem’s resolution.”⁴ “There is no rule or procedure to determine the ‘correct’ explanation or combination of them [in the form of a hypothesis] ... [because,] lacking opportunity for rigorous experimentation [as mentioned above], it is not possible to put [a hypothesis] to a crucial test.”⁵ As a result, “attitudinal criteria guide the choice...[some] pick the explanation of a [wicked problem] which fits [their] intentions best and which conforms to the action-prospects that are available to [them]. The analyst’s ‘world view’ is the strongest determining factor in explaining a discrepancy, and. . . in resolving a wicked problem.”⁶ The particular situation and context of the people who have a voice in the group and are part of the response will heavily affect the way the wicked problem is understood and articulated as well as what possible solutions can and need to be done in response. For example, Jaisy Joseph accounts for how the Catholic Church’s leaders in India drive the narrative on the question of the sex abuse crisis through a mode of self-preservation: “When accusations of sexual violence first surface, it is not uncommon to hear dismissive questions ... or for the accusations themselves to be regarded as retaliation against the church.”⁷ Such questions thus shift the way the problem is framed. Instead of the problem being connected to the institutional culture, the kinds of questions the Church raises shift the problem towards individual behavior of the victims or accusers. Because the way the problem is defined is heavily dependent on the perspectives of the analysts and people responding to the wicked problem, solving the sex abuse crisis requires a diverse set of voices to be part of the discussion when crafting, implementing, and evaluating a response and its future iterations.

⁴ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 166.

⁵ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 166.

⁶ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 166.

⁷ Jaisy A. Joseph, “‘Responding to Shame With Solidarity’ Sex Abuse Crisis in the Indian Catholic Church,” *Asian Horizons* 14, no. 2 (2020): 388.

The second characteristic is that “there is no immediate or ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem.”⁸ Rittel and Webber point out how, for tame problems such as the math problem of $2 + 2 = 4$, “one can determine on the spot how good a solution-attempt has been ... the test of a solution is entirely under the control of the few people who are involved and interested in the problem.”⁹ However, this is not the case for wicked problems, as the full range of consequences of any solution implemented is unclear, and such consequences are generated over an extended and unbounded period of time. Because they are unclear, there may also be unintended negative consequences that may even outweigh whatever good things were accomplished by implementing the solution. The sex abuse crisis has many different facets to it: questions on clergy formation, on the ways in which sexuality, family, and gender are understood within Catholic theology, on the organizational structure of the church that can be opaque and unhelpful in the context of accountability, and many more. Implementing one solution in one aspect, such as linking a particular character trait with the sex abuse crisis, will have both intended and unintended consequences that may also affect Catholic education, clergy formation in seminaries, how the church is organized, or if justice will even be achieved. An example of this issue is the response of “linking homosexuality and pedophilia, and implicitly blaming gay priests for sexual abuse.” Not only does it unjustly condemn a particular group on unfounded claims, but it also has ramifications on such things as teachings on priesthood, sex and gender, and who are thus qualified to be leaders of the church.¹⁰ While the solution aims for some form of change to address

⁸ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 163.

⁹ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 163.

¹⁰ See Michael J. O’Loughlin, “Vatican Reaffirms Ban on Gay Priests,” *America Magazine*, December 7, 2016, www.americamagazine.org/faith/2016/12/07/vatican-reaffirms-ban-gay-priests: “The language barring gays from the priesthood first came to light in 2005 under Pope Benedict XVI, but it was crafted soon after the clergy sexual abuse scandal broke in the early 2000s. Some observers said at the time that church leaders were trying to pin the scandal on gay priests, even as psychology and law enforcement experts said there is no link between homosexuality and child abuse.” See also James Martin, SJ, “It’s Not About Homosexuality:

the problem, human finitude as well as difficulty in predicting all reactions to the solution make it difficult to account for all possible changes and all those who will be affected, whether good or bad.

The third characteristic is that “every solution to a wicked problem is a ‘one-shot’ operation; because there is no opportunity to learn by trial-and-error, every attempt counts significantly.”¹¹ Because of the difficulty in accounting for the consequences, as well as the sheer number of people affected, every trial will be crucial and most likely incomplete in totally responding to the problem, resulting in several iterations in order to improve the situation. Each attempt will also change the constraints in the wicked problem, based on the consequences of the previous attempt. Solutions that may target clergy formation or emphasize sacramental confession will certainly have lasting effects but will not totally address the sex abuse crisis as other factors such as justice and doctrinal teachings also need to be considered and responded to appropriately. Theologian Aaron Milavec identified sacramental confession as one way the United States bishops approached the sex abuse crisis, which may be healing for some, such as the perpetrator, and supposedly allow them to change with God’s grace. However, this theology of the confession “reduced any prospect that angry parents would ever hear any admission of guilt” or restitution and often did not entail penances such as never being alone with potential victims or going into rehabilitation or therapy.¹² This sacramental solution also did not have an effect on teachings of celibacy or sex and gender in the Catholic Church, which many agree are also necessary considerations in addressing this problem. Each implementation of a solution therefore

Blaming the Wrong People for the Sexual Abuse Crisis,” *Huffington Post*, June 14, 2010, www.huffpost.com/entry/its-not-about-homosexuali_b_537810; Robert Mickens, “The Catholic Church is Enabling the Sex Abuse Crisis by Forcing Gay Priests to Stay in the Closet,” *The Washington Post*, July 23, 2018, www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2018/07/23/the-catholic-churchs-sex-abuse-scandals-show-it-has-a-gay-priest-problem-theyre-trapped-in-the-closet/.

¹¹ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 163.

¹² Aaron Milavec, “Reflections on the Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests,” *Asian Horizons* 4, no. 1 (2010): 187.

needs to be thought through as carefully as possible, given these limitations and very real impact on communities. Any solution “leaves ‘traces’ that cannot be undone” easily as “many people’s lives will have been irreversibly influenced, and large amounts of money will have been spent...every attempt to reverse a decision or to correct for the undesired consequences poses another set of wicked problems, which are in turn subject to the same dilemmas.”¹³

Design Thinking in the Catholic Church's Organizational Structure

Given the complexity of responding to wicked problems such as the sex abuse crisis, how should one respond? One proposed framework in response to wicked problems is design thinking, a problem-solving framework used in response to wicked problems. Design thinking has been used by businesses to design their products and services, as well as by non-profit organizations to improve their services for various marginalized and vulnerable individuals and communities.¹⁴ The methodology has several “steps,” though design thinkers will always emphasize that it is not a neatly designed framework that acts as a silver bullet for any and all problems. Rather, design thinking helps groups of diverse people harness their creativity and organize their thoughts in order to address a problem that can seem too complex to handle because of competing claims on the good, interests, and constraints, making design thinking an appropriate methodology to respond to wicked problems. In response to the three characteristics of a wicked problem described in the first part of this paper, design thinking offers helpful tools and principles. First, design thinking’s use of system archetypes can also help increase and diversify the voices heard and taken into account when responding to the sex abuse crisis. Second, design thinking’s emphasis on change management and iteration can help those responding to the sex abuse crisis understand more deeply

¹³ Rittel and Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory,” 163.

¹⁴ For more on this, see Liedtka, Salzman, and Azer, *Design Thinking for the Greater Good*.

and manage the effects of the solution attempt on the communities involved.

System Archetypes

In response to the first characteristic of wicked problems, where the description of the wicked problem as well as the solutions crafted are heavily dependent on the world views and perspectives of the people responding to the wicked problem, solving the wicked problem requires the inclusion of a diverse set of voices in order to have a more robust description of the wicked problem at hand. Design thinking encourages its practitioners to foster a deep sense of empathy and willingness to listen; an assumption in design thinking is that part of the solution is to “empathize [with the people being served], understand them, and bring them along...in the design process.”¹⁵

In relation to what was mentioned earlier in the description of iteration, engaging new voices is key in this process, as well engaging the voices of those most heavily affected. This engagement reflects the importance of solidarity as an important marker of the Catholic social vision. Solidarity, a core principle of Catholic social thought, is the conviction that all creatures, including people, are interconnected, and thus we are to engage in “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 38), especially those most heavily impacted or those in vulnerable communities.

This solidarity leads to an approach informed by subsidiarity, another core principle in Catholic social thought, which, “understood *in the positive sense* as economic, institutional or juridical assistance offered to lesser social entities, entails a corresponding series of *negative* implications that require the State to refrain from anything that would de facto restrict the existential space of the smaller essential cells of society. Their initiative,

¹⁵ IDEO.org, *Field Guide to Human Centered Design* (Canada: Design Kit, 2015), 22.

freedom and responsibility must not be supplanted” (*Compendium*, no. 186). While there is debate on whether subsidiarity should be practiced within the church organizational structure, design thinking would argue in the affirmative, especially in the sex abuse crisis where there are elements that need to be addressed at the level of the universal church but also at the level of the diocese or parish.¹⁶ Such engagement and solutions will entail some form of structural change at both levels.

In design thinking, going about structural change entails an understanding of systems thinking and the concept of system archetypes in order to help clarify patterns of behavior at the structural level between related agents or groups. The basic premise is that an action will trigger some form of reaction, and these actions and reactions are called feedback loops. Certain feedback loops have become predictable ‘archetypes’ that can help those engaging in structural change projects to ensure success and avoid common pitfalls. One example of a system archetype is known as the tragedy of the commons, where the uncoordinated and solely self-interested use of a particular resource by individuals who have open access to the resources lead to the resource’s depletion.¹⁷ Once a systems archetype is identified, it is important to consider what kind of reaction or feedback happened in order to assess what needs to be improved to move closer towards a goal.¹⁸ There may also be delays, where people may perceive feedback incorrectly, which may lead to misunderstanding what is needed for the next iteration of the solution.

¹⁶ For an example of analysis done and the debate on whether subsidiarity and authentic participation can be applied to the Catholic church organizational design, see Kathryn R. Hamrlik, “The Principle of Subsidiarity and Catholic Ecclesiology: Implications for the Laity,” (PhD diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2011).

¹⁷ For more on the concept of the tragedy of the commons, see Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243–1248.

¹⁸ Radim Spicar, “System Dynamics Archetypes in Capacity Planning,” *Procedia Engineering* 69 (2014): 1351.

One system archetype is “fixes that fail,” where an easy fix simply fixes the symptoms but not the actual cause.¹⁹ The “fix” simply reinforces the problem in the long run with additional problem of delayed unintended consequences that add to the symptoms, while also creating an addiction to the easy fix because of the perceived “change.” Such fixes—for example, moving a priest accused of misbehavior to another diocese—might seem like the Catholic Church is responding to the sex abuses crises but are not enough to address root causes and instead may just address symptoms.

“Fixes that fail” may also lead to “shifting the burden,” another archetype that is similar to “fixes that fail” but shifts attention from the fundamental problem to the side effects. The focus then becomes solving those side effects rather than the fundamental problem. This creates a culture of avoidance or dependency on a particular intervention that, in actuality, may only be partially helpful or even unhelpful, such as focusing solely on celibacy without understanding the role of clergy formation and church teaching on sex and gender. Consider how Hamburg auxiliary bishop Hans-Jochen Jaschke’s quote that alleges that “celibate lifestyle can attract people who have an abnormal sexuality and cannot integrate sexuality into their lives” is misused to link celibacy alone with the sex abuse crisis and pedophilia.²⁰

These archetypes may also lead to another archetype called “eroding goals,” where the system’s community is asked to accept the way things are and settle, in the name of particular values, rather than risk and work towards justice. One of the two abuse survivors who quit the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors in 2016, Marie Collins, identifies this archetype at play at the Vatican when she describes the “cultural resistance” driven by “fear of change ... or a closed mindset which

¹⁹ Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York, USA: Doubleday, 2006), 422.

²⁰ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 104, 110. The quote from Jaschke can be found in Tom Heneghan, “Celibacy Debate Re-emerges Amid Church Abuse Scandal,” *Reuters*, March 13, 2010, www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62B38C20100312.

sees abuse as an inconvenience, or a clinging to old institutional attitudes.”²¹

Asking the question “what system archetypes are at play?” and “what feedback has happened and how do we avoid oscillation, where a system just cycles between good and bad without permanent improvement? If there is delay or continued gaps, are there hidden agendas hindering the improvement of feedback?” can help surface whose voices are being heard and whose are not, and whose expertise is needed in the kinds of solutions required based on the archetypes present in the system. Bringing new voices and practicing active listening towards those at the margins can then shift the kinds of feedback loops happening within the system and reveal other aspects of the system that may be affecting the problem.

Awareness of system archetypes can help create structural change needed to bring in more diverse voices to contribute to the continued iteration of solutions needed to address the sex abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. The diverse voices, particularly the voices of the victims and those at the margins, can help generate alternative ways and catalyze change in the structures within the church to foster healing and justice. Bringing in their voices also show that they are valued in the church, which includes getting them to share in the vision and the process as part of change management, in the same way that various organizations have done so using this methodology.²²

²¹ Frances D’Emilio, “Abuse Survivor Quits Pope Francis’ Panel Over Vatican Stonewalling,” *The Associated Press*, March 2, 2017, www.apnews.com/article/vatican-city-ma-state-wire-ap-top-news-pope-francis-international-news-f49acb21f4a646faa9290c56063f37fc.

²² Examples of other organizations that have used design thinking in fostering community-wide dialogue towards generating solutions for their organizations are the cases of Monash Medical Centre in Australia and the Institute without Boundaries (IwB) in Toronto, Canada in partnership with the town of Iveragh, Ireland. The Monash Medical Centre’s medical staff used design thinking to engage their patients and community by attending to “people, process, and systems, including the role of human emotion. In particular, an appreciation for the power of the larger system to drive both intended and unintended behaviors and outcomes” was key in getting buy in and redesigning their systems. The community in Iveragh, Ireland used design thinking as well to “create a community-wide conversation” on revitalizing the

Change Management and Iteration

The second way that design thinking can help in addressing the sex abuse crisis is through the tools of change management and iteration. In response to the second and third characteristics of wicked problems—that there is no ultimate test to see if a solution will work prior to its implementation and thus each attempt to respond to the sex abuse crisis counts significantly and will most likely only be a partial solution with both intended and unintended consequences—design thinking offers tools that can help manage the attempts in ways that can continue the positive benefits of an attempt. It can also help mitigate the negative consequences that may arise in relation to the different interests and concerns of various stakeholders involved in such sensitive and polarizing issues.

First, change management tools in design thinking keep church leadership and those responding to the sex abuse crisis in dialogue with the victims, the community, and other stakeholders and sectors involved, rather than revert to a “bunker mentality” where “the Church wants to resolve her problems from the inside and exclude the public dimension because she is afraid of her own reputation and the reputation of the institution.”²³ Many are rightfully upset over the handling of the sex abuse crisis, and so many of the stakeholders involved may be carrying strong emotions—anger, sadness, dejection, despair, disgust—at the situation, at the abusers, and at the institution of the Catholic Church.²⁴ Change management acknowledges the different ways that organizations change—

rural community and population, making sure that the economic success stemming from tourism reaches the population. For more on these two cases and more, see Liedtka, Salzman, and Azer, *Design Thinking*, 79–102, 125–146.

²³ Hans Zollner, SJ, “The Spiritual Wounds of Sexual Abuse,” *La Civiltà Cattolica*, January 18, 2018, www.laciviltacattolica.com/spiritual-wounds-sexual-abuse/.

²⁴ Kathleen Davis, “‘Beyond Anger’: Pittsburgh Priest Says Sex Abuse Report ‘Shook’ Parishioners,” *NPR*, August 18, 2018, www.npr.org/2018/08/18/639648032/beyond-anger-pittsburgh-priest-says-sex-abuse-report-shook-parishioners; Sean Reynolds, “How Are Grassroots Catholics Responding to the Sex Abuse Crisis?” *America Magazine*, April 8, 2019, www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/04/08/how-are-grassroots-catholics-responding-sex-abuse-crisis.

structural change, process change, cultural change—and various approaches have been proposed to help organizations succeed in changing unjust or terrible systems, while helping manage the many different emotions, opinions, and interests at stake.

Business writer Richard Luecke's proposal is helpful in this context as he lists several steps in managing such highly emotional changes or transitions: 1) mobilizing commitment and energy, 2) developing a shared vision of what to work towards, 3) identifying the leadership, 4) focusing on results and not just the activities and 'fluff,' 5) starting change at the periphery and letting it spread without necessarily pushing it from the top in order to show that the change can work and reaps benefits for the people and the organization, 6) institutionalizing successes through formal policies, systems, and structures, and 7) monitoring and adjusting strategies in response to problems within the change process.²⁵

Some of these steps, such as steps 1, 2, and 5, are helpful especially in scaling smaller cultural or structural changes across the larger institution, given the size of the Catholic Church, while at the same time helping address fears, motivations, and concerns at play. Step 1, for example, calls for the organization to face the issues with honesty, calling for the involvement and commitment of all the people in the organization, in order to clarify the implications and consequences should the issues continue to go unaddressed. This is what organizations such as the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) or Rete L'Abuso demands of religious institutions such as the Catholic Church to do.²⁶ Step 2 requires a vision of the church that entails the church confronting the clericalism, sexism, and other -isms that plague its community and organizational structures. Such a vision is articulated through the work of Catholic organizations such as the Catholic Worker Movement. Step 5

²⁵ Richard Luecke, *Managing Change and Transition* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003), 33–45.

²⁶ Nicole Winfield, "Italian Clergy Abuse Survivors Demand Catholic Church Inquiry," *CTV News*, February 15, 2022, www.ctvnews.ca/world/italian-clergy-abuse-survivors-demand-catholic-church-inquiry-1.5781713.

emphasizes the importance of solidarity and subsidiarity in promoting change, rather than having authorities at the top quash movements from the peripheries out of fear. The work of Esther Cameron and Mike Green is also crucial for this step, in order to assuage fears and concerns regarding change. Cameron and Green argue that in order for change to happen, “survival anxiety must be greater than learning anxiety, and learning anxiety must be reduced rather than increasing survival anxiety.”²⁷ One reduces learning anxiety through such things as increasing psychological safety through training, communicating a particular shared vision, support groups and positive models, and helpful systems and structures.²⁸

Second, design thinking's emphasis on the importance of iteration as a mindset helps manage expectations, while also keeping the process of change transparent and continuous when putting change management tools into practice. Instead of attempting one big solution and ending there, iteration helps break the process down and encourages those responding to the sex abuse crisis to think about the relationships among the various agents, institutions, and issues affecting the crisis, especially given the possible presence of certain system archetypes mentioned in the previous paragraphs. In iterating, it would be important to consider the ways in which the solution will affect those involved in terms of feedback loops and delays, and to think of what would need to be done next, given that not everyone's needs will be met in the execution of the solution. The assumption is that each solution has its own unique contours in response to the unique characteristics of the wicked problem and that the process to respond to the wicked problem will take time, resources, and effort. Iteration also “makes feedback from the people we're [working for] a critical part of how a solution evolves,” keeping in mind the work for justice and care required should include the voices of the victims and

²⁷ Esther Cameron and Mike Green, *Making Sense of Change Management: A Complete Guide to the Models, Tools, and Techniques of Organizational Change*, 5th ed. (New York: KoganPage, 2020), 52.

²⁸ Cameron and Green, *Making Sense of Change Management*, 52–54.

vulnerable.²⁹ Such feedback can help flesh out the positive benefits more clearly, as well as identify the unintended negative consequences, which may not be obvious to those who were not victims or vulnerable.

Both of these examples call for varying interventions with specialists outside of the organization in order to encourage honesty and facilitate more out of the box discussions that could help move the organization—in this case the Catholic Church—towards justice and avoid the sex abuse crisis from repeating itself. Rather than employing a process that is confusing or opaque, change management and iteration can help show the steps in the solution and how it moves towards the goal of justice and accountability. Iteration can help manage the effects of any solutions implemented, understanding that one solution is not enough to absolutely solve the sex abuse crisis. At the same time, change management can help bring people together to pull in the same direction, knowing that each intervention counts and thus requires commitment. Additionally, change management can address the concerns and interests of those affected, such as the church, the victims, the abusers, and the community. The current pope's emphasis on synodality is a welcome ground to experiment with these approaches, given Francis' openness to listening and dialogue with others.³⁰

Conclusion

Understanding the complexities and difficulties when reckoning with the sex abuse crisis in the Catholic Church requires a mapping out of the relationships and stakeholders involved. Design thinking as a methodology can help identify these relationships and stakeholders as well as manage a way forward both at the level of the local church, including dioceses and parishes, and the universal church. While the size of the Catholic Church, adaptability, and different interests, fears, and concerns at stake will make

²⁹ IDEO, *Field Guide to Design*, 25.

³⁰ Francesca Merlo, "Pope to Rome's Faithful: Synodality Expresses the Nature of the Church," *Vatican News*, September 18, 2021, www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-09/pope-francis-discourse-rome-faithful-synodal-process.html.

change quite difficult, further complicated by the categories of sin and grace, beginning a conversation and dialogue with the social and managerial sciences can offer models and tools for church leadership to use in improving the structures and culture within the Catholic Church.



Stephanie Ann Puen, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Theology at Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines, teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate level. She received her PhD, with a focus in Theological and Social Ethics, at Fordham University, where she also taught undergraduate classes. A Filipino of Chinese descent, she worked in corporate planning in the manufacturing industry prior to her work in academia and manages a business together with her family. Her teaching and research interests are in economics and business ethics, Catholic social thought, gender and sexual ethics, and theology and popular culture, and she has written on these topics for both scholarly and popular publications.