

PARISH EVANGELIZATION INVENTORY

INTRODUCTION

Evangelizing means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself. Its essence is the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ and the response of a person in faith, both being the work of the Spirit of God. Evangelization must always be directly connected to the Lord Jesus Christ. (Go and Make Disciples)

This definition has been given to us by the U.S. Bishops in their plan and strategy for Catholic evangelization. They addressed the plan to all Catholics in our country. "Although everyone will pursue these goals with different gifts, no one can claim exemption from them." It is their hope that parishes, schools and Catholic institutions will use the pastoral plan to evaluate existing evangelizing activities and to plan future evangelization efforts. The goals emphasize education and methods to create an enthusiasm among Catholics for their faith, becoming a welcoming community that reaches out to inactive Catholics and to persons without a faith community, while "impacting the values of the United States, affirming what is good and courageously challenging what is not."

We have adapted the Bishops' goals and strategies to create a tool for your use to evaluate your parish evangelizing activities. **This tool is for you.** We have no need to see the results but we welcome the opportunity to assist you with future evangelizing efforts.

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How to Use this Inventory

1. Invite a group of people that includes staff (parish and school, if applicable) and those in leadership positions, especially those people working in the area of evangelization, to participate in the assessment process. i.e. Welcoming Committee, Evangelization Committee, Catholic Connection Team, RCIA, etc.
2. Explain the process. Ask each person to read the document *Go and Make Disciples* and to complete **Part I** of the *Parish Evangelization Inventory*.
3. Schedule a date for the group to meet to discuss their response to the ten inventory questions.
4. Ask the parish office to provide the numbers for **Part II**.
5. At the scheduled time, share the numbers from **Part II** with the group then begin the process in **Part III**.

PART I

1. *Begin your inventory process with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to inspire your efforts.*
2. *Read through the goals and ten objectives to get an overview.*
3. *Put a rating of 1-4 (**1=low, 4=high**) next to each action in the space provided.*

GOAL 1: To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others.

This goal calls Catholics to continue to hear the Good News at ever deeper levels. The call to holiness, given to every Catholic through baptism, consecrates each one to God and to the service of the kingdom (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 40). The strategy of this goal is to so deepen the sense of Scripture and sacrament that Catholics will pray more fully, and, with a greater understanding of Christ's call, live as disciples at home, at work, and in today's many cultural settings. Lifelong faith formation should be a priority for parishes to enable Catholics to develop an adult faith.

A. How well does our parish provide on-going opportunities for faith renewal and development?

- Parish renewal processes (e.g. missions)
 - Marriage preparation
 - Retreats for all ages
 - Marriage enrichment
 - Faith sharing groups
 - Small Christian communities
 - Eucharistic adoration
 - Promotion of Cursillo
 - Liturgy of the Hours
 - RCIA implemented
 - Parishioner involvement in Baptism preparation
 - Quiet place for personal prayer
 - Family based sacramental preparation
 - Deepened experiences of Sacrament of Reconciliation for adults and children
 - Wide invitation for sponsors for RCIA
 - Resources for lifelong learning
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

B. How well does our parish focus on the Word of God as leading to conversion and renewal?

- Frequent encouragement of individual reading of the Bible
- A development study of Scripture through classes and groups
- Effective preparation of lectors and cantors
- Resources for families to help them focus on the Word of God in their homes
- On-going homilectic training for those responsible for preaching
- Homilies that break open the Scripture and help people live the Gospel in their daily lives
- Lectionary based faith sharing groups or small Christian communities
- Shared preparation of the Sunday homily
- Use of Scripture reflection at parish meetings
- A system of feedback on effectiveness of Sunday homilies
- Creative presentation of Scripture, i.e. dramatic narrative
- Weekly Sunday dismissal of catechumens to break open the Word.

Other: _____

Other: _____

C. How well does our parish focus on Sunday Eucharist as central to conversion and renewal?

- Welcoming and hospitality
- Attention to prayerful environment and involvement of all
- Fostering a sense of community among parish members
- Attention to physical plant, especially those features that facilitate quality Liturgy, e.g. sound system, cleanliness, etc.
- Sensitivity to family needs
- Attention to addressing children, youth, young adults and older adults in liturgy
- Reaching out to visitors and newcomers
- Use of quality music that encourages participation
- Worship space accessible to everyone including persons with special needs.
- Making communion available to those who cannot attend Sunday Eucharist
- Developing rituals to publicly welcome new parishioners
- Spirit-filled celebration of Eucharist
- Encouraging a variety of musical and cultural expressions

Other: _____

Other: _____

D. How well does our parish prepare people to be disciples?

- Adult faith formation opportunities based on parishioners' needs
 - Opportunities for religious education with the family
 - Development of home and family based catechetical techniques
 - Development of evangelization training for parish staff and all catechetical ministers
 - Emphasis on discipleship as the goal of all religious education
 - More widespread understanding of service as part of the stewardship of gifts given by God
 - Reflection on the connection between faith and the workplace
 - Homilies that connect faith and everyday life
 - Stewardship forms that recognize service in the family, workplace and community
 - Encouraging the formation of faith sharing or prayer groups that focus on work experience
 - Promote the understanding and celebration of the spiritual diversity of different cultures and traditions.
 - Promote an understanding of the practice of stewardship as giving the first fruits of our time, talent and treasure
 - Expand the understanding of discipleship through the use of sacramental preparation
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

GOAL II To invite all people in the U.S., whatever their social or cultural background, to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic faith.

This goal means that we are to invite effectively every person to come to know the Good News of Jesus proclaimed by the Catholic Church. This goal means not only that people are invited and welcomed but also that Catholics create an attitude of sharing faith and develop greater skills to do this; then, undertake activities to invite others to know the Catholic people better.

A. How well does our parish equip members to share their faith?

- Faith sharing groups or small Christian communities
- Other opportunities for sharing stories of faith and conversion
- Programs to equip parents for sharing faith in the home
- Opportunities for families to share faith with other families
- Fostering family prayer and religious traditions
- Promoting evangelization in parochial schools and religious education classes
- Training people to share their faith
- Provide opportunities for parishioners to preach at non-eucharistic gatherings
- Special ministry to young adults in parishes and on college campuses
- Involving youth in ministries of faith and service

Other: _____

Other: _____

B. How well does our parish welcome people and reach out to the broader community?

- Offering workshops on greeting and welcoming
 - Formation of volunteers and staff, especially those who have first contact with the public (e.g. secretaries, ushers, etc.)
 - Assessment of facilities for use by persons with disabilities, including sound systems
 - Review of the hospitality practices in all areas of parish life
 - Review of opportunities to take advantage of the public media for outreach and welcome
 - Use of mailings, home visits, etc. to create a consistent invitation to people moving into parish
 - Paying attention and following up on "absent" parishioners
 - Involvement with and service to the neighborhood by the parish
 - Information session/open houses to the neighborhood and wider community
 - Use of a process inviting Catholics who are inactive to return
 - A process of reconciliation for returning Catholics
 - Effective implementation of RCIA for preparing and receiving new members into the Church
 - Using new forms of Catholic presence in malls and large gathering places
 - Communications audit of regular parish mailings, literature, brochures, bulletins, etc. to insure that they support the parish mission of evangelization
 - Use of media technology to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

C. How well does our parish provide specific training for evangelization leaders?

- Training for parish staffs on the use of technology for evangelization (e.g. voice mail, e-mail,)
 - Training for one-to-one evangelization
 - Evangelization components included in religious education materials at all levels
 - Ongoing welcome and hospitality follow-up for newcomers to the parish
 - Foreign language training for ministers
 - Programs to increase understanding of cultural diversity
 - Fostering ecumenical and interfaith understanding through discussion, socials, and other gatherings
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

GOAL III To foster Gospel values in our society, promoting the dignity of the human person and the common good of our society, so that our nation may continue to be transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ.

This goal means supporting those cultural elements in our land that reflect Catholic values and challenging those that reject it. The transformation of our society in Christ particularly calls for the involvement and skills of men and women who carry the values of the Gospel in to their homes, neighborhoods, workplaces, areas of recreation – indeed, into all aspects of life. This goal requires the strategy of strengthening our everyday involvement with those in need, of reflecting on the workplace and media, and of encouraging Catholic involvement in areas of public policy as a way of having greater impact on society’s values. This is how we address our society as a system and also in particular situations

A. How well is our parish involved with neighborhood groups, local service agencies and public policy?

- _____ Raise awareness of needs of local poor and marginal
- _____ Put works of justice and love as priorities in our parishes
- _____ Cooperation with local charitable agencies and community ministries
- _____ Provide service learning opportunities
- _____ Study and education about political choices that Catholics make
- _____ Encourage voter registration
- _____ Encourage people to run for and to hold public office
- _____ Encourage parishioners to challenge unjust economic systems and practices

- _____ Other: _____

- _____ Other: _____

B. How well does our parish promote Gospel values in families and the workplace?

- _____ Provide support and resources for the spiritual development of families
- _____ Provide support and resources for the personal growth of families
- _____ Provide support and resources for the social life of families
- _____ Provide support and resources for financial counseling for families.
- _____ Acknowledge efforts of individuals who model Gospel values in the workplace
- _____ Acknowledge efforts of families who model Gospel values in the neighborhood
- _____ Influencing social policy to strengthen family life
- _____ Study and put into practice Catholic social teaching
- _____ Provide workshops on evangelization in the workplace
- _____ Provide groups to explore the connection between spirituality and work

_____ Other: _____

_____ Other: _____

C. How well does our parish promote Gospel values through the arts and media?

- _____ Effective use of public media for evangelization
- _____ Education on Catholic values in using the media in homes, workplaces, and educational settings
- _____ Provide opportunities for theological reflection on media, eg. film, book discussion, etc.
- _____ Use of the media and the arts to promote the Gospel
- _____ Use of audio, video and video tapes to communicate the Catholic faith to others

_____ Other: _____

_____ Other: _____

Part II

Who makes up your parish community? (# of people are active members?)	What %
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_____ Number of parishioners (every person; every age)	_____
_____ Senior adults (60 plus)	_____
_____ Middle adults (36-60)	_____
_____ Young adults (19-35)	_____
_____ High school (14-18)	_____
_____ Junior High (11-13)	_____
_____ Primary/intermediate (6-10)	_____
_____ Early childhood (3-5)	_____
_____ Infants/toddlers (0-2)	_____

Analyze the parish demographics to more effectively address needs. It might be helpful to consider who makes up your active membership (ie. Ethnic groups, young families, singles, etc.). What are their characteristics? Do you know why some are active and others are not? What might you do to involve them in the parish community?

PART III

Using the Inventory

- ◆ Appreciate the “3-4” answers for each question. This indicates the extensiveness of your evangelization efforts. Build on your positive direction.
- ◆ Survey the “1-2” answers. Do you see a trend?
- ◆ Which question does your parish need to tackle first? If your committee is more than 3-5 people, you may want to consider a ranking process for the nine questions.
 - a. Each person assign a ranking number to each question:
 - #1 = highest priority
 - #2 = high priority
 - #3 = medium priority
 - b. Tally the 1’s, 2’s, 3’s.
 - c. The question receiving the most #1’s is the area that should be targeted.
- ◆ Focus attention on the group’s selected question. Place it in perspective in terms of the GOAL from which it comes.
- ◆ Look over the response to each item listed under the question. TAKE TIME TO PRAY HERE. Reflect on where you would like for your parish to be in five years. Add responses not listed that are important to your parish.
- ◆ Take your group discussion to other leadership groups within your parish. Present your findings and ask for their reflections.
- ◆ Decide on an action plan for your parish. What are the first steps to take in your action plan? Assign tasks. Assign a timeline.
- ◆ Evaluate the progress of your plan. Give thanks to God for this call to evangelize!