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## EVANGELIZATION GUIDE AND HELP

The following booklet has been put together as a guide for parishes in the area of Evangelization. The following questions are simply meant to stir discussion among parish leadership as to what direction their Evangelization effort(s) may be taking them. These questions can also serve as an evaluation of those areas of parish life that often enhance Evangelization efforts. Each section is given an introduction as to how each might be useful to a parish effort.

*“Transformative visioning is a communal faith journey. While the end goal may be a prophetic vision, the power of this journey lies more in how we walk it than in the vision claimed. It is a journey that will test our readiness to live authentically out of our deepest beliefs. It will cause us to leave behind all that has become misaligned and bereft of meaning, all that is made more of nostalgia than of our call to further the reign of God. It is a journey that seeks to transform the very culture of community through holy and intimate conversations, loving and reconciling exchanges and communal discernment of God's call. It is less about the future that awaits us than the sort of people we are, who we are growing to become and the very purpose we claim for our existence. Transformative visioning is a multi-phase process of envisioning a future distinct from our past. It is a means for re-discovering, re-vitalizing, co-creating, and transforming the culture of community. It involves spiritual, intellectual, emotional, behavioral, and existential processes. It is not about forecasting the future, eliminating risk, creating vision statements or engaging conventional strategic planning. The primary reason for engaging in transformative visioning is to gather the wisdom and weave a dream powerful enough to awaken a community's soul. It is a journey intended to bring forth deep and radical change enabling new life to emerge. Such processes are part and parcel of re-founding religious life, the part that invites us to create, articulate and activate a prophetic vision for the future.” “Gather the Wisdom, Weave a Dream – Transformative Visioning as a Refounding Process” by Ted Dunn, PH.D. Published in Human Development magazine. Summer 2010-Volume 31-Number Two.*

### PARISH LEADERSHIP

Prayer: I Thessalonians 1: 2-4, 2: 11-13; Psalm 18:1-3, 28, 35;

1. Does the parish need to reorganize its leadership model?
2. What is the parish' understanding of evangelization?
3. Does the parish need to redefine its organization regarding:
  - ✓ liturgy
  - ✓ finances
  - ✓ service/outreach
  - ✓ religious education (both for children, young adults, and adults)?
  - ✓ evangelization
4. When did your parish leadership and the parish at large last study the *Guiding Principles and Criteria for Parishes* documents put forth as part of the Diocesan Reconfiguration? When and how will this be done?

5. What does your parish understand about “evangelization” as it applies to your parish, community, and greater area around you?
6. What is the average age of your liturgical ministers – not counting altar servers? Does this age represent all the ages found in your congregation? How welcoming are the “established” parish leaders to “new blood?” What can be done about this if it’s a problem?
7. Has there been a study (and by who) of the statistics for the following areas of parish life?
  - ✓ baptisms, funerals, marriages, First Communion
  - ✓ mass attendance for weekday and weekend masses
  - ✓ seating capacity for your church
  - ✓ staffing needs
  - ✓ increases or decreases in weekly, special, and holiday collections
  - ✓ debt increases or decreases
  - ✓ Catholic school enrollment
  - ✓ all parish religious education attendance
  - ✓ additional extended care facility ministry demands or expectations
  - ✓ parking needs in and around your parish
  - ✓ RCIA candidates and participants?
8. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

## **MUSIC**

Prayer: Romans 8: 28, 31, 38-39; Ephesians 3: 17-21

1. How would you evaluate your parish’s *music*?
  - ✓ Do people sing?
  - ✓ Does your pastor and ministers sing or use hymnals?
  - ✓ Does the tempo of your music resemble an upbeat style or Russian funeral dirge?
  - ✓ How current are your hymns?
  - ✓ How many different kinds of instrumentation does your parish have?
  - ✓ Are there any “no singing” masses at your parish?
  - ✓ Do you sing at daily mass?
2. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

## **PARISH ENTHUSIASM**

Prayer: Psalm 91: 1-2, 14-16; Psalm 143: 8-11; Psalm 38: 4-6, 9, 15-18, 21-22

1. To what degree is your parish *enthusiastic*?
  - ✓ Do your parishioners respond with spirit?
  - ✓ Do your leaders of prayer (including priests) read or pray prayers /the Mass?
  - ✓ Is there any sense of human emotion in your service or is emotion looked down on?

- ✓ Does anyone in your congregation ever get excited about what they've heard or experienced?
2. Is there reason for your people to want to stay or come back?
    - ✓ Do people leave before mass is over (during communion or before the final hymn)? Why?
    - ✓ How long does it take for the Gathering Space to empty?
    - ✓ Do you ever hear anyone say, "I can't wait to come back next week?"
    - ✓ How many new parishioners have joined your parish in the past six months? Do you know why they joined your parish - has someone invited them to come?
  3. To what degree would you say that your parishioners are happy?
    - ✓ Does the priest greet people before or after mass?
    - ✓ Is there ever laughter during mass?
    - ✓ Do people smile at each other?
    - ✓ Does your parish have a Sign of Peace? Do people act like they are truly sincere in the exchange or do they try to ignore the action?
  4. To what degree would you say your parish understands its need to be vibrant and involved in outreach or some sense of evangelization?
  5. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

### **PARISH GENERATIONAL MIX**

Prayer: I Corinthians 13: 12; II Corinthians 4: 16-18;

1. How many age groups are represented in your parish community?
  - ✓ Do you know that some parishes do not have First Communion? Does yours and if not what might
  - ✓ Not counting altar servers, what is the average age of your liturgical ministers?
  - ✓ Overall, are there children or babies in your congregation who make noise? If not what might that be saying?
  - ✓ Do those who have been involved in liturgical ministry invite new people or does their attitude turn people away?
  - ✓ Once kids leave altar serving, do they cease serving or do they join other liturgical ministries?
  - ✓ Is your theological "bent" as a parish narrow - are you inclusive of many different types of thinking or belief? Do you as a parish simply present ONE point of view?
  - ✓ How effective is your parish when it comes to ADULT catechesis? Do you invest all your time and energy in the catechesis of children?
2. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

## PARISH PLANNING

Prayer: Psalm 37: 3-6; Psalm 55: 22; Psalm 62: 1-2;

1. How will your parish establish and implement your five year plan? What specific opportunities will the parishioners have to enter into and be part of the planning and implementation?
2. When was your last parish census? Should there be one now? Who will be in charge and by what date will the census be completed?
3. What advancements, arrangements, or plans has your parish made to update or begin your capacity to utilize Social Media technology both in relationship to the diocese and elsewhere?
4. Have you established a protocol by which you can come to a better understanding of what the people enjoy about the parish and/or what criticisms they may have regarding the parish as it is? How are their thoughts being gathered and by whom?
5. How do you plan to respond to their ideas? By what date should this evaluation be complete?
6. What formation opportunities do your liturgical, business, and staffing personnel have or have taken advantage of?
7. Are there any plans made for staff retreat opportunities or social gatherings for the staff alone?
8. How would you describe your pastoral leadership's understanding of "Transformative Visioning?"
9. What aspects of your parish's history and heritage have you preserved and how?
10. Describe and discuss your understanding of "change" as it differs from "transformation."
11. Discuss the where in your parish you sense or hear the following attitudes toward transformation:
  - i. *"things will only get worse" - "things will get better" - I am inspired and in awe."*
12. List what specific changes you might see as necessary for your parish over the next 2, 3, or 5 years.
13. What plans are being made NOW to make these changes easier.
14. Does your parish have documented history (written/pictorial)? Should this be done? By whom?
15. How many different kinds of Catholics attend your parish? How are they identifiable? Is each represented in liturgical, social, educational, and service opportunities?
16. Is there any way to monitor why people join or leave your parish?

17. Has there been a study (and by who) of the statistics for the following areas of parish life?
  - ✓ baptisms, funerals, marriages, First Communions
  - ✓ mass attendance for weekday and weekend masses
  - ✓ seating capacity for your church
  - ✓ staffing needs
  - ✓ increases or decreases in weekly, special, and holiday collections
  - ✓ debt increases or decreases
  - ✓ Catholic school enrollment
  - ✓ all parish religious education attendance
  - ✓ additional extended care facility ministry demands or expectations
  - ✓ parking needs in and around your parish
  - ✓ RCIA candidates and participants?
  
18. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?
  
19. Has your parish leadership seen the diocesan study of your physical plant? What specific steps have been taken to rectify shortcomings in the report? Is there a time-line to address the issues raised in the building condition report? Who is in charge of overseeing this project?
  
20. How many buildings are presently on your campus? How is each being utilized? What is the five year plan for each of these buildings?
  
21. Which buildings are most “marketable?”
  
22. Has your parish leadership discussed which of the buildings “need” to be maintained vs. which of the buildings “should” be maintained?
  
23. Has there been any discussion as to “just because we can afford this.....should we?” -or- Is there a better purpose for the utilization of funds presently being used to maintain a building that is no longer truly necessary?
  
24. If a building has closed, how has it been disposed of or what is its present status or condition? Should something be done about this?
  
25. How would you describe the religious art in your church or on your parish grounds? Is the art quality in nature?
  
26. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

### **KEEP-STOP-START**

1. What three things would you keep doing in your parishes?
2. What three things would you stop doing immediately in your parish?
3. What three things should you start doing in your parish.

## **SERVICE**

Prayer: James 1:2-4; Psalm 61: 3-4, 8; Psalm 94:19

1. Do the service programs offered by your parish represent the needs of your people today?
2. How did (do) you determine what the needs of your community are?
3. Did a well-intentioned leadership simply assume the needs and appropriate responses or was a study done and by whom?
4. Do your service programs extend to every age group in the parish?
5. Does your service outreach include both the universal church and the local church?
6. Do your participants understand service rooted in our commitment to Jesus Christ and service that is purely humanitarian?
7. Is there intentional invitation to those un-churched by those coming to church? Individual invitation is most effective.
8. Does the parish understand that service may be the first door through which the un-churched walk before coming back to church?
9. Is there any form of follow-up after the service event to maintain contact with all involved – both the church and the un-churched?

## **PARISH FINANCES**

Prayer: Isaiah 30: 15; 40: 29-30; 41: 10; 13-14; Hebrews 10: 19-23; Jeremiah 29: 11

1. Does the parish or each parish involved have a Pastoral Council and Finance Board?
2. Has your parish leadership seen and studied the diocesan guidelines for Finance Boards and Pastoral Councils? What plans are there to do so if this has not been done?
3. When was the parish last audited? Should there be an audit?
4. Does the parish publish a financial report to the people? How often? If not, by what date will this begin?
5. How would you describe your pastoral leadership's understanding of "Transformative Visioning?"
6. What aspects of your parish's history and heritage have you preserved and how?
7. Is there a need to dispose of buildings or property? What issues surround this decision?
8. By what date will all of the above be completed?
9. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

## EVANGELIZATION ITSELF

Prayer: Nehemiah 8:10; Joshua 1: 5-6; Daniel 10: 19;

1. Which of the following groups has your parish identified as an area of concentration?
  - a) Those attending church and want faith deepened
  - b) Those attending church but are not involved in parish life
  - c) Youth and or Young Adults
  - d) Alienated Catholics
  - e) Those searching
2. How vibrant is the Sunday mass experience? How would you rate the following entities of Sunday mass?
  - a) The Presider
  - b) The Congregation
  - c) Music
3. When was the last time your parish evaluated the physical, social, or family needs of your congregation and neighborhood? Are your present outreach organizations and/or services current with our times?
4. Who is studying the above? What does the parish intend to do with the results? Are there deadlines for the study to be complete and to whom do the results go?

## POSSIBLE BUMPS IN THE ROAD

Prayer: Proverbs 8: 14; James 1: 2-4

1. Many congregations are older in age. They are happy with what they have. Can we realistically expect them to get behind the New Evangelization effort?
2. A number of priests are nearing retirement age. A number of priests are tired. They too can seemingly be content to simply carry on "as usual." Can we realistically expect them to get behind the New Evangelization effort?
3. Some priests and laity throughout the country do not seem to accept the model of Church put forth by the Second Vatican Council. This would include the role of the laity, a less formal and stiff approach to worship, a more centralized authority role for the priest. Will they promote what seems to be need to attract Catholic and non-Catholics to the Church when the New Evangelization model of Church seem opposite of theirs?
4. More and more people make the distinction between the faith community and the Eucharistic community. They are not the same in the mind. They spend quality time and effort with the faith community during the week, but see little need to join the Eucharistic community.
5. As you listen to those who do not attend Church, what do **THEY** say are their reasons for not doing so? Do you see the Church taking their recommendations seriously, in that the Church or parishes might actually make changes in how the function?

## SOME POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Have the Office of Evangelization meet with and discuss how parish hospitality can be improved among ushers, ministers of hospitality, and parish staffs.
2. Study redistributing parish funds to create better equity or fairness among parish staffing/ ministers essential to parish life. Do some parish programs may be dated or no longer effective. A study of old and new needs can help clarify distribution of parish funds.
3. Challenge parish thinking so that donated funds or funds in parish organizations may be channeled to financially support parish programs rather than the purchase of “things” that may be ornamental rather than needed. These funds could be used to add additional staff or improve the salary of those already employed.
4. Do whatever is needed to improve pay for our staffs (new and old); especially those directly related to new evangelization programs. This may include the sharing of staff or programs with neighboring parishes.

## A QUICK REVIEW

1. Does your parish have an evangelization committee?
2. What is your parish’s idea of evangelization? How is this different from anything your parish is doing right now?
3. What group is the primary group of concern for your parish?
  - -present but not active
  - -present, active, yet always in need of inner growth
  - -occasionally present and not active
  - -young families, singles, and youth
  - -hurt or alienated individuals?
4. Has your parish purchased and evangelization program? How do you intend to use it?
5. How do you intend to share this with the entire parish and not just a few interested people?
6. What forms of new communication does the parish use? Who actually knows how to maintain and use these new forms of communication?
7. True parish evangelization depends on total parish renewal and/or spiritual conversion unto the Lord. How do you intend to pursue this? How do those outside your parish know what’s happening here?
8. How do present parish programs understand evangelization and in what way are they incorporating this in what they offer and/or do in the parish?

9. What service programs exist for adults? Kids? *Ecumenical Community Prayer Services??*
10. Do the parish and the school cooperate in evangelization programs in the parish?
11. How and when do you evaluate the success of each evangelization effort? Are there signs of success?
12. Has your parish consulted with surrounding parishes regarding the following and how long-range evangelization efforts may redefine parish services in your local area?
  - -Lenten-Advent programs
  - -Saturday evening masses/-Daily mass schedules
  - -Weekend mass schedules
  - -Nursing Home/Hospital coverage
13. Have you discussed with your pastor what you (your parish) expect of him in light of his pastoral, spiritual, and managerial responsibilities? Do (would) you support a serious change in his activity/presence in parish activities if he began to focus more on his spiritual, and pastoral roles? Do you understand the “why” of this question? How would the whole parish respond? Are parish expectations unrealistic?
14. Does the parish respect other forms of parish leadership beside the priest?

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1. The reconfiguration of the diocese will be a creative response to the fewer number of priests, the demographic/population shift and the needs of Catholics today. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
2. Full sacramental ministry, pastoral care and Christian formation will be available to all Catholic people within 15 miles or 25 minutes from their home. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
3. Competent pastoral ministers (i.e. priests, deacons, religious, commissioned and certified persons) will provide sacramental ministry, pastoral care and Christian formation.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
4. All parishes and institutions of the diocese will continue to manifest a special concern for the needs of the poor and marginalized. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
5. All parishes will continue to reach out to the alienated, the inactive and un-churched.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
6. Every parish must have a functioning parish council and finance council. Every parish must be financially stable and solvent. The parish council and finance council will participate in a formal and regular assessment of the communal, spiritual, sacramental and formational programs using an evaluative tool provided by the diocese. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
7. The reconfiguration of the diocese will respect the age, numbers, talents, abilities and limitation of the priest. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
8. The reconfiguration of the diocese will be congruent with civil and canon law.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5

**CRITERIA FOR PARISHES**

1. Parishes: separate or in collaboration with others will show evidence of quality ministries of the Word, Worship and Service. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
2. Parishes: separate or in collaboration with others will show credible evidence of financial stability. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
3. Parishes: separate or in collaboration with others will, with the assistance of the Office of Canonical Services show that their structures are congruent with civil and canon law.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
4. Parish plans for the future will show evidence of responding to fewer priests, the demographic/population shifts and the needs of Catholics today. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
5. Parish plans for the future will incorporate an assessment of existing facilities.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5

## MEASURING PARISH VIABILITY AND DECISION MAKING

1. Our parish has or is developing a sense of “transformative visioning” (*a multi-phase process of envisioning a future distinct from our past*).  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
2. We preserve parish history and heritage. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
3. We understand the meaning and need for change in our parish and in the diocese.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
4. Our parish has a plan for our future. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
5. The parish is current with the use of Social Media technology. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
6. Our parish census is current. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
7. I am satisfied with my knowledge of parish financial stability. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
8. The use of, maintaining of, and question of parish buildings, property, and/or sale of unnecessary facilities has been addressed. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
9. Our parish is growing. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
10. The sacramental life of the parish is growing and vibrant. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
11. Our parish is a welcoming community of faith. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
12. Our parish invites and makes use of new members in our ministries. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
13. Our parish invites and makes use of new members in our parish organizations.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
14. Our parish is over staffed. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
15. Our parish is under staffed. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
16. The music ministry in our parish is good. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
17. People here sing. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
18. I would describe our parish worship as “enthusiastic.” 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
19. Our parish is multi-generational. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
20. Our parish and our parishioners are inviting and friendly. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
21. Our parish is happy. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5

22. Our parish has good lines of communication. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
23. Clear information and appropriate information is shared with parishioners on an as needed basis.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
24. Information shared with the parish is transparent and understandable. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
25. Rate the following areas of parish life:
- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Liturgy   | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Finances  | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Outreach/Service                                    | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Children’s Religious Education                      | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Youth Religious Education                           | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Adult Religious Education                           | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Relationship to Our School ( <i>if applicable</i> ) | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| RCIA  | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Care of the Homebound                               | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Care of the Sick & Hospitalized                     | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Preferential Option for the Poor                    | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
| Persons with Disabilities                           | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 |
26. Our present parish leadership is/will be able to make the decision to close one or more of our church sites. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
27. I would prefer that the bishop make the choice as to which church(es) should be closed.  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
28. Our parish has a plan to evangelize active parishioners. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
29. Our parish has a plan the evangelize participating but uncommitted (less than active) parishioners. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
30. Our parish has a plan to evangelize those who say they are “spiritual but not religious.”  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
31. Our parish has a plan to evangelize people who are uninterested and unaffiliated with any church. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
32. Our parish has a plan to evangelize youth. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
33. Our parish has a plan to evangelize those between the ages of 21-35. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
34. Our parish is represented by more than one generation. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
35. Our parish has seen non-traditional programs started within the past year. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
36. Our parish has been doing the same thing(s) over and over again. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5

## DIOCESAN CHANCERY DIRECTORY

A number of chancery offices and services could easily help facilitate the above plan or recommendations. This is a listing of chancery offices/services that would be more than willing to assist your parish:

<u>Service</u>	<u>Extension</u>
Annual Bishop's Appeal (Stewardship)	324
Bishop's Office	232
Canonical Services (Tribunal)	252
Catholic Charities	320
Catholic Exponent	308
Catholic Schools	341
Chancellor	235
Clergy and Religious	329
Consecrated Life	238
Continuing Education for Priests	237
CTNY	330-533-2243
Financial Services	262
Information Systems Services (Computers)	269
Lay Ministry Formation	271
Missions (Propagation of the Faith)	277
Office of Evangelization	237
Permanent Diaconate	329
Pro-Life & Family Ministry	289
Public Relations	235
Religious Education	302
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