The Parish Pastoral Council: The Engine for Building Communities of Disciples

Part Two

Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston
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Part Two – Overview

• Call to Discipleship (Adult Formation)

• Getting Started

• Basic Strategies
“What I would like to propose is something much more in line with an *evangelical discernment*. It is the approach of a *missionary disciple*...,”

Pope Francis Evangelii Gaudium - # 50
“The church that "goes forth" is a community of missionary disciples"

Evangelii Gaudium - #24
“We do many things as church leaders.

- Build Buildings
- Design Programs
- Staff churches
- Put on Events
- Rally people – new initiatives

But are we making disciples? Have we become proficient in many things – yet deficient in the one thing that matters most?”

Transformational Discipleship – Geiger et al - 2012
Create Parish Culture of Expectation, Responsibility - of Discipleship for All

Move the Community from;

Cultural Catholics – to – Intentional Catholics
Consumers – to – Contributors
Observers - to - Participants
Disengaged – to – Actively Engaged
Good Parish– to – Great Parish of

Committed Disciples!
CATHOLICS

The Holy Spirit

a lot of good hard work!
The Seven Last Words of the Church

“abandon the complacent attitude that says

“we have always done it this way”

Pope Francis – Evangelii Gaudium #33
“WE CANNOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE SAME THINKING WE USED WHEN WE CREATED THEM”
“An organization that spends more time thinking about its past than about its future is an organization that is dying.”

Matthew Kelly

"Use your imagination not to scare yourself to death but to inspire yourself to life."
~ Adele Brookman
“God is not afraid of new things! That is why he is constantly surprising us, opening our hearts and guiding us in unexpected ways.”

Pope Francis – Oct. 19, 2014
Closing Mass of Synod on Families
Placing the Challenge – the Opportunity - into context

• How do we welcome new people?

• How do we help “Catholics” take a step in faith?
U.S. Catholic Populations and Parish Life, 2014

Generally, each group is a subset of those above it

Catholic at some point in life

104,572,738

'verio active and involved'

'involved in lay ministry'
“Structure and organizational reforms are secondary – that is they come afterward”

“The first reform must be attitude. Ministers of the Gospel must be people who can warm the hearts of the people...”

Pope Francis - Curial Speech – 12/21/13
Key Question

- What is My Basic Attitude toward Disciple Making?

- Fear, Anxiety, Problems?

- Excitement, Anticipation, Possibilities?

Beware of Self Fulfilling Prophecies – Where Do You Begin?
You!

Who Me?

You must be kidding!

YOU DA MAN! WOMAN!
Jesus Relationship Stages

1. Awareness of Jesus
2. Curious about
3. Friends of
4. Somewhat Close Friends
5. Intimate Friends With *(Intentional Disciples)*
6. Christ Centered Life *(Missionary Disciples)*
Your Primary Mission Fields

- Your Living Room
- Your Neighborhood
- Your Workplace
For the Parish – Broaden Your Vision!

- 2012 – Weddell – *Forming Intentional Disciples*
  - White & Corcoran – *Rebuilt*

- 2013 – Pope Francis – *Evangelii Gaudium*

- 2014 – Mallon – *Divine Renovation*

- 2018 – Archdiocesan Website – Pastoral Plan Best Practices

**Caution - Consumer Driven – Status Quo Approaches**
Consider Pastoral Council
Community of Discipleship Formation

• Every Two Years

• Six Months to year – formation in Discipleship before beginning two years of service
Engaging Catholics

Keys to success - People rarely volunteer – they need to be asked
- The more personal
- The more important
- The clearer the job description
- Time commitment clarity
- Availability of training
- Promise of support and resources
- Ability to match need and talents
Engagement

• Best recruiters – those currently involved
• Great resource – welcoming/newcomers to the parish
• Get volunteers started with shorter time and flexible time commitment
• Time Talent Survey
• Ministry Fair
• Gift Discernment Strategy
Parish Criteria for Success?

“A Church’s health is measured by its *sending* capacity, not its seating capacity”

Warren - Purpose Driven Church - 1995
Disciple Making – Two Approaches

“believe in the Core Work of helping people deepen their communion with Christ and sustain that within the church”

Bill Huebsch – Dreams and Visions - 2007
Relationship With God?

“Only 48% of Catholics were absolutely sure that the God they believed in, was a God with whom they could have a personal relationship.”

Pew Research cited by Sherry Weddell – Forming Intentional Disciples - 2012
“Hence the need for a pedagogy that will introduce people step by step to the full appropriation of the mystery”

Pope Francis – Evangelii Gaudium #170
"most practicing **Catholics** are stalled, and **stalled** people are often satisfied, if not complacent, in their mediocrity. It is the job of the pastor to **provide impetus** for **growth** on a regular basis."

Pierre Hegy – Wake Up Lazarus - 2011
“What we did was make church all about who wasn’t there and started challenging those who were there to grow.”

White & Corcoran – Rebuilt - 2013
Life Journey Strategies

- Mass & Sacraments
  - Welcome
  - Homily
  - Music
- Get people engaged
- Inter-generational activities
- Stewardship
- Bible Studies
- Parish Missions
- Small Groups
Disciple Making – Strategy Two
Transformative Opportunities

“necessary to build opportunities for encounters with Christ into parish life”

Bill Huebsch – Dreams and Visions - 2007
“Among the highly engaged Catholics..., 89% described a conversion experience – an event in their life that won them to a more engaged relationship with God”

Some “got it” by going on a retreat, pilgrimage, went to a conference, had a life altering event, death of a loved one, weekend experience, a small group or mission trip.”

Matthew Kelly – The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic – 2012
What Changes Hearts?

• Spirit Led Role Models

• Significant Encounters
  – Christ Renews His Parish

• Mission Trips

• Small Groups
  – Catholic Alpha
More Parish Heart Changers

• Christ Renews His Parish
  • Now part of Dynamic Catholic

• Light of the World
  • WWW.lotwem.org/

• Alpha
  • http://alphausa.org/catholic

• Amazing Parish
  • www.amazingparish.org
A Key Question

How can the parish put more time, talent & treasure into disciple making activities?

(what should the parish say no to — so that it can say yes to more disciple making?)
So..., In Silence..., 

• What are 1 – 2 things that struck you in this presentation that you would like to take back to your parish?
Final Thought - Pope Francis

“Don’t be scared, dare to have fabulous plans. I encourage you to not be afraid, to dream, to have great ideals, to be builders of hope.”
Thank you!
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