## Diocese of Scranton - Parish Life Projects

#### (Ideas from November 7 and March 2 Meetings)

### Welcoming Parish, Engaging Parishioners, Building Community

**Hospitality and Welcome**: The parish welcomes everyone. The parish creates a welcoming environment for all people.

* To make everyone feel welcome, especially new and occasional worshippers.

#### Projects

1. Welcoming new people: Review of welcoming new parishioners ministry (registration form-gifts to share, 3-6 month new parishioner coffee, visit home) + Newcomer visit – show them what the parish has to offer based on their needs + invite them to choose among 3-5 ministries that will connect with other people
2. Training a hospitality team.
3. Coaching the community to be welcoming.
4. Identifying people’s gifts and providing a way for people to explore gifts and use in collaboration (parish covenants)
5. Create new opportunities to engage mature adults (55+), such as a mentoring/apprenticing role, “young at heart” ministry, new service projects
6. Physical environment as part of the welcoming—physical limitations and possibilities

#### Ideas from November 2016 “Envisioning the Future of Parish Life” Event

#### Evangelization and Hospitality

Seek out and invite everyone to accept the good news and to belong to our community, by;

* involving the whole community in extending a spirit of welcome;
* strengthening relationships with people in all life circumstances;
* learning about evangelization and 21st Century approaches; and
* initiating deliberate evangelization activities.

Create a welcoming ministry group

* Develop a plan to welcome
* Explain purpose of group
* Identify/invite members
* Train/educate: other parish input, D.P.L., literature

Develop a welcoming process

* Develop a plan to welcome
* Develop a timeline
* Recruit people
* Implement the process

Identify who needs to be welcomed

* Parish community
* Potential Catholics: advertising, parishioners, RCIA
* Lapsed Catholics: office, priests, parishioners
* New parishioners: office

Sustain a welcoming atmosphere

* Establish metric/criteria for success
* Evaluate welcoming process
* Modify process based on evaluation

#### Gifts

The parish fosters a stewardship spirituality where people’s time, talents, and treasure are cultivated for mission and ministry.

* To foster a stewardship spirituality where people’s time, talents, and treasure are cultivated for mission and ministry; sustain mission/stewardship through education and leadership.

Preparing the call

* Leadership training and retreats
* Sharing the pastoral plan
* Ministry formation
* Ongoing discernment: prayer, shard wisdom

Rediscovering your baptismal call

* Family sacramental preparation: godparents, parents, confirmation
* Identify strengths: Echoes of Faith, Called and Gifted, Living Your Strengths

Nurturing the call

* Days of reflection
* Ongoing formation and conferences
* Party for progress
* Acknowledge

Living the call

* Naming the call
* Mentoring
* Re-apply best practices
* Feedback to individual / monitor the ministry
* Spiritual direction
* Practical orientation

#### Stewardship

* To foster a stewardship spirituality where people’s time, talents, and treasure are cultivated for mission and ministry; sustain mission/stewardship through education and leadership.

Personal (time, talent, treasure, spirituality)

* Intergenerational approaches to time, talent, treasure: children, families, mature adults, older adults/wiser
* Encourage a spirituality of stewardship: conversion, gratitude of giving back and forward, planning giving

Parish

* Specific fundraising space/resource needs for mission
* Covenantal (intentional) community: Education: gifts and strengths finder, ministry faith; and responsible relationships: cultivate attitude to give back, tithing, articular expectations

Diocesan

* Diocesan training/education: stewardship day
* Alternatives to diocesan fundraising (annual)

Community

* Partnering: interfaith, government, local town, city, foundations/grants

### Evangelization

**Evangelization**: The parish is actively engaged in outreach to those who are no longer involved in parish life and to those who have never been involved in a faith community.

* To create meaningful contact with the unchurched and disenfranchised; actively seek out and invite everyone to accept the good news and to belong to the Catholic community.

#### Projects

1. RCIA-Inspired Projects
* New Catholics / apprenticeships
* Expanding and enriching RCIA for whole parish renewal
* RCIA based sacramental prep (marriage, baptism, confirmation, Eucharist)
1. Develop an evangelization lens; discern the best response/programs/resources in our community:
* #1 develop the community as evangelizers
* #2 evangelize community
* #3. outreach to the unaffiliated/unchurched
1. Defining ourselves as a parish community, demographics, census, neighborhood, etc.

#### Ideas from November 2016 “Envisioning the Future of Parish Life” Event

**Evangelization and Hospitality**: Seek out and invite everyone to accept the good news and to belong to our community, by;

* involving the whole community in extending a spirit of welcome;
* strengthening relationships with people in all life circumstances;
* learning about evangelization and 21st Century approaches; and
* initiating deliberate evangelization activities.

Form evangelizing community

* Develop living spirituality at the parish level
* Encourage faith sharing opportunities
* Education about evangelization: bulletin, talks, resources

Form evangelization team

* Develop ways of being approachable
* Identify leaders
* Know resources
* Train for dialogue and listening
* Be adaptable

Outreach and contact

* Identity who: transients, unchurched, marginalized, disenfranchised, non Catholic spouses, young adults, religious education families, broken families, marriage preparation
* Take and make opportunities: BBQ, outreach ministries, sponsor cards, kennel ministry, religious education families, parish visitors
* Be welcoming and tolerant
* Social media

Follow-up after outreach and contact

* Notify parish office with information
* Conduct needs assessment
* Accompaniment: invite and take to church; assist with pastoral care; escort to social service ministries
* Evaluation: how well are we doing?
* Take care of sacramental/pastoral issues, instruction, etc.
* Parish participation is important.

### Expand Service

**Service**: The parish practices Christian service as essential to its mission through local and global action. The parish fosters a missionary spirit and missionary discipleship in all ages and generations.

* To empower people to respond to the Gospel call to serve others; expand into a social ministry reflective of the whole of Catholic Social Teaching.

#### Projects

1. Creating a service ministry team in a parish or utilize service coordinating team
2. Parish Social Ministry
* Education on Catholic way of doing service: reflection, CST, scripture, prayer
* Become educated about parish social ministry: service, justice, peace-making, care for creation, advocacy (political)
* Integrate parish social ministry and CST throughout the parish and ministries and groups
1. Organize a regional team to collaborate on regional projects, create a model for regional collaboration on service; connect parish service coordinating teams in a region
* Plug into the needs assessment and response already be planned by human services in counties

#### Ideas from November 2016 “Envisioning the Future of Parish Life” Event

**Social Ministry**: Expand into a social ministry reflective of the whole of Catholic Social Teaching, integrating:

* charity/outreach responsive to real needs of parishioners and the neighborhoods we serve;
* advocacy and action on behalf of justice; and
* peacemaking at the local, national and global levels.

Invite

* Youth group
* Social justice
* Individual contact
* Preach / speak
* Call—who we are as Church (Matthew 25)

Give tools

* Read
* Attitude: recognize and respect
* Listening to stories
* Refer to assessment
* Recognize biases
* Reflection

Raise awareness

* Walk for…
* Catechesis
* Media
* Speaker (preach): gospel values

Assess needs

* Ask needs
* Word of mouth
* Contact partners
* Demographic information

Sustain

* Mentoring
* Providing replacements
* Affirming
* Long-term planning
* Empower recipients
* Celebrating success
* Evaluation: recipients and givers

### Faith Formation

#### Projects

1. Catechetical leader formation: at all levels
* Getting parish leaders to know the wide range of resources that are available for different spiritual development levels
1. Life Cycle: New models, formats, approaches for age groups in a style that connects with each generation: Millennial, Gen X, Boomers; creative ways/activities to get into AFF; multiple opportunities
* Young adult project: re-articulate Catholic identity
* Ways for parishes to collaborate on faith formation
1. Family: Bridge between church and home (family faith formation plan with digital tool to help them progress)

#### Ideas from November 2016 “Envisioning the Future of Parish Life” Event

**Lifelong Faith Formation**: Provide life-long religious formation for individuals and families, in ways that:

* integrate faith and life;
* address all life stages and circumstances; and
* stem from well-formed and supported catechetical ministers.

#### Family

*Provide whole family catechesis and nurture faith at home.*

**Family Life**: The parish develops strong families by equipping families to grow in faith, nurture the faith of young people, talk about faith at home, and live their faith in daily life. The parish provides whole family catechesis and the resources for faith formation at home.

Liturgical catechesis

* Children’s liturgy of the Word
* Diverse cultural celebrations
* Youth Masses

Community building

* Bazaars and festivals
* Prayer partners
* Name tag Sunday
* Family fun nights

Lifelong faith formation

* Adult catechesis: online line, Bishop Barron, Scott Hahn, Edward Sri
* Adult faith sharing: arise
* Bible study

Spirituality/sacramental life

* Preparation with parent and child
* Celebrating world day of marriage
* Post baptismal relationship – from baptism to first communion
* Eucharistic adoration
* Creating a culture of vocations (all)

Services

* Corporal works of mercy
* Spiritual works of mercy

#### Youth

*Engage the parish community in understanding the importance of youth ministry.*

**Youth**: There is an ongoing engagement with youth and encouragement for the participation in parish life. The parish energizes young people by acknowledging their wisdom.

Family outreach

* Ministry to parents
* Facilitate parent/guardian involvement
* Keep parents up to date on what’s going on
* Intergenerational activities: babysitting, service or social

Youth community involvement

* Mass participation
* Diocesan event involvement
* Student representative to serve on PPC
* Community service
* Church fundraisers volunteers

Educating the community

* Establish a social media presence
* Network with other parish staff
* Have students speak at parish organization meeting (KofC, A&R, women’s guild)
* Utilize parish bulletin
* Student written reflections / witness of faith

Build a relationship with the pastor

* Consult for spiritual guidance/leadership
* Intentionally include pastor in planning and implementation
* Ask pastor to identify students for student leadership team
* Budget
* Attend meetings
* Be a voice from the pulpit

Diocesan opportunities

* Scholarships
* Student retreats
* DoS Congress
* Light the Fire
* National conferences
* Supplemental/resource materials

#### Young Adults

*At a critical time in their faith life, college students and young adults are underserved in the diocese.*

**Serve college community**

Develop infrastructure

* Develop business plan
* Create unique strategy
* Location funding: grants, diocese, university
* Tap into past experience: students, priests, ministers

Determine leadership

* Student
* Parish
* Diocese: make campus ministry a priority in personnel planning (priests)
* Train leadership

Identify needs

* Catholic universities without priests
* Catholic universities with priests
* Non-Catholic universities

Collaborate with universities

* Engage campus community
* Engage community at large

**Serve young adults**

Engage variety of young adults

* Social media/technology
* Dynamic preaching
* Married and single
* Invite to ministries in parish: religious education, service, liturgy

Collaborate with leaders

* Identify and utilize young adult leaders
* Allow young adult leaders to set agenda and plan

Identify needs

* Research regional demographics
* Marriage preparation and baptismal preparation
* Engage community at large

Find resources

* Grants
* Work with neighboring parishes
* Diocese
* Within parish

### Communication

To incorporate use of modern communication media and strategies; everyone in the parish receiving communication through a variety of channels.

#### Projects

1. Create a parish communication team and training for the team on communication methods and approaches
* Showcase/demonstration of communication methods, case studies, etc.
1. Design a communication plan for the parish to communicate internally and externally – with all ages, involved and not involved in the parish community
* MissionInsite – how parishioners choose to receive communication – assessment
* How to use social media effectively
* Reimaging the parish bulletin as a must read
* Best practices for internal and external parish communication + Diagnostic – how a parish diagnoses the way it communicates – internal and external
* How parishes market/promote/present themselves; consistency in message and frequency in communication
* Orientation for parishioners on how to experience the reimagined format
1. Motivation for paying attention; two-way communication

#### Ideas from November 2016 “Envisioning the Future of Parish Life” Event

**Communication**: Incorporate use of modern communication media and strategies in order to:

* meet, connect with and engage people where they are;
* share our story, inviting parishioners and seekers to understand who we are, where we are going and what we have to offer; and,
* listen effectively to understand the real hungers and quests of our times.

Awareness of communication channels

* Pros and cons of each channel
* Addressing individual needs of parish
* Overcoming fear
* Channels: email, bulletin/newsletter, calling/phone calls, texting (Flocknote), website, social media

Communications ministry

* Diocesan support
* Empower others and see value in this service

Education and training

* Workshops
* Resources

Website for parishes

* Research companies: options, pricing, support offer
* History
* Bulletin
* Online calendar
* Ministry schedules
* Online giving

Using social media for evangelization, communication, and fundraising

* Facebook: events, pictures, video, Scripture, “share” Catholic sites
* Twitter: Scripture, re-tweet Pope Francis, Bishop Bambera
* Instagram: pictures (Masses, events), high school/young adults, posters advertising
* YouTube: homilies, events, evangelization, iPhone/smartphone or video camera