

Archdiocese of Hartford 2011 Clergy Conference

Approaches to Evangelization

Goal

Exploring parish-based, evangelization approaches and strategies to reach a diversity of the religious and spiritual needs of people today: people who participate occasionally in parish life but are not spiritually committed, people who are spiritually hungry but not engaged in a parish community, and people who once engaged but have left the Catholic Church.

4-Scenario Evangelization (*Faith Formation 2020 Initiative*)



Evangelization is...

Evangelization is “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.”
(Paul VI)

“The heart of evangelism is having an alive relationship with God, being part of a church you love, and caring that people outside the church find what you’ve discovered.”
(Martha Grace Reese)

“Evangelism is to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and others to bring one person one step closer to Christ.”
(Lisa Orris).

Evangelization, then, has different implications depending on our relationship to Jesus and his Church.

For those of us who practice and live our Catholic faith, it is a call to ongoing growth and renewed conversion. For those who have accepted it only in name, it is a call to re-evangelization. For those who have stopped practicing their faith, it is a call to reconciliation. For children, it is a call to be formed into disciples through the family's faith life and religious education. For other Christians, it is an invitation to know the fullness of our message. For those who have no faith, it is a call to conversion to know Christ Jesus and thus experience a change to new life with Christ and his Church.

(U.S. Catholic Bishops)

Evangelization Strategies

Evangelization & Faith Formation with the Whole Community

- Parish Presentation: Sacred Heart, Southbury
- Parish Presentation: St. Mark, West Hartford

Evangelization & Faith Formation with Families

- Parish Presentation: Assumption, Woodbridge

Evangelization & Faith Formation with Hispanic Communities

- Parent Presentation: St. Rose, Meriden

Evangelization & Faith Formation through the Life Cycle

Evangelizing & Faith Formation with Web Technologies

- Parish Presentation: St. Peter Claver, West Hartford

Evangelization with the “Spiritual but Not Religious” & the “Unaffiliated and Uninterested”

Evangelization with the “Participating Occasionally but Not Spiritually Committed”

Empowering People of Vibrant Faith to Share their Faith

Evangelization through Parish Ministries: In-Church, In-Home, In-the-World, Online

Milestones Faith Formation

Churches can fashion a plan for lifelong faith formation for home and church around congregational, lifecycle (individual or family), and annual milestones. *Congregational milestones* include: baptism, welcoming young children to worship, first communion, presentation of Bibles, confirmation, marriage, funeral, commissioning members for ministries and mission trips, and much more. *Lifecycle milestones* include: entering a new stage of schooling, graduations (middle school, high school, college, or graduate school), getting a driver's license, leaving home for college or the military, first home or apartment, new career or job, moving, retirement, death of a family member, and much more. *Annual milestones* include birthdays, anniversaries, start of the school year (blessing backpacks), seasons of the church year (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week), and much more.

Churches can incorporate and integrate the following essential elements to provide a multi-faceted faith formation for individuals, couples, families around each milestone:

1. a ritual celebration or a blessing marking the milestone with the whole church community
2. a home ritual celebration or blessing marking the milestone
3. a learning program, often for the whole family or intergenerational, that prepares the individual and the whole family for the milestone and for faith practice at home
4. a tangible, visible reminder or symbol of the occasion being marked
5. resources to support continuing faith growth and practice after the milestone

Milestone Example

Plan milestones faith formation that includes: (1) preparation for marking or celebrating a milestone, (2) the experience or celebration of the milestone, and (3) follow-up after the milestone. A milestones plan includes congregational activities and individual/home activities. For example, developing a milestones plan for marriage could include the following elements:

1. Education: marriage course or workshop (theology, life skills, faith practices)
2. Ritual: preparation for the marriage ritual
3. Marriage ceremony
4. Connection to the community: prayers at Sunday worship for the married couple (before and after the ceremony); a "Book of Blessings" from the congregation to the married couple with prayers and words of support and encouragement
5. Continued support: monthly married couples small group meeting; online resources for married couples at the parish web site, a free magazine subscription for the first year of marriage, monthly e-newsletter for married couples
6. Reunion: a reunion breakfast or dinner for newly married couples every six months for the first several years of marriage
7. Anniversary: celebrating marriage anniversaries each month at Sunday worship with a special remembrance and blessing; sending a note of congratulations and a prayer on the anniversary of marriage
8. Resources: Bible readings and reflections for married couples, prayers for a new couple, suggestions for starting a faith-filled home life, ways to be involved in the faith community, ways to be involved in service and justice ministries as a couple

Moments of Return

At each stage of life, significant milestones and life transitions provide churches with "moments of return" when people who have not been involved in church life can return to the church for a ritual experience, family celebration, religious perspective on life's transitions, encouragement, and/or comfort and support. By maximizing these opportunities churches are nurturing people's faith and welcoming them back into the life of the faith community. Marriage, baptism, moments of sickness (personal, family, friends), the death of a loved one, and life decisions are all important milestones or life transitions that provide an excellent opportunity for

“moments of return.” Marriage and baptism present special opportunities to build a relationship with young adult couples that can lead to an invitation to participate in a church program to guide them in becoming spiritually committed or in renewing their faith as a foundation for deeper growth and more active engagement with the church community. Adulthood is especially filled with transitions: geographic relocations, family formation and re-formation, career changes, empty nests, unanticipated illness, divorce, and the loss of loved ones. In times of transition, people can experience feelings of disorientation and tend to question personal priorities; they may seek to “finish unfinished business” or develop new dimensions of their lives.

Resources

Faith Stepping Stones. Faith Inkubators. (online resource: www.faithink.com).

Family Faith Celebrations. Loveland: Group, 2010. (<http://familyfaithcelebrations.group.com>)

Haynes, Brian. *Shift—What It Takes to Finally Reach Families Today*. Loveland: Group, 2009.

Keeley, Laura and Robert J. *Celebrating the Milestones of Faith: A Guide for Churches*. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2009.

Keeley, Robert J. *Shaped by God: Twelve Essential Practices for Nurturing Faith in Children, Youth, and Adults*. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, 2010.

Milestones Ministry Manual for Home and Congregation. Bloomington: Vibrant Faith Ministries, 2007. (www.vibrantfaith.org)

Websites

Faith Inkubators: www.faithink.com

Group Publishing: <http://familyfaithcelebrations.group.com>

Legacy Milestones (Brian Haynes): www.legacymilestones.com

Vibrant Faith Ministries: www.vibrantfaith.org

Evangelization with the “Spiritual but Not Religious” & the “Unaffiliated and Uninterested”

Churches can offer a guided process for spiritually hungry people to become spiritually committed and join in small communities with other seekers for spiritual growth and support. One example of this process is an “Introduction to the Christian faith” program—an opportunity for people to investigate the claims of the Christian faith in an informal, no pressure, non-judgmental, and friendly environment. The emphasis is upon exploration and discovery in a relaxed and informal setting, and does not assume any background knowledge or belief in Christianity. It can offered in a variety of settings, formats, and times.

➤ The Alpha Course

Alpha (<http://alphausa.org>) is an opportunity to explore the meaning of life in a relaxed, friendly setting. The Alpha course usually meets once per week for ten weeks, and includes a one-day or weekend getaway. Each session, people enjoy great food, laughter and learning in a fun and friendly atmosphere where no question about life or God is seen as too simple or too hostile, questions like—Is there a God? Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going? Alpha is for anyone who thinks there may be more to life than meets the eye. People attend from all backgrounds, religions, and viewpoints. They come to investigate questions about the existence of God, the purpose of life, the afterlife, the claims of Jesus and more. Some people want to get beyond religion and find a relationship with God that really changes life. Others come for the close, long-lasting friendships that are built during the Alpha course. Many guests have never been to church, others may have attended church occasionally but feel they have never really understood the basics of the Christian faith.

Each gathering begins with a meal or refreshments—a chance to get to know others. Then there is a short talk which looks at a different aspect of the Christian faith each week. This is followed by a time of discussion in small groups, where everyone is welcome to contribute their opinion and ask questions. People usually stay in the

same small groups for the duration of the course so they can get to know each other, continue discussions and deepen friendships. The emphasis is upon exploration and discovery in a relaxed and informal environment. The talks each week cover the following topics, acting as a springboard for the small group discussions:

- Introduction Dinner: Is there more to life than this?
- Week 1: Who is Jesus?
- Week 2: Why did Jesus die?
- Week 3: How can we have faith?
- Week 4: Why and how do I pray?
- Week 5: Why and how should I read the Bible?
- Week 6: How does God guide us?
- Week 7: How can I resist evil?
- Week 8: Why and how should we tell others?
- Week 9: Does God heal today?
- Week 10: What about the Church?
- Weekend: Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? How can I make the most of the rest of my life?

The Alpha course is available in eighty-one languages such as Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Portuguese, and Vietnamese.

Alpha (UK): <http://uk.alpha.org>

Alpha (USA): <http://alphausa.org>

➤ Faith Formation in Third-Place Settings

Churches can establish a Third-Place gathering space for faith formation in the community, that offers hospitality, builds relationships, hosts spiritual conversations, provides programs and activities, and nourishes the spiritual life of people, especially those who are “spiritual but not religious” (Scenario 2) or “unaffiliated and uninterested (Scenario 3). “The Third Place is the informal public space between home and work that connects people to each other, allows them to recharge, pause, and the reengage the world. They are places in which participants feel strong, positive emotional ties because they are creating rewarding, meaningful social experiences and a warm community environment” (Herring, 123). Bookstores with a café, spaces for reading, guest speakers and programs, and reading groups are an example of a contemporary Third Place.

A Third Place is the ideal setting for groups to gather, each with their own focus. Some groups emphasize studying the Bible and deepening knowledge of the faith, others emphasize expressive and artistic activities (making music, creating art or writing poetry), others are organized around a lifestyle or common interest. Some are on a contemplative path (gathering for evening prayers or spiritual exercises), while others are on an active path (working at soup kitchens, tutoring kids, building houses).

Churches use the Third-Place concept to offer a variety of programs and activities for the wider community. Programs and activities can be sponsored by the church and conducted by people and groups in the community, such as an after-school program for children, an art gallery for local artists and art classes, a “faith and film” series, music concerts by local musicians, children’s storytelling hour, book reading groups, guest speakers, and so on. A church’s Third Place serves as a venue for faith formation programming and an entry point for those who are not engaged in church life. Program offerings can include spiritual formation programs, life-centered clinics and workshops (for example, marriage enrichment, parenting, divorce and separation, bereavement, life and career planning, financial planning, recovery programs, dealing with depression), and the “introduction to the Christian faith course” (see “Faith Formation for Spiritual Seekers” for ideas).

Some churches locate their Third-Place facility in the “marketplace”—as a coffee shop, a café or a store in a mall, while other churches re-design space within their existing church facilities, transforming an old fellowship hall into a café where people can meet through the day and night and an indoor play area where children can play while parents gather. Churches are “building” their Third Places with a café (coffee and food), bookstore, play space, and rooms for small group gatherings; and equipping their Third Places with Wi-Fi, flat screen televisions, computers, and couches.

Lifetree Café (www.lifetreecafe.com) offers people the opportunity to gather in warm and hospitable venues to explore life and faith. The hour-long Lifetree Café experiences feature stories of real people, guided conversation, biblical insights, time to build relationships with new and old friends, laughter, fun, and opportunities to serve. Lifetree Café offers a casual physical environment, warm hospitality, a safe place for questions and doubts, and an encouraging atmosphere for participants to share their own stories. Lifetree stories dig into the big and little stuff that shapes people’s lives: family, friends, fears, busyness, balance, money, materialism, health, heaven, peace, and purpose. Through the exploration of these stories people discover that God is active today and looking for a close relationship with them—through all that life has to throw at them. (For more information about developing a Lifetree Café contact Group Publishing at www.lifetreecafe.com.)

The Playhouse (www.freshexpressions.org.uk/stories/playhouse). As a member of Howden Clough Methodist Church, Birstall (England), Caroline was faced with the challenge of a dwindling congregation and a community that appeared to have no need for the traditional church building on their doorstep. “Seeing all those children in these awful places to play made me really stop and think,” says Caroline. “I thought, ‘why don’t we do something like this at Howden Clough?’” Her dream has become an amazingly successful reality—thanks to the efforts of a dedicated volunteer team, key sponsors, and a church willing to take what was seen as an enormous risk. “We now have three thousand square feet of play area, a café that operates alongside it, and a supportive local community who have taken it to their hearts and now use the Wesley Playhouse as the venues for birthday parties and celebrations. We’ve even had several Christenings there as a result of people feeling so much part of what has very much become their own fresh expression of church.” Since its launch in 2007, the project has seen over 2400 people come through its doors. Services take place in a room re-designed as a chapel downstairs every Sunday morning, and a Playhouse Praise is now a regular event on the first Sunday of the month. “It’s fantastic to see how many people have struck up friendships and are happy to be part of this community,” says Caroline. “People have asked to have their babies christened here and been amazed to discover that we can do this in the Wesley Playhouse. I explain that we may have climbing frames and all sorts of things all over the place but we are a church, and we’re here because we love God and we love them.” The Playhouse seeks “to lead people to faith and disciple them; to help them find out why we’ve done what we’ve done with this project and encourage them in their own walk with God.”

Croft, Steven, Ian Mobsby, and Stephanie Spellers, editors. *Ancient Faith, Future Mission: Fresh Expressions in the Sacramental Tradition*. New York: Seabury, 2010.

Fresh Expressions: www.freshexpressions.org.uk

Garrison, Becky. *Starting from Zero with so: Building Mission-shaped Ministries on a Shoestring*. New York: Seabury Books, 2010.

Evangelization with the “Participating Occasionally but Not Spiritually Committed”

➤ Mini-Retreats: Our Lady of Soledad Parish

Our Lady of Soledad Parish provides a step-by-step process to help parishioners deepen their faith, so they don't just enter the front door only to drift quietly out the back door later. The discipleship program mirrors the process developed by Rick Warren (Saddleback Church). It consists of five mini-retreats. Each mini-retreat includes prayer, ice breakers, talks, faith sharing and food. Held on a Sunday when most parishioners are off work, the first session begins at 3 p.m., late enough to allow for both Sunday Mass and family time. Retreats end at 8 p.m., early enough for participants to be rested for the next day. The parish provides child care. Each mini-retreat is self-contained; no one must return to complete it. This practice eliminates absenteeism and distinguishes the retreat experience from a class. Lay teams lead the mini-retreats, which are offered in English and Spanish and repeated frequently throughout the year. Each mini-retreat focuses on a different aspect of spiritual growth:

- *Mini-Retreat 101: “Catholics Alive!”* begins with the question, “What does it mean to be a follower of Christ?” Retreatants discuss the difference between a relationship-centered faith and a rules-centered faith; consider the importance of church as a family, instead of a privatized, Lone-Ranger Christianity; and note similarities and differences between Catholic and non-Catholic Christians. The group discusses the importance of serious commitment to the Catholic faith, as well as the commitments asked of parish members. Participants are asked to sign a simple membership covenant if they wish to join the parish as registered members.
- *Mini-Retreat 201: “Alive and Growing Spiritually!”* focuses on maturation in the Catholic faith. Retreatants discuss prayer, Bible study and the importance of belonging to a small faith community. There is also a presentation of Catholic moral teachings.
- *Mini-Retreat 301: “Alive and Gifted!”* helps retreatants discern how to serve God in ministry. The activities follow the acronym Shape, as developed by Warren, where “S” is for spiritual gifts; “H” represents the “heart” or passion and desire to serve; “A” stands for natural abilities; “P” is personality; and “E” represents life experiences. This mini-retreat helps participants discover how God has uniquely shaped them for ministry. Parishioners take up a ministry based on their gifts, not just on parish needs.
- *Mini-Retreat 401: “Alive in the World!”* helps participants live as witnesses for Christ, as contagious Catholic Christians. The group discusses evangelization, as distinguished from proselytizing. Retreatants learn how to defend the Catholic faith. They also discuss Catholic social justice teachings and specifically how this parish is active in community organizing.
- *Mini-Retreat 501: “Alive to Praise God!”* focuses on Catholic worship and the sacraments. It begins with a Taizé-style prayer, followed by a guided tour of the church during which sacred spaces, vessels and vestments are explained. Next, retreatants rotate through four workshops on the sacraments, the liturgical year and church traditions. The retreat concludes with a shortened Seder-like meal that leads into an explanatory Mass.

➤ *Awakening Faith & Seeking Christ* Paulist Evangelization Ministries (www.pncea.org)

Awakening Faith: Reconnecting with Your Catholic Faith, is a conversation-based, small group process that helps inactive Catholics return to the Church. The group meets once a week for six weeks of conversation and socializing. The conversations are based on short, easy to read essays about spirituality, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, God's mercy, the Mass, and the Church. The meetings foster reflection, prayer, and honest sharing in a setting of hospitality and acceptance. A small community is formed and over the weeks that community becomes a bridge to the larger church community. Additional, optional essays allow the group to continue to meet if desirable for another four weeks to discuss faith, love, marriage and divorce, and money. The process is simple and inviting. A parish can offer *Awakening Faith* any time of the year and repeat it year after year.

Seeking Christ aims to solve the problem parishes face when people inquire about the Catholic Church, but the parish has no way to begin receiving them. *Seeking Christ* includes eight sessions that can be used in a variety of ways to welcome and engage people who are inquiring about becoming Catholics. After an initial interview, the program offers eight possible sessions dealing with human seeking, our words and the Word of God, faith, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the church as the community of Jesus, freedom, and conversion. Depending on inquirers' needs, a parish chooses which sessions would be most helpful. Each session involves a short DVD reflection, a scripture passage for discussion, and a take-home session which allows the inquirer to begin seeing Catholic approaches to various life issues. The inquirer receives a booklet for reflection and journaling.

Empowering People of Vibrant Faith to Share their Faith (*Unbinding the Gospel*, GraceNet: www.gracenet.info)

The process and integrated set of resources from *Unbinding the Gospel Project* empower the faith community—people of vibrant faith and active engagement—to share their faith with those are not engaged in the church community and/or not growing in faith. This process and the accompanying resources help the whole church change its habits to reflect practices of members and leaders of highly effective churches. They begin to pray daily, to talk about their faith with each other, and to take steps toward significant faith conversations with friends without a faith/church relationship. The process moves through the following steps:

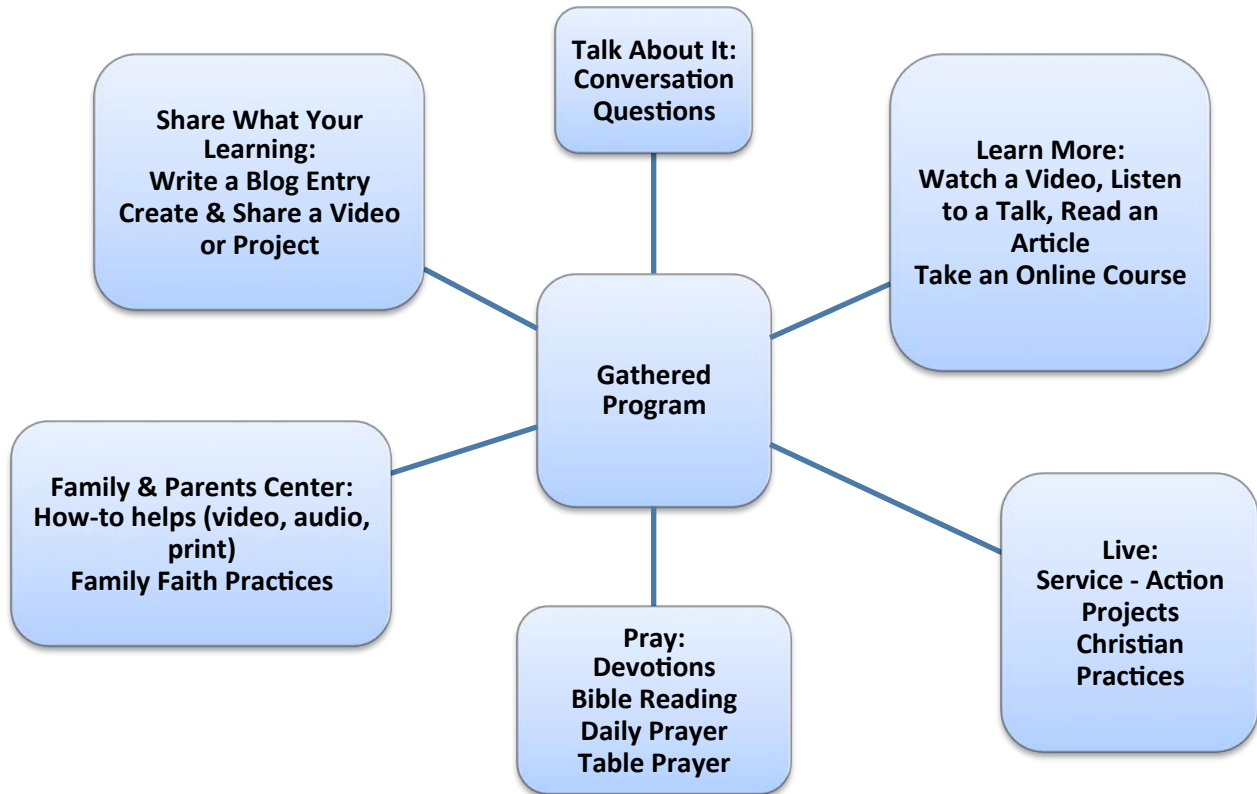
- **Step One. Church Leader's Study:** *Unbinding the Gospel*. Designed for pastors, key congregational leaders and evangelism teams *Unbinding the Gospel* helps committed leaders deepen and start sharing their own faith, understand their cultural context, and begin to plan for authentic congregational faith-sharing. It works best as a seven- to ten-week small group study. Each chapter concludes with questions, scripture suggestions and group exercises.
- **Step Two: All-Church Saturation Study:** *Unbinding Your Heart: Forty Days of Prayer & Faith Sharing*. This is a six-week, church-wide, small group E-vent! that can be conducted during Lent, summer or fall study for all established classes and small groups, and new ones formed just for the E-vent. The purpose of an all-congregation is to help people strengthen their own faith and to learn to talk about it with each other first, and then others outside the community. Each week, for forty days, people will (1) pray each day's scripture and prayer exercise and work with a prayer partner; (2) study a chapter of the book with their small group, and (3) worship with sermons, music, and prayers centered on the week's chapter. *Unbinding Your Heart* enriches the church's community life. It helps individuals risk face-to-face encounters with God. The entire congregation begins to talk about their faith. The E-vent creates momentum in the church.
- **Step Three: An Experiment in Prayer and Community:** *Unbinding Your Soul*. Many people who aren't connected with a church would love to try a no-obligation experience of substantial spiritual discussion, prayer and community. *Unbinding Your Soul* prepares church members to invite their friends into a four-week small group experience with short study chapters, an individual prayer journal, prayer partner activities, and group exercises. Groups can choose an additional four-week segment: "Faith and Courage."

Resources

- Reese, Martha Grace. *Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism*. Saint Louis: Chalice, 2006.
_____. *Unbinding Your Heart: Forty Days of Prayer and Faith Sharing*. Saint Louis: Chalice, 2008.
_____. *Unbinding Your Church*. Saint Louis: Chalice, 2008.
_____. *Unbinding Your Soul: Your Experiment in Prayer and Community*. Saint Louis: Chalice, 2009.

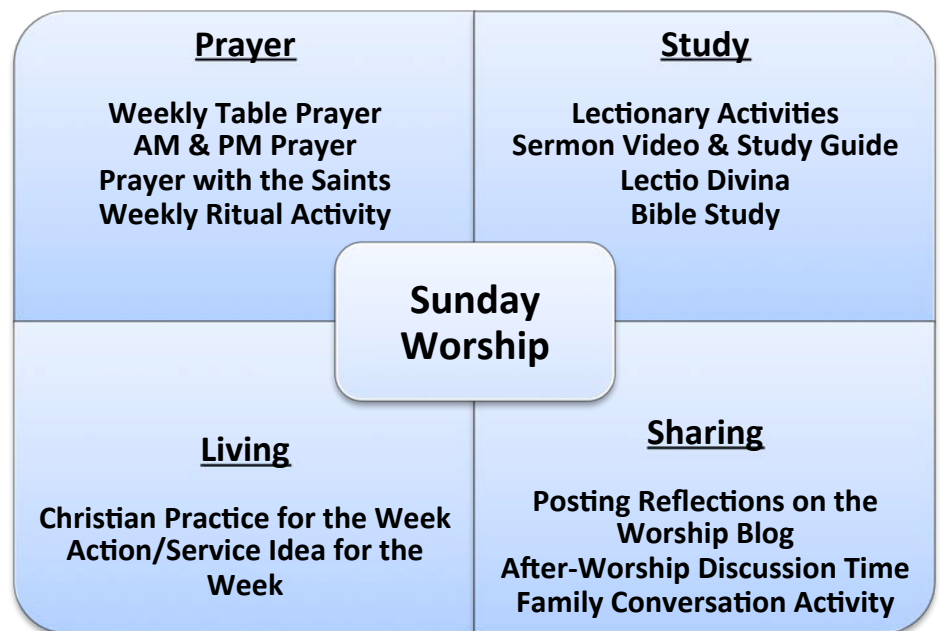
Evangelization through Parish Ministries: In-Church, In-Home, In-the-World, Online

➤ Example 1: Extend a Gathered Program through Continuing Learning and Practice



➤ Example 2: Extend Sunday Worship into Everyday Life

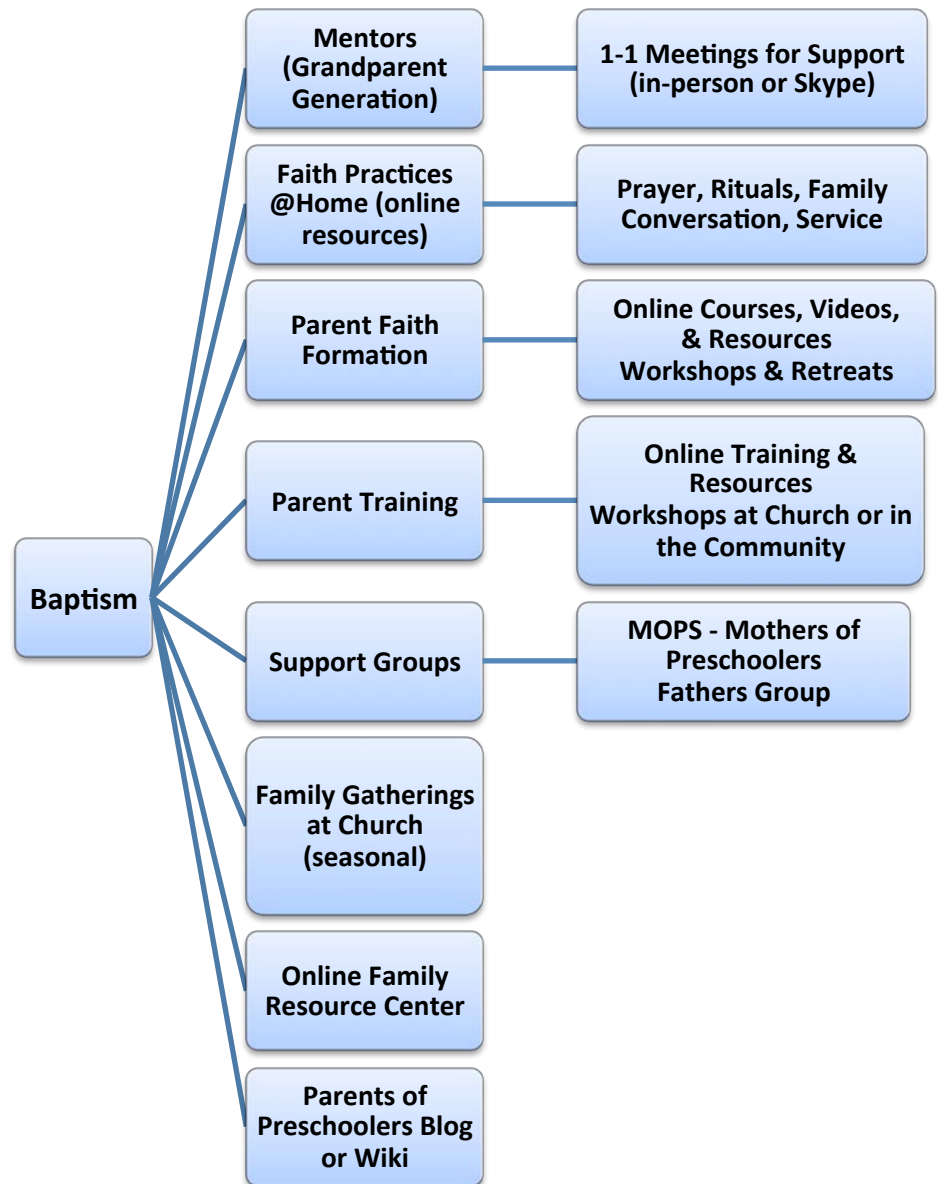
Imagine a congregation extending Sunday worship throughout the week using a variety of formats, face-to-face and virtual. A congregation can build a node on their Lifelong Faith Formation Network for Sunday Worship. Once this node is built it can be updated every week with new content for that particular Sunday's Scripture readings and Church Year season. The prior Sunday's content goes into the online library and can be used again at another time.



➤ Example 3: Target a Milestone or Family Life Stage with Comprehensive Faith Formation in a Variety of Formats

Imagine developing a Network just for parents of young children, beginning at baptism, blending faith formation in virtual and physical settings and using the seven faith formation formats to provide a diversity of content and activities.

1. **Mentors:** provide 1-1 mentoring by connecting parents to adults in the grandparent generation who can meet with them regularly: in person, by phone/video conference
2. **Faith Practices @Home:** provide parents with faith practices resources geared to the age of their growing child and family
3. **Parent Faith Formation:** offer a variety of faith growth opportunities for parents: workshops, presentations, retreats; online courses, videos, and print resources
4. **Parent Training:** offer a variety of programs at church or through community organizations; and online training and resources using websites such as Tumblon.com & ParentFurther.com.
5. **Support Groups:** organize groups in the church, host community groups, or connect parents to existing support groups.
6. **Family Gatherings:** 3 or 4 times per year
7. **Parent Blog or Wiki:** give parents the opportunity to connect, share ideas, and ask for assistance online



➤ Example 4: Young Adults & Adults

Imagine developing a network approach to young adult formation around the life issues, transitions, and spiritual and religious needs of adults. With the great diversity among young adults, faith formation needs to provide a wide variety of content, experiences, and faith formation formats, balancing programming in physical spaces with an online resource center. Faith formation can be offered in the six formats: on your own, with a mentor, at home, in small groups, in large groups, in the congregation, and in the community and world. Each offering can be tailored to one of the four scenarios, e.g., the Alpha Course for Scenario 2, the Third Place Café for Scenarios 2 and 3, etc.



1. **Small Group Studies:** Opportunities and resources for small groups to organize for faith sharing, Bible study, and book discussions. You can develop small groups around audio and video content and link people to online Bible studies, topical small group programs, and more.
2. **Weekly Gathering and Worship Experience:** A weeknight worship experience, designed by and for young adults (art, music, environment, worship experience), that provides a time for young adults to worship and celebrate, apply the Scriptures to their lives, make new friends, enjoy live music, and connect with a God.
3. **Life Tasks and Issues:** Programs, workshops, online programs, and website resources that address young adult life tasks and issues, such as relationships, career and vocation, marriage, finances, life planning, and more.
4. **Online Courses:** A “course catalog” of online courses and webinars (with descriptions and website links) from seminaries, universities, and publishers, religious organizations, iTunes University, and other online course providers. These courses can be offered for “on your own” study or small group study (online or face-to-face), as well as the primary content for a course at the church with a facilitator.
5. **Online Audio and Video Programs:** A library of audio and video programs (with descriptions and links) from iTunes, YouTube, Vimeo, and other providers, organized into categories such as Bible, theology, life issues, and so on. In addition to individual use, audio and video programs can be organized into the primary content for small group study (online or face-to-face) or a course at the church with a facilitator.
6. **Prayer and Spiritual Practices:** A spiritual life center with content from online sources: daily prayer online, spiritual life reflections, spiritual life videos, prayer forms, daily liturgy of the hours, praying with the saints, daily Bible reading, Lectio Divina, links to retreat centers, online spirituality courses, and more.
7. **Justice and Service:** A clearinghouse of mission and service opportunities: local, national, and international with links to websites with content on social issues and with Bible and church teachings; and a place online for young adults to share their thoughts and reflections on justice issues and service experiences.
8. **Third Place Café:** A café in the community sponsored by the church for young adults that offers hospitality, builds relationships, hosts spiritual conversations, provides programs and activities, and nourishes the spiritual life of people, especially those who are “spiritual but not religious” (Scenario 2) or “unaffiliated and uninterested (Scenario 3).” (See www.LifetreeCafe.com)
9. **Alpha Course:** (<http://alphausa.org>): An opportunity to explore the meaning of life in a relaxed, friendly setting in a ten-session program with a one-day or weekend getaway. The Alpha course investigates questions about the existence of God, the purpose of life, the life and teachings of Jesus, prayer, evil, the Bible, the church, and more. The emphasis is upon exploration and discovery in a relaxed and informal environment.
10. **Social Network and Blog :** An online setting to connect, share ideas, and ask for assistance.
11. **Cross-Generational Relationships.** Ways for young adults to connect with the whole community through worship, service, and other church ministries or events; and to connect with adults in the community through mentoring, small groups, programs, and events.