



# Best Practices in Parish Evangelization

*“The seed sown on rich soil... bears fruit.”*

*Matthew 13:23*

## Leadership - Share a Vision and Plan for Growth

- ❖ **Form a Cohesive Leadership Team:** Host workshops and trainings that help parish staffs, councils, heads of ministries, etc. develop a shared vision of leadership.
- ❖ **Listening & Assessment:** Use surveys, demographic data, and other assessment measures to identify and respond to the needs and realities of the local community.
- ❖ **Visioning & Pastoral Planning:** Plan strategically for evangelization efforts based on guided self-assessment using the Indicators of Vitality.
- ❖ **Discipleship/Evangelization Leader Training:** Create a shared culture of evangelization by training heads of ministries and other key leaders using local and national resources (e.g. ‘E101’).
- ❖ **Building Intercultural Competencies for Ministry (B.I.C.M):** Equip ministry leaders and parishioners for intercultural ministry and dialogue (parishes interested in scheduling this training may contact the Office of Cultural Diversity [culturaldiversity@adw.org](mailto:culturaldiversity@adw.org)).



## Encounter - Increase Opportunities to Encounter Jesus Christ

- ❖ **Beauty and the Sunday Liturgy:** Reflect as a parish team on how to maximize the experience of the parish on Sundays including reflecting on the current hymns, homilies, and hospitality that promote beauty, engage visitors, and invite them into parish life.
- ❖ **Hospitality:** Develop a welcoming team, parishioner follow up process that responds to peoples’ gifts and needs, and other creative efforts to engage visitors and invite them into parish life.
- ❖ **Personal Witness:** Expose the parish community to the kerygma of Jesus Christ through the ongoing personal witness of parishioners. Host a workshop to teach the kerygma and provide parish opportunities to offer their personal witness.
- ❖ **Access to Prayer and Sacraments:** Help more people encounter Christ by increasing access to the Sacraments (e.g. Confession, Mass, adoration, etc.) at new days or times that fit in better with the busy work and life schedules of the laity.
- ❖ **Popular Piety: Devotions and Healing Ministry:** Provide a transformative experience of Jesus Christ through healing prayer/Mass, cultural devotions, or other popular piety that reflect the rich spiritualities within the Church.
- ❖ **Communications:** Connect to more people through an updated and maintained website, social media presence, printed resources, etc.



## Accompany/Community - Accompany People into Christian Community and Friendship

- ❖ **Mentoring:** Empower disciples to walk alongside others through one on one or small group community (e.g. RCIA sponsors, married couple mentors, young adults, etc.).
- ❖ **New Parishioner Registration:** Welcome new parishioners into your community through a one on one meeting with the priest or lay leader that orients them to the parish, connects them into a smaller community group, and invites them to use their gifts.
- ❖ **Personal Invitation into Parish Community:** Utilize one-time parish touchpoints (e.g. weddings and funerals) or ongoing parish programs (e.g. marriage preparation, RCIA, religious education) to invite people into the ongoing life of the parish community.
- ❖ **Small Groups:** Form communities who grow in faith together through prayer, discussion, and mutual encouragement on the Christian journey.
- ❖ **Adult Faith Formation:** Provide evangelizing catechesis for more adults in the parish (e.g. young adults, parents, couples, seniors, etc.) using national and archdiocesan resources and best practices.
- ❖ **Parish Retreats:** Host transformative spiritual experiences for adults such as weekend retreats, days of reflection, parish missions, etc.
- ❖ **Liturgical and Key Evangelizing Days Year-Round:** Maximize special days and seasons (e.g. parish traditions, festivals, neighborhood gatherings, etc.) to build community and provide a Christian witness inside and outside the parish.
- ❖ **Spiritual Direction & Spiritual Companionship:** Assist parishioners in personal spiritual growth by more widely providing spiritual direction or spiritual mentorship/companionship.
- ❖ **Family Perspective:** Build the domestic Church by providing spiritual, service, and catechetical offerings for the whole family.
- ❖ **Building Competency in Inclusion:** Create parish and community programs where all are truly welcomed, especially those with special needs.



## Mission - Help More People Discern and Live their Mission

- ❖ **Congregational Engagement:** Connect people with opportunities to discover their gifts through volunteer recruitment, ministry fairs, Called and Gifted workshop, Living Your Strengths inventory, etc.
- ❖ **Personal Evangelization Training:** Form parishioners to live as missionary disciples through evangelization trainings (e.g. E101, Apostles on Mission).
- ❖ **Service and Justice:** Help parishioners put their gifts into action through parish charity efforts, local advocacy, Catholic Charities, etc.
- ❖ **Door to Door and street evangelization:** Equip disciples with the tools to bring Christ into the community through personal invitation.
- ❖ **Mission Trips:** Send parishioners on mission to bring the light of Christ to other communities in need.

