8 Tips for Effective eCommunication

1. Email Frequency

- No matter how good your content is, most people don't like frequent mass emails – be moderate and strategic with the emails you send. Less is more!
- Once a week is a good rule of thumb, with an *occasional* second email in a week for something truly important
    - Consider a weekly parish e-newsletter, which includes: link to parish bulletin, listing of upcoming events, spiritual resources, announcements, link to online giving
- You can always create other lists later that people can opt into that are more frequent or have a targeted purpose (i.e. marriage and family list, youth group list, daily reflections list, etc...)
- Watch your analytics – if a lot of people are unsubscribing from your emails, it means they are too frequent, or not helpful; a few "unsubscribes" are normal

2. Avoid long texts on emails and flyers

- Assume your reader is going to skim your email or flyer. The most important information should be accessible "at a glance."
- Rather than long paragraphs, use 2-3 short descriptive sentences with a link to a webpage or flyer where they can learn more if interested
- When promoting events: most people want to know:
    - **What is it?**
        - Use a descriptive title and a sentence or two summarizing what the event is.
        - Use bullets where possible; be practical and specific – *what is a person going to learn/gain from this event?*
    - **When and where is it?**
        - Date, time & location should be clear and obvious
    - **How much is it?**
        - Cost should be clear and obvious
    - **How do I learn more/sign up?**
        - Include a short, easy to remember URL pointing them to where they can learn more/sign up (e.g. archphila.org/arise for Arise information)

3. A picture is worth 1,000 words!

- Choose an image or photo for your flyer/email that communicates the spirit and topic of your initiative or event. This will communicate a lot about your event, without having to use long descriptions. For example, what does the image below tell you about the Arise initiative?

4. Your website is your information hub!

- Use your parish website as the hub where all additional information can be found, including ways to sign-up and register for events
- Create a page on your website where people can sign up for your email lists. Make this "sign up" page accessible from all pages on your website
- Make your website user-friendly. Make it very simple to find the most important information with one or two clicks. Assume that most people aren't fluent in Church-language or navigating websites.

5. Use short URLs

- Instead of: https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=f32367
- Try: phillyevang.org/donate

- Instead of: https://archphila.org/events/easter-video-series-arise-initiative
- Try: archphila.org/arise

6. As few clicks as possible

- The web address that you put on your email or flyer should go to the exact page where the information is posted. Try to avoid people having to search your website to find what you are telling them about.

7. Think ahead: Use every email to grow your email lists

- On every email you send, add a link where people can sign up for your email lists. This will gain you a handful of new people each time you send an email.
    - E.g. *"Did someone forward you this email? Sign up to receive these email updates from the Office for the New Evangelization directly to your inbox at:* phillyevang.org/inform.*"*

8. Think ahead: Use your current event to promote upcoming events

- At the end of every event, let people know about upcoming events that may be of interest to them