

In+Formation

RENEWING PARISHES

News for Pastoral Planners and Those Making the Plan a Reality

The InFormation is an electronic newsletter. Feel free to print as many copies as you need. <http://archphila.org/pastplan/INDEX/InFormationindex.html>

Facilitators?

What are they? Who are they? What do they do?

Do I need one? What do they cost?

All good questions, lets start with:

1- What are they?

A group of skilled professionals well trained and experienced in the art of helping a group accomplish their goals.

2- Who are they

They are people from parishes just like you and I. They have a desire to help the church move forward.

They have no agenda nor have a conclusion in mind. They are neutral on the issues.

3- What do they do?

- A- They keep the meeting on track and on time.
- B- They manage the communication process among the group members.
- C- They see to it that everyone has a voice and is heard
- D- They help the group accomplish its goals and commitments
- E- The facilitator guides the group in establishing a plan
- F- The facilitator makes sure that everyone can support the out come.

4- Do we need one?

If you think the items above might be difficult to accomplish on your own then I would certainly recommend a facilitator to help get your group through the process in a reasonable time frame.

5- What do they cost?

In a parish self study the fee would be negotiated between the parish and the facilitator. For budget purposes I would estimate \$50-\$100. dollars an hour.

Area pastoral planning (PPA) facilitators will be compensated by the Archdiocese.



Dr. Miller Training facilitators



our facilitators have been trained by:

Evelyn Tarpey Sr. Janet Baker Ron Lill Dr. Robert Miller Marti Harrington

If you feel you have need of a facilitator please contact the office for **Research and Planning we maintain a list of trained and experienced resource people.** We'll be happy to assist you with your questions e-mail resplan@adphila.org

or call 215-587- 3545

Volume 11 Issue 3

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The Office of Research & Planning

for the use of Parish Pastoral Planners and

those who implement those plans.

Suggestions for future articles should be directed to Ron Lill *editor*

e-mail: orp@adphila.org

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These suggestions are encouraged and welcomed

PRAYER FOR A MEETING



Prayer for a Meeting

Forgive me Lord because while I believe with all my heart that you need me, need us, to build a fraternal world I often forget that I cannot do it without you... I work alone, struggle alone, fight alone, and I'm afraid that's what others do also because often we don't think of inviting you to the meeting. And when we say you are there because we are accustomed to saying it we avoid searching for and asking for your opinion because it's easier to settle for our own and more difficult to reflect on your gospel and pray in your Spirit. But we are building in vain Lord, until we build with you. You are there, Lord, and I am speaking to you...

I entrust this meeting to you.

Scripture (John 15:4-5)

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

Intercessions/Reflections -

Concluding Prayer

Father, breathe your Spirit upon your people gathered together to do your work. Grace us, we pray, with a new sense of your mystery, a new experience of your presence, a new commitment to your gospel, a new dedication to your kingdom. May your Spirit be our inspiration and may our work contribute to the coming of your kingdom, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Philadelphia Archdiocesan Office for Research and Planning is among the 13% of online Americans on Twitter. Get all our latest research and numbers by following <http://twitter.com/PhillyCatholic>



Trivia Box

How many Deaneries are there in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia?

(see answer on page 5)



**ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THE
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT:**

<http://www.archphila.org/pastplan/InFormation/index.html>



Note:

You can print as many copies as you need. But remember to save the trees!

**Has your parish or pastoral planning area
entered into a planning Process?**

Do you need a professional Facilitator?

**The office of Research and Planning maintains a list of trained and
experienced Resource people.**

Contact us at: The Archdiocese of Philadelphia

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Why Size Matters

People mean many different things when they consider the size of a parish. Some talk about the fact that the size of the parish generates enough resources to ensure that the parish could make an impact in its community. For others, size produces a capacity for excellence in worship and education that they valued. For still others, the size of the parish is a measure of prestige. They valued being part of the “biggest and richest” parish around



Is size an end unto itself—or a means to accomplish something else? If we cease to be a large and resource rich parish, will we have failed in our mission? Should our size be one of the core values expressed by our parish? What difference does it really make that we are considered “big” in the world of parishes? What does our size allow us to accomplish?

Our Attraction to Large

There are five major aspects that create a sense of appeal for the large parish in this day and age:

Capacity for Excellence

We live in a high expectation culture. Increasingly, people are looking for parishes with a threefold emphasis on relevance, quality, and choices: excellence in presenting the gospel in what is perceived as relevant terms; a reputation for quality worship, teaching, and service; and provision of a broad range of attractive choices in worship, learning, and involvement.

Effective Use of Technology

Culturally we have shifted from communication that is printed and spoken to communication that is visually supported with imagery, motion, humor, drama, and music. This shift is transforming the parish life to higher energy, multimedia, and even entertaining worship and education experiences. Overall, large parish’s have greater resource capacity to purchase and use technology effectively, which contributes to their sense of cultural relevance.

Space for Anonymity and Intimacy

One of the reasons that larger parishes are growing at a faster rate than smaller parishes is because of their unique capacity for accommodating both intimacy and anonymity. The large church provides an arena in which a person seeking to be unknown can be present and participate in worship and education without compromising anonymity. Larger parishes can also meet the intimacy needs of individuals through small-group educational, service, and programming venues, where people can know and be known in deeply connectational ways. People who are seeking engagement at opposite ends of the intimacy/anonymity continuum can sit comfortably side by side in the large church.

Presence of Diversity

In addition to being better able to serve diverse needs and appeal to different demographic groupings, the large parish allows members and participants to engage diversity, in measured doses, as they feel comfortable. In a small parish, when diversity shows up in the form of a visitor who presents some form of “otherness,” the parish as a whole must encounter the difference if the visitor is to feel welcome.

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Top 15 Dioceses by Total Catholic Population

Top 15 Dioceses by Total Catholic Population	Catholic Population	# of Parishes	Average Parish Size	Total # of Priests in the Diocese	Priests to Catholic Ratio	Diocesan Priests Active in Diocese	Diocesan Priest Active in Diocese to Catholic Ratio	Religious priests in Diocese	# of Parishes without a resident pastor
Los Angeles	4,176,296	287	14,552	1,092	3,824 to 1	349	11,966 to 1	560	54
New York	2,576,800	370	6,964	1,489	1,731 to 1	471	5,471 to 1	852	7
Chicago	2,338,000	359	6,513	1,600	1,461 to 1	540	4,330 to 1	789	21
Rockville Centre	1,493,528	133	11,230	413	3,616 to 1	227	6,579 to 1	48	0
Boston	1,484,661	292	5,084	1,338	1,110 to 1	499	2,975 to 1	498	0
Philadelphia	1,458,430	266	5,442	977	1,493 to 1	442	3,300 to 1	371	0
Brooklyn	1,440,000	198	7,273	699	2,060 to 1	289	4,983 to 1	159	9
Detroit	1,434,622	277	5,179	618	2,231 to 1	265	5,414 to 1	211	32
Newark	1,318,557	224	5,886	911	1,447 to 1	438	3,010 to 1	177	13
San Bernadino	1,220,750	94	12,987	245	4,983 to 1	55	22,195 to 1	130	31
Orange, California	1,197,681	60	19,961	278	4,308 to 1	117	10,237 to 1	127	5
Galveston-Houston	1,128,065	149	7,571	408	2,765 to 1	132	8,546 to 1	211	4
Dallas	1,127,985	67	16,836	171	6,596 to 1	61	18,492 to 1	73	12
Fresno	1,074,944	89	12,078	160	6,718 to 1	81	13,271 to 1	38	14
San Juan, PR	1,015,802	154	6,596	277	3,667 to 1	83	12,239 to 1	157	0



I'LL BE STAYING

Hanging In There

We promised to tell a few of the stories of those who are struggling with the Church but are choosing to remain part of it. These stories will eventually find their way into a forthcoming book, *The Catholic Dilemma – Remain or Move On: A Resource for Parish Renewal*. The interviews cover a wide range of topics, including authority, the role of women, justice, sexuality and spirituality, to name but a few. One person wrote, “Many of us have chosen to stay but on our ‘terms.’ We celebrate with the pastoral church and disregard the institutional Church.”

Issues For A Parish

Along with asking people why they have remained in the Church, we also inquired into what a parish could do to keep people active and invite new ones to join. A few of the responses included: “The parish can model shared leadership. A pastor needs to bear the vision of the people, making decisions in collaboration with the lay leaders. This is not happening at the mo-

ment, so I put my nose down and help the people to whom I minister. But a parish could be a force and advocate for true collaboration, respecting the gifts and hopes and dreams that the people of the community have to offer. It is important to support the pastor in this shared decision making, calling him to task if need be, and be patient.” “The local parish is the only place where the Church is life-bringing. There is good energy put into prayer, Word, sacraments, taking care of others. Parishes need a collective voice right now. They need to speak out more about problems with the hierarchy. This is tricky because it can disenfranchise some of the parishioners and could be seen as setting up the parish against the hierarchy – but this is where the energy for change exists.” “Parishes need to do better in their efforts at inclusiveness. Many who have been turned off by the Church and parish are not there anymore. Those who are left feel everything is going well. It is not. Parishes need to talk with those who have left about such concerns as women’s issues, balanced language in the liturgy and why many people are no longer coming. Get the women up there and include them more.” As one person put it, “God is a living God. Our Church will only survive if we keep it the living, dynamic, loving presence of God on earth.”

This is a partial reprint from the monthly newsletter November, 2011 A Service of the Parish Evaluation Project Milwaukee, Wisconsin

from “Parish evaluation Project”

By Mrs. Wendy Rappé & Tom Sweetser, SJ

Visit their website www.pepparish.org

Or email them pep@pitnet.net

ARE YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING THE CHURCH IF SO, WHY?

According to an article Dateline ROME, NOV. 25, 2011 By Father John Flynn, LC

On the Zenet website: Fr. Flynn says “It’s well-known that many young people stop being active Church-goers. A recent book examined extensive research carried out by the Barna Group to find out why so many drop out as they move into adulthood. Flynn quotes from “You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving the Church ... and Rethinking Faith,” (Baker Books), David Kinnaman, along with Aly Hawkins, analyzed a wide range of statistical data.

The problem, Kinnaman explained, is not that teens are any less active in church than in previous times. In fact, around four out of five teens in America will spend a part of their childhood or teen years going to a Christian congregation or

parish. What happens is that this activity fades away during their 20s.

For both Catholics and Protestants the age group of those in their 20s is the least likely to say that they are committed to Christ, in spite of their previous religious experience.

An even greater problem is the disconnect with the church. Even more than a struggle with their faith in Christ, young people cease their institutional participation.

Disconnection

Kinnaman expected to find one or two big reasons why young adults disconnect from their church. Instead, it turned out that there is a wide variety of frustrations that leads to people dropping out.

Some consider their church to be an obstacle to creativity and self-expression. Others become bored with superficial teachings and platitudes. A perceived incompatibility between faith and science leads others to drop out. What some consider to be repressive rules, particularly regarding sexual morality, is another reason young people leave their church. The current cultural trends that emphasize tolerance and acceptance of other values and opinions clash with Christianity’s claim to possess universal truths. What some consider to be repressive rules, particularly regarding sexual morality, is another reason young people leave their church. The current cultural trends that emphasize tolerance and acceptance of other values and opinions clash with Christianity’s claim to possess universal truths.

Kinnaman also found that in many cases churches fail to instruct

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Why Size Matters



in the large parish, however, people can find their way toward others with whom they identify, without the entire parish having to negotiate difference all of the time. Congregants balance the tension between engaging differences when it feels safe and retreating to more homogeneous groupings when that feels right, in much the same way that they negotiate intimacy and anonymity.

Capacity to Make a Difference

“Think global, act local” has become a mantra in our culture. We are becoming increasingly aware of our own insignificance in the global scheme of things, and we crave ways to make a difference in our own lives and in the lives of others. Large parishes offer members and constituents the opportunity to participate in something that feels significant. People who struggle with a sense of insignificance in life may be drawn to a large parish so that they can finally be part of something that makes an impact. People who are movers and shakers in their communities may similarly be drawn to these institutions, because they expect to invest themselves in places where their voice matters.

The Limitations of Large

With all of the natural advantages that the large parish brings to bear on our culture, it would seem evident that the large parish has become a poster child for the future of the church. However, the large parish also faces formidable challenges that may limit its capacity to serve the very culture to which it appeals.

Communication Problems

The larger a parish grows, the more difficult it becomes to make sure that the right and left hands of the parish are aware of one another and informed about mutual activity. Increased size means increased complexity, and the greater an organization’s complexity the harder it is to ensure that everyone has access to the same information.

Continual Staff and Leadership Transition

The effectiveness of the large church is dependent upon a high functioning, strategically aligned team of clergy and program and support staff. The stability of that team is critical. If the team is in conflict or turmoil, the parish is likely to be in conflict and turmoil. However, the very nature of the staff team in the large parish is that it is continually in a state of transition.

Undercapitalization

The large church naturally projects an image of abundance, and it is difficult to convince people that the church has any genuine need or that their financial contributions make a difference.

Lack of Alignment

As growth occurs, coordinating and aligning the ministries of the church becomes more challenging. When the staff team no longer fits comfortably around a single decision-making table, the church begins to lose its sense of strategic focus. Successful ministries begin competing with one another, not just for budget dollars, but for voice in shaping decision making. Highly talented staff members compete for limited resources. Lay leaders begin to feel that they’ve lost their place in the decision-making life of the parish as the role of staff becomes more central. Keeping the entire structure aligned and focused is one of the greatest challenges in the large church and also a key to its effectiveness.

Regardless of what draws you into this dialogue, I invite you to examine your own presuppositions and assumptions about parish size. I invite you to pause and reflect upon your own parish background and the various ways in which your assumptions about the right-sized parish have been shaped by your experience.

Adapted from ;

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ARE YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING THE CHURCH IF SO, WHY?

young people in a sufficiently profound manner. A shallow faith in teens and young adults leaves them with a list of vague beliefs and a disconnect between their faith and their daily lives.

Kinnaman has some recommendations on how to stem the loss of so many young people. There

needs to be a change in the way the older generations in churches relate to younger generations.

He also urged the rediscovery of the theological concept of vocation in order to encourage a deeper consideration by young people of what God is asking them to do with their lives.”

[More](#) (to read a related article in *Zenet on the subject*)

Trivia Answer Box

There are 12 deaneries

in the Archdiocese of

Philadelphia

Go to:

<http://archphila.org/pastplan/MAPS/Deaneries.pdf>