

Category: Communication and Vision

Resource 1

Journey of Faith Ongoing Communication

Providing parishioners with multiple layers of support will make the process of change easier. People need to hear messages more than once, in multiple ways, from multiple people. In addition to communicating at events like town halls or retreats, it is important to create a plan for all the standard modes of communication available to your parish. Use the table below to take stock of your current communication efforts around Journey of Faith and decide how you might include additional modes or increase the frequency of messages. You can combine this plan with your custom roadmap if it helps you.

Remember – no news is BAD news. Your parishioners will fill in the information gaps with rumors. Even if you have no “new” news, update your parishioners anyway.

Mode of Communication	Recommended Frequency	Types of Messages	What and how often will I communicate using each mode?
Flocknote	Weekly or as needed	Concise call to action; Key point to consider	
Bulletin	Weekly to monthly	Brief personal message from the pastor; Data on demographics or Mass attendance; Prayer meditations; Reflection questions; Concise call to action	
Letter to Parishioners	2-4 times per year	Brief personal message from the pastor; Data on demographics or Mass attendance; Prayer meditations; Reflection questions	
Ambo Announcements	Monthly	Concise call to action	

Homily Series	As needed; 2-4 consecutive weeks on the same theme	Confer with other pastors and associates in the family to preach the same message on specific weekends	
Video to Parishioners	As needed	Brief personal message from the pastor; Data on demographics or Mass attendance; Prayer meditations; Reflection questions; Concise call to action	
Prayer Meditations	As needed	Your hopes and desires around what God is doing in your parish family	
Info Graphics	As needed	Family of parishes information (size, demographics, interesting history, need for change, etc.)	

Timeline/practice of continual messaging

- You can add these to your timeline if it helps you
- Bulletin (once a month update)
- Flocknote or email (directed/particular resource push or singular message – I want my people to know this 1 thing) as often as needed up to once a week
- Letter to parishioners (2-4 times a year – JOF = what is the most important message)
- Ambo announcements (something another parishioner can speak about – invite a FPPT member to talk/give a perspective) once in a while
- Homily Series (get other pastors/associates to preach on the same thing for the weekend?) - teaching that needs time to percolate (2-4 weeks in a row)
- Video to parishioners – utilize Flocknote/Facebook/parish website to post
- Priest swap? - let parishioners hear from each priest (pastors and associates)
- Prayer meditations – your hopes/desires for the parish
- Info graphics – Family of parishes information (size, demographics, interesting history, need for change, etc.)

Resource 2



TOWN HALL MEETING OUTLINE

Purpose

A Town Hall Meeting is one method to inform your parishioners about the necessary shifts toward becoming a missional community.

When to use

This schedule can be used in May or June after the regional kickoff sessions when parishioners will likely have more questions.

Target audience

The target audience is any parishioner who wants more information about the Journey of Faith.

Objective

A successful meeting will accomplish the following goals:

- **Purpose:** Communicate the current reality (demographic trends and declining participation) and the purpose (the “why”) of the Journey of Faith.
- **Picture:** Communicate the 4 planning principles as a picture of flourishing faith communities. Also, express the hope you have for the future.
- **Plan:** Explain the Journey of Faith process and timeline.
- **Part:** Explain how you would like your parishioners to engage in the process.

Pastors should consider preparing their Parish Leadership Representatives (who attended the Planning Kickoff Session) to help present specific sections of the Town Hall Meeting.

Handouts to Print

- [Journey of Faith PowerPoint Presentation](#) (Recommended slides: 1-28, 33-38)
- Prayer with scripture – see below
- [Prayer for Pastoral Planning](#)

Format for a 90-Minute Meeting

Time	Minutes	Content	Presenter
7:00	5 min	Welcome and Open in Prayer	
7:05	10 min	Purpose: Present slides from the Journey of Faith PowerPoint Presentation	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended slides: 1-23 	
7:15	5 min	Introduction to Prayer See below “Prayer with Scripture” for robust intro instructions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind the group of the love and presence of Jesus Give a brief orientation to prayer as a loving dialogue with the Lord where we express our thoughts, feelings, and desires and listen to his response “Cast all your anxieties on him for he cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7) 	
7:20	10 min	Lectio Divina with Jeremiah 29:11-14a See below “Prayer with Scripture” for robust leader instructions and passage Jeremiah 29:11-14a (print and hand out) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate one person to prepare in advance to lead the group through guided prayer experience using the handout, <i>Scripture passage: Jeremiah 29:11-14a</i> 	
7:30	10 min	Picture: 4 planning principles as a picture of flourishing faith communities (present slides 25-27) Slide 27 – provide the following definitions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mission = the mission of Jesus is to go make disciples (Matthew 28: 18-20) Mission-oriented communities or Missional Communities = an outward looking group of disciples, under the care of a pastor, sent by Jesus to make disciples. Flourishing = a parish that not only takes care of the people within the community but also looks to care for those outside the community. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Feel free to expound on the 3 Characteristics of a Missional Community (Collaborative Leadership, Clear Path to Discipleship, Culture of Generosity) 	

Page Break

Time	Minutes	Content	Presenter
7:40	20 min	Discussion of flourishing: Small group discussion (10 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> When you think about flourishing in ordinary circumstances, what does it look like? (Example: a flourishing apple tree) How might the above question translate to your parish? What would a flourishing parish look like? Large group sharing (10 minutes)	
8:00	5 min	Father shares his hope for the future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge there is grief in a time of change Name your hope for the future 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When there is pruning, there is a possibility for abundance. ○ We don't know everything about what the future will look like, but the Lord is asking something of us in this moment, and we can follow joyfully. <p>Questions to discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are my fears and hopes as we review this material? 2. Where do I desire the Holy Spirit to provide a greater abundance of grace in our parish? 	
8:05	5 min	Plan: Name the various groups that have been formed, the people that are on them, and how the process for making decisions will unfold between now and the end of the year.	
8:10	5 min	Part: Explain how you would like your parishioners to engage in the process. Suggestions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your part is to engage in the Journey of Faith by acknowledging the grief and pointing to the hope. • Pray the Journey of Faith prayer daily for open hearts to God's plan for the future of our parish(es). • Help parish leaders by clarifying information and correcting misinformation with other parishioners. • Stay informed with updates from parish leadership in the bulletin, social media, Flocknote, etc. 	
8:15	10 min	Large Group Q&A	
8:25	5 min	Next Steps and Closing Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reiterate the “part” you are asking your parishioners to play in the process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See below for other recommended next steps • Pray the <i>Prayer for Pastoral Planning</i> together 	
8:30	-	End	

PRAYER WITH SCRIPTURE

Introduction to prayer

- We are praying because the purpose of pastoral planning, though understandable, is a difficult reality. (or something like that...)
- Remind the group of the love and presence of Jesus
- Give a brief orientation to prayer as a loving dialogue with the Lord where we express our thoughts, feelings, and desires and listen to his response
- “Cast all your anxieties on him for he cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7)
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Script for leading Lectio Divina¹

First reading:

As I read the scripture slowly, notice the word, image, or phrase that stands out to you. Feel free to underline or circle what stands out to you. Once I am done reading, I will pause for a few moments of silence.

Read the scripture aloud, slowly and pause for 2-minutes of silence. Use a timer or watch to keep track of time.

Second reading:

As I read the scripture a second time, continue to notice what stands out to you and reflect on the principle or truth that the Scripture is teaching. Use your imaginative and analytical faculties. Write down your thoughts, feelings, and desires in relationship to the Scripture and dialogue with Jesus. Tell Him what you are thinking, feelings, and desiring. We will pause again in silence after I have read aloud.

Read the scripture aloud, slowly and pause for 4-minutes of silence. Use a timer or watch to keep track of time.

Third reading:

As I read the scripture a final time, consider how Jesus is calling you to apply the truths from Scripture. Write down your response to the Scripture and how you can apply it beginning today.

Read the scripture aloud, slowly and pause for 4-minutes of silence. Use a timer or watch to keep track of time.

Close:

As we close our time in prayer, take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for the grace you have received during this time.

Pause for 1-minute.

Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you for this time in prayer as together we pray, All glory be, to the Father...

JEREMIAH 29:11-14A

For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope. When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will change your lot.

Recommended Next Steps

1. Ask parishioners to pray for the Journey of Faith. Suggestions include:

- Ask parishioners to pray the Prayer for Pastoral Planning daily.
- Inform parishioners of plans to include the Journey of Faith as a regular petition in the General Intercessions.
- Invite parishioners to a Holy Hour to pray for the success of the Journey of Faith throughout the Archdiocese.

2. Send a letter to all your parishioners summarizing the information from your Town Hall meeting. Include this letter as an insert in your bulletin.

3. Use the bulletin inserts and other communication resources from the Journey of Faith website. Share Current Reality Videos from <https://journeyoffaith.org/> with your parishioners via social media, parish website, Flocknote, etc.

- Video #1 – [Why We Need a Journey of Faith](#)
- Video #2 – [Join the Journey of Faith for Stronger Parishes and Schools](#)
- Video #3 – [How Families of Parishes Grow the Journey of Faith](#)
- Video #4 – [It's Easy to Join the Journey of Faith](#)

Resource 3

PARISH LEVELING SESSIONS

What are Leveling Sessions?

Leveling Sessions are a series of interactive sessions that take key parish influencers on a deep dive of the Vision & Priorities, the Big Goal, and the process of evangelization. These sessions are not intended to teach skills for evangelization, but to create unity in vision and a foundation for change.

What happens at Leveling Sessions?

The Parish Support Team facilitates a mix of presentation, small group discussion, and games/exercises that help your leaders to grasp key concepts. Some components of the leveling sessions include:

- Current landscape and demographics of the U.S. Catholic Church and your local Parish
- Call for a New Evangelization and Archbishop Lucas' Pastoral Vision and Priorities
- Process of evangelization
- Evangelization Strategy
- Key elements of building a parish culture of encounter and equipping disciples

- Intro to a *Clear Path of Discipleship*

When and Where do the *Leveling Sessions* take place?

Typically, *Leveling Sessions* take place at your parish. The most common format is a series of three evening sessions, each lasting 3 hours (once a week for 3 weeks), beginning with dinner provided for your participants.

What factors make the *Leveling Sessions* successful?

- Pastor and Leadership Team engagement throughout the sessions
- Inviting *key influencers* from your parish who will help share your vision for the parish
- Inviting *intentional disciples* who are open to moving forward as commissioned disciples

Taking Action:

1. Pastor consults with the Parish Support Team to schedule dates for *Leveling Sessions*.
2. Pastor sits down with a trusted parishioner(s) to brainstorm a potential list of attendees with the above characteristics in mind. Ask yourself, “Who do we *want* in the room?” not simply, “Who do we *have* to invite?”
3. Cross off individuals who either cannot or should not participate for any reason.
4. Confirm a list of participants.
5. Work with parish secretary to send an invitation letter/email and make a follow-up phone call to each person you would like to attend the *Leveling Sessions*.

RESOURCE 4

PARISH LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Purpose

A Parish Leadership Retreat is one method to engage key leaders in your parish(es) to help you make the necessary shifts toward becoming a missional community.

When to use

This schedule can be used anytime between May (after the regional kickoff sessions) and August (before the Family Pastoral Planning Team begins to work on the plan to be approved by the Archbishop).

Target Audience

This retreat outline is designed for key leaders from groups such as the Parish Leadership Representatives, Family Pastoral Planning Team (FPPT), Pastoral Council, Finance Council, School Board, staff, deacons, etc.

Objective

A successful retreat will leave people with hope for the future. This will be accomplished by:

- Ensuring parish leaders continue to grow in understanding the current reality (demographic trends and declining participation) and the purpose (the “why”) of the Journey of Faith.
- Engaging parish leaders in relational prayer to bring their concerns to God.
- Giving parish leaders a space to express their desires for the future that can inform the Pastoral Planning process.
- Allowing parish leaders to reflect on practical ways they might be called to assist the pastor with the Pastoral Planning process.

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Handouts to Print

- [Journey of Faith PowerPoint Presentation](#) (Recommended slides: 1-28, 33-38)
- Scripture passage: Luke 1:46-55 (see below)
- Adoration Instructions & Questions for Prayer
- Reflection sheet (to be collected by pastors)
- [Prayer for Pastoral Planning](#)

Format for a 4-hour Retreat

Time	Minutes	Content
8:30am	5 min	Welcome and Opening Prayer
8:35am	10 min	Introductions (as necessary)
8:45am	5 min	Introduction to Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a full instruction on why and how to pray with scripture
8:50am	30 min	Lectio Divina with Luke 1:46-55 (Mary’s Magnificat) in small groups See below for scripture passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended to have one person read the scripture for the whole group, then have tables discuss separately what is standing out for them
9:20am	20 min	Purpose & Expectations for the Day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are we gathered? (JOF slides 1-25) • What do we hope to accomplish? • How should we engage in the conversation (disposition, behaviors, etc.)?
9:40am	10 min	Break
9:50am	10 min	Picture: Present the four planning principles as a picture of flourishing faith communities (JOF slides 25-27) Slide 27 – provide the following definitions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mission = the mission of Jesus is to go make disciples (Matthew 28: 18-20) 2. Mission-oriented communities or Missional Communities = an outward looking group of disciples, under the care of a pastor, sent by Jesus to make disciples. 3. Flourishing = a parish that not only takes care of the people within the community but also looks to care for those outside the community. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Feel free to expound on the 3 Characteristics of a Missional Community (Collaborative Leadership, Clear Path to Discipleship, Culture of Generosity)
10:00am	25 min	Discussion of flourishing: Small group discussion (15 minutes)

		<p>1. When you think about flourishing in ordinary circumstances, what does it look like? (Example: a flourishing apple tree)</p> <p>2. How might the above question translate to your parish? What would a flourishing parish look like?</p> <p>Large group sharing (10 minutes)</p>
10:25am	5 min	Plan: Name the various groups that have been formed, the people that are on them, and how the process for making decisions will unfold between now and the end of the year.
10:30am	5 min	<p>Part: Explain how you would like your parishioners to engage in the process.</p> <p>Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your part is to engage in the Journey of Faith by acknowledging the grief and pointing to the hope. • Pray the Journey of Faith prayer daily for open hearts to God’s plan for the future of our parish(es). • Help parish leaders by clarifying information and correcting misinformation with other parishioners. • Stay informed with updates from parish leadership in the bulletin, social media, Flocknote, etc.
10:35am	30 min	<p>Eucharistic Adoration with Exposition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive hope from Jesus • Orientation for how to dialogue with the Lord, sharing our thoughts, feelings, and desires and listening for his response. • Ask each person to pray with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take some time to tell Jesus honestly about how you feel about the Pastoral Planning process. “Jesus, I feel...(sad, angry, hopeful, discouraged, encouraged, etc).” ○ Ask Jesus for the gift of supernatural hope so that you can continue to trust in his loving goodness in spite of all the difficulties of Pastoral Planning.
11:05pm	25 min.	<p>Think, Pair, Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you receive during this time of prayer? • As you encounter others in your parish who are feeling the grief and difficulties of Pastoral Planning, what can you share with them to strengthen their hope for the future?
11:30am	15 min	<p>Next Steps and Closing Prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind them of the next steps in the process. • Remind them of the “part” you are asking these leaders to play in the process – “Acknowledge the grief; point toward the hope” <p>Pray the <i>Prayer for Pastoral Planning</i> together</p>
11:45pm	30 min	Lunch
12:15pm		End

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”