

**Dessert  
and Discipleship**



Building a Parish Evangelization  
Team that ... "Takes the Cake"

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**Introductions**

- Peg
- Evangelization Commission
- YOU!

Thank you to our hosts!

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**Prayer for the Year of Faith  
in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis**

Heavenly Father,

In this Year of Faith, draw us closer  
to You through your Son, our Lord  
Jesus Christ.

Send your Spirit to guide our  
reflection on Holy Scripture and  
Sacred Tradition.

May our prayerful discussion,  
sharing and service to others  
bear witness to the power and  
beauty of the Faith.

Through our lives,  
may we attract others to know you  
and to live in full communion  
with your one, holy, Catholic and  
apostolic Church.

Grant this, loving Father, in this Year  
of Faith

for your Church in the Archdiocese  
of Indianapolis and throughout the  
world.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus  
Christ, your Son,

who lives and reigns with you in the  
unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

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A message from Archbishop Tobin



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A moment to focus

Why are you here?

- Take an index card (in your folder)
- Write down the top 3 things that "you love about being Catholic" (leave space between each)
- For each one, write a short description of a memory or real-life situation related to that reason (phrase or short sentence)
- Set it aside for now. We will come back to this later ...

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We're here to talk about the New Evangelization and what we can

DO!

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What the New Evangelization is NOT ...

- It is NOT a program
- It is NOT about a new church teaching
- It is NOT the same old thing

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Short recent history about the New Evangelization

<p>From the Holy See</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i> (Evangelization in the Modern World, 1975)</li> <li>○ <i>Catechesi Tradendae</i> (Catechesis in Our Time, 1979)</li> <li>○ <i>Redemptoris Missio</i> (On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate, 1990)</li> </ul>	<p>From the US Bishops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Go and Make Disciples (1990)</li> <li>○ Disciples Called to Witness (2012)</li> </ul>
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Coming Attractions:

Exhortation from the Synod on the New Evangelization (November, 2012)




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### Year of Faith

October 11, 2012 – November 24, 2013

"The renewal of the Church is also achieved through the witness offered by the lives of believers: by their very existence in the world, Christians are called to radiate the word of truth that the Lord Jesus has left us.

The Year of Faith, from this perspective, is a summons to an authentic and renewed *conversion* to the Lord, the one Savior of the world." (Year of Faith Proclaimed, para. 6)

This is a part of the New Evangelization!

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### Conversion

- "Conversion begins with the truth ... the truth about oneself and God." – Archbishop Tobin
- "The New Evangelization does not seek to invite people to experience only one moment of conversion but rather to experience the gradual and lifelong process of conversion: to draw all people into a deeper relationship with God, to participate in the sacramental life of the Church, to develop a mature conscience, to sustain one's faith through ongoing catechesis, and to integrate one's faith into all aspects of one's life." (*Disciples Called to Witness*, p. 9)

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Conversion → Christian Life

- The process of conversion, Pope Francis explains, begins in a personal encounter with the mercy and tenderness of Jesus Christ in the face of our sins. As a result of "this merciful embrace ... we feel a real desire to respond, to change, to correspond; a new morality arises ..."
- This happens or *can happen* through the family. (*Disciples Called to Witness*, p. 13)

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Christian Life →  
*Discipleship & Evangelization*

- "With a renewed faith, *the Church goes forth to share the faith*. Given the current cultural context of our society, the Church is directing her evangelization efforts in a particular way to those members of the Body of Christ who are absent." (*Disciples Called to Witness*, p. 8)
- Truly is a work of the Holy Spirit.

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How do we do this?

- Always remember and include prayer...  
*And*
- 1. Begin with the end in mind
- 2. Communicate with your pastor/PLC (And pastors/PLCs, communicate with your people.)
- 3. Form a team (different models are possible)

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### 1. Begin with the end in mind (vision)

"... to *arouse in every believer the aspiration to profess the faith in fullness and with renewed conviction, with confidence and hope.* It will also be a good opportunity to *intensify the celebration of the faith in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist,* which is "the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed: ... and also the source from which all its power flows". At the same time, we make it our prayer that *believers' witness of life may grow in credibility. To rediscover the content of the faith* that is professed, celebrated, lived and prayed, and to reflect on the act of faith, is a task that every believer must make his own ... (Year of Faith Proclaimed, para. 9)

○ What does/would this look, sound, feel like in your parish?

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### Discipleship-building



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### 2. Communicate with your Pastor/PLC

○ Communication and leadership are key!

○ Various ways to make this happen:

- Collaborate
- Assist
- Offer your help

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### 3. Form a team

- Two ways to "read" this – both are correct
  - An actual team needs to be put together - *formed*.
  - The team that comes together needs to continue to be *formed in the Faith*.
- Use *Disciples Called to Witness* (see handout)

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### Teams can take various shapes

- Existing commission/committee can commit to evangelization and discipleship-building
- New commission/committee devoted specifically to evangelization and discipleship-building
- Summit 2-3 times per year
  - Gather leaders and name what is/can/will be done in existing ministries for evangelization and discipleship-building
  - Especially good for parishes where leadership is already stretched

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**WANTED**  
**Parish Evangelization Team Member**

You will be part of a team responsible for sharing the faith with people who do not have a faith in Jesus, people who have faded in their faith in Jesus and the practice of their Catholic faith, and Catholics in the parish who wish to deepen their faith. You will serve on a multifaceted parish team with other incredible people who share your enthusiasm and desire to share the faith. This team may take many different forms—a parish council, a commission or committee, or a separate evangelization team. You will utilize old-fashioned face-to-face and voice-to-voice methods of communication as well as other forms.

**Key Objectives/Deliverables:**

- Welcoming parish newcomers
- Renewed spirit of faith in the parish
- Enhanced outreach to the community in your immediate area
- Awareness of and enhanced outreach to the poor
- New and returning faces in the pews

**Requirements:**

- Faith
- Hope
- Love

**Additional skills/preferences:**

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**What makes a good team member?**

- Enthusiasm about her/his faith
- Active participation in the sacramental life of the Church
- Ability to communicate to others with Christian love
- Commitment to prayer and lifelong faith formation
- Ability to work within a team setting
- Devotion to Our Lord's Great Commission

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."  
(Matt. 28: 19-20)

- Willingness to learn more about Catholic evangelization

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**Communication is key**

- Keep regular line of communication with pastor/PLC
- Communicate with key parish leadership groups (ask for their insights)
  - Check your folder for a handy tool – "Team and Coalition-Building Worksheet"
- Be open and prepared for communication with folks who are encountering intentional evangelization/discipleship-building for the first time.

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**Matching people to tasks**

- Reflect on the gifts of the team members (check your folder for "Helpful Skills and Gifts" sheet)
- Reflect on the needs of the evangelization effort
  - There must be a balance of task-oriented gifts and "big picture" gifts. (Too much of either can sink a group.)
  - Ask: For those needs which are not addressed by the team members, who/how will we recruit help?
    - For specific tasks or events?
    - Do we need more members? (One caveat: People are more likely to accept a task if they know the end point.)

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**Set achievable goals** (see goal-setting handout)

- Start with one effort/task/event for each of the 3 target groups of the New Evangelization:
  - At "Home" and becoming more rooted
  - Been away from the "Household" for a while
  - New to the "Household"

Current parishioners	
Faded or Unattached Catholics	
Un-churched	

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**"Key Components of Outreach Programs"** (*Disciples Called to Witness*)

- The Holy Spirit and Conversion
- Leadership
- Team Preparation
- An Atmosphere of Hospitality and Trust
- Catechesis, Including Sacramental Catechesis
- Prayer and Popular Piety
- Sunday Eucharist and Effective Preaching
- Resources
- Continued Support

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**An Atmosphere of Hospitality and Trust**

The next element needed for effective evangelization is hospitality and trust. The entire parish community, especially the parish leadership, must foster a spirit of hospitality and welcome. This sense of hospitality extends beyond those who participate in formal "welcome back" programs. It includes Catholics who approach the Church at key "teachable moments," such as couples seeking the Sacrament of Matrimony, parents who have children in Catholic schools or parish-based religious education programs and are bringing their children for sacramental preparation, and Catholics who seek assistance from parish social ministry programs. Additionally, Catholics who choose to participate in a "welcome back" program ought to feel supported in their journey by the entire community. The following are among the other aspects of hospitality and trust that could be included in outreach programs:

- Fostering a liturgical environment that invites, spiritually fulfills, and welcomes the full and active participation of the parish
- Encouraging words of welcome by pastors at all liturgies, especially key liturgical moments when Catholics attend liturgies, such as weddings, funerals, quinceañeras, and Christmas and Easter Masses
- Offering the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation during hours that are convenient for those with busy work schedules, such as during lunch and after work
- The use of multiple languages in every aspect of parish life when culturally diverse groups are members of the parish
- Accessibility of worship and inclusion in all aspects of parish life for all, especially those with physical and mental disabilities
- Creation and pastoral formation of a welcome committee to help greet and support new parish members
- Parish-based support groups for those populations who tend to drift away from the Church, such as young adults, the newly married, new parents, and the recently divorced or widowed
- Openness to the participant's questions and listening to the group's concerns
- *Respectful dialogue during the meeting sessions*

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### Bring the parishioners in on the effort

- The parishioners are part of the extended "team" – help them understand what that means. (welcoming, prayerful, etc.)
- Most Catholics need catechesis and encouragement about their role in evangelization.
- This is a big part of evangelization to folks "in the pews."
  
- If the word "evangelization" is too uncomfortable for your typical parishioner, use "discipleship-building."

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### What are we inviting people into?



- How welcoming and open is my parish?
  
- You must ask people on the "outside" if you want an honest answer.
  
- What are the day-to-day barriers to bringing in the "lost sheep?"

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### An opportunity to focus on your parish ...

#### Identify:

- At least one effort your parish is doing presently to evangelize each of the 3 target groups.
  
- What is going the best? Jot down some specifics.
  
- What target group needs more attention?
  
- At your table, share some specifics about what is going best.

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Sharing some examples ...

- These are the "methods" of evangelization/discipleship-building.

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Other "methods"

- Card campaigns
- "Rediscover Reconciliation" event
- Phone-a-"friend"
- Booth at festivals
- Neighborhood campaign
- Book/resource given out (but follow up with something more personal, e.g. a discussion group, blog, etc.)




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Always offer an easy "next step"

Might be :

- An event at the parish
- A website to check out
- " I/Someone will call within \_\_\_\_\_ days."

But be SURE to follow through.

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### An "elevator pitch" for the Faith

- Remember the index card you wrote? Those three things and the examples are probably the most powerful tool of evangelization. It is a way to become more comfortable with "witnessing" to your faith. Is Jesus in your pitch somewhere?
- After your team has been formed (in both senses), have everyone write their "elevator pitch" and practice it with each other. It should never become "rote," but it can be helpful to think ahead about what we might say to someone who is struggling or new to the faith.

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### Summary of steps

- Pray
- Communicate with pastor/PLC and key leaders
- Form a team and identify gifts
- Set 1 evangelization goal for each target group of the New Evangelization
- Match team members to tasks
- Go for it! Then evaluate. (See handout)

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### Peg's contact info ...

- Peg McEvoy  
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