



## FOCUS AREA I

### FORMING PARISHES THAT ARE IN THE SERVICE OF EVANGELIZATION

#### TOPIC 1A— WELCOMING PARISHES

##### 1. Welcome and Hospitality

Foster in each parish an intentional culture of welcoming and hospitality that seeks to encounter people where they are and open wide the doors to Christ for them.

- Be especially mindful of those who are new, those who are feeling disconnected from the Church, and those who are from different cultures.
- Cultivate awareness among the faithful that all are ministers of hospitality who can help their neighbors feel they belong.

##### 2. Build Parish Community

Provide opportunities for parishioners to connect in order to foster relationships, support one another in their walks with Christ, and deepen a sense of belonging within the parish.

- Host events and social gatherings, including after Mass.
- Form small groups (based on the interests of the parishioners) that unite them more deeply in faith.

##### 3. Invite into Parish Community

Teach and inspire parishioners to personally invite others into parish life.

- Create easy entry events, even outside of the physical church, to which others can be invited.

##### 4. Accompaniment

Establish a process for identifying and walking with those who are newly welcomed or in times of need.

- Examples: Older married couples walking with newly married couples, mature RCIA sponsors walking with those who seek the sacraments
- If there are special circumstances, provide special accompaniment (e.g., loss of job, loss of spouse).
- Provide formation for those willing to accompany others.

#### TOPIC 1B— COLLABORATION IN PARISH MINISTRY

##### 5. Engagement in Parish Life and Mission

Cultivate a culture of ministry where all the faithful are personally invited to put their natural gifts and charisms (spiritual gifts) at the service of their brothers and sisters.

- Communicate parish needs and ministries effectively.
- Encourage and form the faithful to discern their charisms.
- Make it easy for parishioners to serve with their gifts, and personally invite them to do so.

## 6. Lay Leadership and Formation

Encourage and empower laity to work collaboratively with clergy in parish leadership.

- Provide formation for clergy and parish staff that enables them “to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry.” (Eph. 4:12)
- Provide formation for parish staff and lay leaders that includes an encounter with Jesus, conversion and discipleship, so that they may serve the parish community faithfully and effectively.

## 7. Parish Action Plan

Through a collaborative process, identify the parish’s mission and goals, then develop and communicate an action plan for implementation.

- Form or strengthen a parish team to implement the action plan.
- Equip and provide parishes with support and tools for this work.

## 8. Decision Making and Transparency

Use an appropriately collaborative process to make decisions and communicate those decisions and important parish information openly and clearly.

- Develop processes and protocols to ensure this transparency and communication.

# TOPIC 1C— THE LITURGY EXPERIENCE

## 9. Education for the Mass

Educate God’s people on the beauty, form and meaning of the Mass, with special emphasis on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

- Include how individuals and families can prayerfully prepare for an encounter with the risen Christ in Word and Sacrament.

## 10. Reverent Liturgies with Active Participation

Celebrate prayerful liturgies that inspire the faithful to offer their very selves in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass.

- Homily: Invest the resources necessary for the preaching of relevant, educational, and inspirational homilies that equip the faithful to joyfully live out the faith.
  - Help clergy to prepare homilies that touch the head, heart and imagination of the people and encourage them to be witnesses to Jesus in their daily lives.
  - Ensure clergy have sufficient time to devote to such preparation.
- Music: Offer sacred music that lifts hearts and minds to God and encourages active participation of the faithful.
- Lay Liturgical Ministers: Form lay liturgical ministers (e.g., lectors, communion ministers, altar servers, music ministers, ushers) to cooperate with clergy in assisting in the liturgy with devotion.
- Congregation: Foster a community that is rooted in sacramental life through which faith is nourished, strengthened and expressed.





### **11. Coordination and Timing of Sacraments**

Offer a variety of Mass times (Sunday and daily) and schedule Reconciliation so more people can attend.

- Coordinate and communicate schedules among parishes geographically close.

### **12. Multicultural/Multilingual Communities**

Offer Sunday and daily Masses in the common languages of the parishioners, while providing social experiences at the service of cultural integration of the entire community.

## **TOPIC 1D— SHARING THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND DEED**

### **13. Charitable Works**

Identify needs within the local community and offer opportunities for parishioners to accompany and serve their neighbors, especially those on the peripheries.

- Cultivate a culture of compassion in the parish in which parishioners recognize Christ's presence in all those in need.
- Facilitate parish partnerships with local Catholic and other charitable organizations to live out the Church's preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.

### **14. Public Evangelization Teams**

Build parish teams that are specially trained to go out and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in public.

- Provide special formation in active listening, proclaiming the kerygma (core proclamation of the Gospel) and sharing personal witness.
- Partner with groups that are familiar with street outreach and door-to-door evangelization.

### **15. Evangelization Small Groups**

Form parishioners in small group leadership who can invite their own family, friends, neighbors and co-workers into a personal relationship with Jesus and ongoing conversion through small group participation.

### **16. Missionary Discipleship**

Increase our efforts across the Archdiocese in calling, training and empowering individuals and families in the content and methods of evangelization.

- Invite parishioners to participate in "Schools of Evangelization" coordinated by the Archdiocese to receive comprehensive missionary formation.
- Equip individuals to prepare and share their personal testimonies of how God's love has changed their lives.
- Provide opportunities to hear the testimonies of others for inspiration.

### **17. Advocacy and Witness in the Public Square**

Cultivate a culture of social awareness so that the parish can be at the service of human dignity and the common good within the broader community.

- Form parishioners in the principles and practice of Catholic social teaching.
- Partner with the Minnesota Catholic Conference and Joint Religious Legislative Coalition to more effectively bring Gospel values into the public square.

## FOCUS AREA 2

### FORMING MISSIONARY DISCIPLES WHO KNOW JESUS' LOVE AND RESPOND TO HIS CALL

#### TOPIC 2A— ENCOUNTER AND LIFE-LONG FORMATION

##### **18. Adult Formation**

Create or strengthen an intentional formation plan at every parish to help adults and families in all stages of life to live and witness to the faith in our culture today.

- Teach the fundamentals and fullness of the faith – i.e., Scripture, Mass and Sacraments, prayer, and the moral life.
- Nurture the faith journey from encounter and conversion to missionary discipleship.
- Make helpful resources available, especially greater promotion and access to the Archdiocesan and national formation resources (e.g., Catechetical Institute, Latino Ministry Institutes, Called and Gifted program, university courses/certificates).

##### **19. Small Groups**

Create or grow a small group ministry at every parish that fosters personal relationships, builds community and provides formation to help parishioners grow as joyful missionary disciples of Christ.

- Types: Bible study, faith sharing, prayer, sacramental preparation, evangelization
- Variety of formats and common interest groups: couples, women, men, single, mixed age, similar stage of life
- Parishes may collaborate with other parishes on this ministry, as desired.

##### **20. Prayer and Retreats**

Teach and provide resources on the many expressions and methods of prayer to encounter Christ and grow in a life-long relationship with God.

- Examples of prayer: Daily Lectio Divina (praying with Scripture) and Examen, Adoration, Life in the Spirit, devotions
- Includes providing a broad range of retreat opportunities within and outside the parish so that people can get away from the busyness of life to recollect and encounter the God of creation.

##### **21. Encounter Christ through Serving Others**

Provide opportunities to encounter Christ through serving and accompanying others (locally and globally), especially the poor and marginalized.


- Examples: Mission trips, parish partnerships, sister parish relationships

##### **22. Large-scale Events That Foster an Encounter with Jesus**

Offer events that proclaim the kerygma with dynamism and create an opportunity to encounter Jesus and a living Church.

- Coordinate or sponsor large events within the Archdiocese that send participants back to parishes with enkindled hearts (e.g., Archdiocesan Youth Day, Mass of the Holy Spirit for school children at U.S. Bank Stadium, Eucharistic Congress at Saint Paul RiverCentre).



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- Prepare follow-up opportunities at the parish so participants can continue to live out the graces received in their daily lives (e.g., prayer opportunities, small groups).

## TOPIC 2B— THE UNIVERSAL CALL TO HOLINESS

### 23. Discipleship in Daily Life

Teach individuals and families the art of Christian living in the modern world to be a witness of the abundant life for which God created us.

- Offer basic discipleship training, including the application of discernment of spirits to daily decision making (e.g., prioritizing relationships, career decisions, financial stewardship, time management).
- Educate on the true meaning of the Lord's Day and encourage all to reclaim Sunday as a day of worship, fruitful leisure and rest to help cultivate a personal relationship with God and solidarity with others.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for each person to discern his or her God-given call, and to embrace it as his or her personal journey to holiness.

### 24. Networks of Faith-based Relationships

Make connections and foster relationships between individuals and families who encourage each other through mutual example and faith sharing.

- Examples: Couples, parents, singles, divorced, widowed, grandparents, women, men, common interest
- Includes: Small groups and mentorship opportunities

### 25. Resources for Those in Need

Communicate available resources for those facing various struggles so they can receive the loving support and care of the body of Christ.

- Example: Appoint and train a person/team at every parish to help connect those in need to resources.
- Resource topics: Mental illness, trauma, abuse, grief, loneliness, loss of spouse, separation/divorce, annulment, crises in marriage, infertility, gender dysphoria, financial problems, job loss, addictions such as pornography or drugs

### 26. Marriage Preparation and Ongoing Support

Educate on marriage as a sacrament, and form couples at all stages of marriage to help them live God's plan for healthy and holy marriages.

- Help couples discern the Sacrament of Matrimony, including those who are cohabitating.
- Encourage couples to be open to life and see children as the crown of Christian marriage.
- Accompany married couples, especially the newly married and those who are struggling.

## 27. Separated/Divorced

Make a special effort to recognize the dignity of those separated or divorced and help them to live holy Christian lives within the Church.

- Educate about and clarify the Church teachings regarding divorce and the purpose and process of an annulment.

# FOCUS AREA 3

## FORMING YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN AND FOR A CHURCH THAT IS ALWAYS YOUNG

### TOPIC 3A— FORMATION FOR CHILDREN (birth - grade 5)

## 28. Parents as Primary Educators

Form and inspire parents to understand and fulfill their responsibility as the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith.

- Provide groups for parents to encounter Jesus, be formed in the faith and support one another in their responsibility to pass on the faith and help their children grow in holiness.
- Equip parents with age-appropriate dynamic resources to share with their children. (Topics include Bible stories, scripture, and the lives of the saints.)
- Encourage faith formation catechists and Catholic school teachers to see themselves as co-workers with parents.
- Provide accompaniment to young parents, showing them how to integrate Catholic culture in daily family life.

## 29. Engage Families in Parish Life

Create an environment where children are celebrated and families can gather for faith and fellowship, finding in the parish their spiritual home.

- Offer parish events where the entire family is welcome and there are faith and fellowship opportunities for children of all ages.
- Offer prayer and retreat opportunities where parents can receive respite through the provision of childcare.

## 30. Comprehensive Faith Formation

Develop an intentional faith formation plan at every parish and Catholic school in which parents encounter Jesus, grow in their faith, and are supported in teaching their children the Catholic faith and living their identity as a beloved child of God.

- Provide meaningful sacramental preparation that emphasizes a personal encounter with the living Christ.
- Create educational, prayer and retreat experiences where the whole family can be formed in the faith.
- Identify, invite, form and equip catechists and Catholic school teachers to provide an authentic and credible witness of the faith and the joy of Christian life.







### 31. Modeling and Experiencing Daily Prayer in the Family

Help parents make each Catholic home a “school of prayer.”

- Teach and encourage parents how to pray daily and to develop their own individual prayer rhythms (e.g., Lectio Divina, Examen, daily Mass, family rosary).
- Provide resources to cultivate daily prayer as a family and to give children a variety of prayer experiences to encounter Jesus (e.g., devotionals, apps, praise music).

## TOPIC 3B— YOUTH MINISTRY (grades 6-12)

### 32. Faith-building Events and Experiences for Children and Youth

Provide children, youth and families with opportunities to foster a personal relationship with Jesus and to encounter a Church that is alive and young.

- Examples of experiences for children: Family faith camps and retreats, Vacation Bible School, Totus Tuus, parish programs
- Examples of experiences for youth: Retreats, Extreme Faith Camp, NET, world and local youth days, mission trips, vocational discernment opportunities, family retreat opportunities
- Include easy-entry experiences where non-practicing or non-baptized persons can be invited to participate in parish community (e.g., sporting events, concerts).

### 33. Vibrant Youth Ministry

Develop at each parish (or collaboratively among parishes) a vibrant youth ministry where youth have the opportunity to encounter Jesus and be formed in the faith with Christ-centered faith sharing and fellowship.

- Include a small group ministry under the leadership of parents and other faith-filled adults who can serve as mentors, providing a safe place for youth to belong and to learn how to make wise decisions.
- Provide small group leader formation with support from the Archdiocese.
- Invite and equip adult, young adult and youth leaders who can serve as authentic and credible witnesses through parish-based youth events (e.g., weekly youth nights).

### 34. Engagement of Youth in the Life and Mission of the Parish

Create a parish culture where the youth feel they belong and understand that their natural gifts and charisms (spiritual gifts) are needed by their parish, school and community.

- Help all the confirmed to recognize the charisms they have received so that they can witness now to the love of Jesus.
- Personally invite youth to engage in various ministries and make an easy process for them to do so.

### 35. Dynamic Confirmation Preparation

Provide Confirmation programs in which students are transformed by the fire of the Spirit through encounters with Jesus, dynamic teaching and formation, and small group fellowship.

- Includes: Eucharistic Adoration, testimony, formation in the charisms, and robust use of multimedia and social media to pass on the fullness of the Catholic faith
- Emphasize why faith is reasonable and how the teachings of the Catholic Church are relevant to daily life.
- Engage and form parents alongside their children as they prepare to receive the sacrament.
- Establish Archdiocesan standards for parish-based Confirmation programs.

### 36. Serving Others

Provide opportunities and encourage youth to take initiative in the service of their brothers and sisters, especially those in need.

- Form young people in Catholic Social Teaching so that they may witness to a Church that serves.
- Tap into their idealism and energy to extend God's kingdom through works of love and mercy.

## TOPIC 3C— YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (Ages 18-35)

### 37. Parish Life

Recognize the value of young adult presence in the Church and make a special effort to invite and welcome them into the life and mission of the parish.

- Communicate effectively through means that reach young adults (e.g., social media).
- Provide opportunities to meet other young adults at the parish and to connect with mentors who can accompany them on their faith journeys.
- Recognize and affirm their gifts for service in the parish community and beyond, and provide opportunities for them to discern their charisms (spiritual gifts).

### 38. Young Adult Small Groups

Create or grow a small group ministry in which young adults can encounter Jesus and find Christ-centered friendships within the parish as they learn to live as disciples of Jesus.

- Parishes may collaborate in this endeavor and can find support from the Archdiocese to provide small group leader formation.
- Include teaching topics on the truths of the faith (even when challenging) to help young adults navigate the culture.

### 39. Regional/Deanery Cooperation

Recognize that vibrant young adult ministry is difficult for any individual parish to create and sustain and consider a move toward a model of regional collaboration.

- Parishes within deaneries work together to provide social and faith-based events to help young adults encounter Jesus Christ, be formed in the faith and find meaningful Christian friendship. (A deanery is a geographical grouping of approximately 10-15 parishes.)
- The Archdiocese supports regional young adult ministry efforts, including coordinating with apostolates.
- Send young adults back to their parish to engage in its life and mission.

### 40. College Age Ministry

Connect high school graduates with Catholic organizations on campus and invest resources to allow these organizations to thrive.

- Examples: Newman Centers, Campus ministry, SPO, FOCUS, Catholic Studies
- Promote theological and pastoral studies to encourage young people who are called to put their education at the service of the Church.
- Connect those who are not attending college with the Catholic young adult groups in their area.

