



Re-Evangelization and Discipleship

As we continue our Partners in the Gospel journey, the primary focus remains on the mission of the Risen Christ to “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). This mission helps us shape a vision of our parish families and our unity of purpose.

As Archbishop Paul D. Etienne wrote in his [*Pastoral letter on Partners in the Gospel*](#),

“...we must always keep first and foremost our desire and our efforts to help our people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. He is our life, our hope, our salvation. Strengthening the faith of our people and redoubling our efforts to advance the mission of the Church must always be our top priorities.”

The Holy Spirit Will Lead Us

The ideas laid out in this document are meant to provide inspiration for how a parish family may choose to embrace re-evangelization and discipleship for their own community. Re-evangelization is focused on reaching those who have left the Church, while discipleship is focused on helping Catholics go deeper in their faith.

How a parish family chooses to do this work will emerge as part of the One Parish Planning process, grounded in communal prayer, listening, and discernment. As we pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance throughout the One Parish Planning process, may we remain steadfast in our focus on discipleship.

To keep our focus on the mission, let us root ourselves in prayer making time to listen to the Holy Spirit and to listen to where God is calling us. We ask the Holy Spirit to help each parish family enable deep personal encounters with Christ and ongoing formation for people to follow Christ more closely day by day.

Re-evangelization for the disengaged; Discipleship for the engaged

Our mission makes it clear that God calls all of us to go forth and proclaim the Good News, that is, to invite everyone into a relationship with Jesus Christ. Pope Francis wrote in *The Joy of the Gospel*, “Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth

from our own comfort zones in order to reach all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel” (The Joy of the Gospel, 20).

In the [Mission and Evangelization Handbook](#), evangelization and missionary discipleship are explored. In this document, the focus is on re-evangelization and discipleship, the former more focused on the disengaged and fallen away and the latter on helping practicing Catholics (wherever they are on the path of discipleship) grow in relationship with Christ.

The reality is that most Catholics are disengaged from their faith and many others have fallen away. According to [Pew Research](#), less than 30% attend Mass weekly across the United States. Those who do practice, whether sparingly or actively, continue to seek to grow closer to Christ.

In his pastoral letter, Archbishop Etienne writes, “If we look within, it seems to me that each of us needs re-evangelization. We all need to be more and more convinced of the power of the Risen Christ, who has already conquered sin and death. Then, and only then, are we capable of being living witnesses to the resurrection of Christ. We need to live the Gospel by putting it into action.” He states that worship and prayer, especially the celebration of the Eucharist, are essential.

In addition to offering the sacraments, catechesis and formation opportunities, what else can we do to invite the disengaged or fallen away Catholics to participate in parish life? For those who do show up, how do we foster discipleship and build a community of believers?

There is no “one size fits all” solution, but over the years, parishes in our archdiocese have been creative in providing fruitful opportunities for re-evangelization and discipleship. There are myriad programs, resources, tools and more for parishes to use. Here are just a few ideas for inspiration:

Re-evangelization:

- Everyone can evangelize with the “Walk with One” initiative. Born out of the recent National Eucharistic Congress, this initiative calls us to accompany one person with prayer, friendship and invitation. The easy step-by-step guide can be shared with your parishioners to encourage them to embrace this effort of inviting one person to the faith. Access the simple guide and program overview at eucharisticrevival.org/walk-with-one.
- Provide opportunities for real conversations about life, faith and meaning such as [Alpha](#).
- Build a culture of invitation with a hospitality ministry. Read more about creating a culture of hospitality and developing a parish family hospitality team in the [Hospitality Handbook](#).

- Explore family-centered faith formation in addition to OCIA. Resources include [Growing Up Catholic](#) (USCCB Conformity list publisher) or [Family Formation](#) (USCCB Conformity list publisher).
- Direct outreach is a powerful way to reach those who have fallen away. Simply inviting people to a parish event, a talk, a service opportunity or even back to Mass can make a big impression. Set up a phone-tree to call parishioners who have fallen away or consider sending personalized postcards to invite them to something new.

Discipleship:

- Offer small faith-sharing groups that focus on formation and discipleship such as “Be My Witness,” through [Renew International](#). Or simply use a Mass reflection guide such as “Food for the Soul” by Peter Kreeft. Each Advent and Lent, the Archdiocese of Seattle issues Liturgical reflection guides that could be used as well to spark rich discussion across a parish family.
- Encourage movement along the path of discipleship as explored in Sherry Wedell’s well-known book about discipleship: “Forming Intentional Disciples: The Path to Knowing and Following Jesus.” This book would be excellent for ministry leaders to read or to use in a book club for the parish family.
- Link faith in God to love of neighbor with programs such as [Just Faith](#) from Jack Jezreel. These in-person and digital programs cover a wide variety of topics from anti-racism and civil dialog to eco-justice, immigration, poverty and preventing gun violence – among many others. People can start a small group at their parish or join another local group. BONUS: In 2026, the Chancery will be providing each parish family with a copy of Jack Jezreel’s book, “A New Way to Be Church.”
- Offer more personal encounter with Jesus Christ through Adoration. In addition to offering regular Adoration, spend time at the end of Mass or in other communications to remind people of the power of Adoration and invite people to take advantage of having quiet personal time with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

These are just a few examples of the many ways to invite people back to the Church or to help Catholics go deeper in their own faith. By offering opportunities for more personal encounters with the living Christ, people are more likely to be formed by that encounter. Doing so will then inspire them to live their faith by sharing the Good News of that encounter with others.