

PROCLAIM  
2016



*On a Mission of Mercy: Evangelising Parishes*



**ENGAGING PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY LIFE  
AND BAPTISMAL MISSION**

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**Workshop Abstract**

We host events and launch new programs, and scratch our heads over why more people do not engage. We watch as people we thought were connected and involved drift away or disappear. Building upon the U.S. Gallup study of churches, we examine the different ways of engaging people in community and mission. Four key questions people ask of any community are: What do I get? What can I give? Do I belong? How do we grow? In this session we explore current parish approaches with youth, with sacramental preparation and with ministry groups and examine how they address (or fail to address) these questions. Participants will then be able to apply this learning to their own approaches to welcoming newcomers and involving people in community life, growing faith and living out our baptismal mission.



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## ENGAGING PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY LIFE AND BAPTISMAL MISSION

### 1. Introduction: Too busy, too tired, too difficult

We host events and launch new programs, and scratch our heads over why more people do not engage. We watch as people we thought were connected and involved drift away or disappear.

Common challenges are:

- How do we get more people involved?
- How do we retain involvement?
- Or even... How do we move people on who won't go?

We recognise the backdrop for involvement has changed with higher standards of accountability including legislation, a shifting culture where communities are time-poor, and complexity regarding many areas of involvement.

This workshop considers:

- Why Should Christians Be Engaged? Our Baptismal Mission Foundations
- How Do We Improve Levels of Engagement? The US Gallup study of churches, and
- What is Good Practice? National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

These are offered as a template to assess several examples of parish community life. The template is then offered to participants as a way forward with assessing and developing their own engagement of people in community life and baptismal mission.

### 2. Why Should Christians be Engaged? Our Baptismal Mission Foundations

Not only should we consider the rationale behind engagement, but also consider how it may vary from other types of volunteering and involvement.

As PROCLAIM 2016 is steeped in this subject, only a brief overview is offered here.

- We are Christians, followers of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus Christ calls us into community, for the purpose of bringing others into God's reign, and cooperating with the Holy Spirit in building up the community of faith as it lives out God's reign.
- The fullness of this engagement is encountered in the heart of the Eucharist





- Being united in Christ, and sharing in the Spirit, in humility... “Let each of you look not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others.” (see Phil 2:1-11)
- Christians, in our response as Christ’s disciples, are called to be stewards. One way of describing this stewardship (see <https://brisbanecatholic.org.au/life/stewardship/>) is a call to:
  - o Receive the gifts of God with gratitude
  - o Cultivate them responsibly
  - o Share them generously in justice with others
  - o Return the gifts with increase to God

Most recently, Pope Francis repeated the call to get involved, to be engaged (WYD Prayer Vigil, 30/7/16):

*The times we live in do not call for young “couch potatoes” but for young people with shoes, or better, boots laced. It only takes players on the first string, and it has no room for bench-warmers. Today’s world demands that you be a protagonist of history because life is always beautiful when we choose to live it fully, when we choose to leave a mark. History today calls us to defend our dignity and not to let others decide our future. As he did on Pentecost, the Lord wants to work one of the greatest miracles we can experience; he wants to turn your hands, my hands, our hands, into signs of reconciliation, of communion, of creation. He wants your hands to continue building the world of today. And he wants to build that world with you.*

*You might say to me: Father, but I have my limits, I am a sinner, what can I do? When the Lord calls us, he doesn’t worry about what we are, what we have been, or what we have done or not done. Quite the opposite. When he calls us, he is thinking about everything we have to give, all the love we are capable of spreading. His bets are on the future, on tomorrow. Jesus is pointing you to the future.*

In conclusion each Christian:

- Is called by virtue of baptism for the roles of building up community centred in Christ, and evangelisation – drawing people into communion with Christ
- Is gifted by the Holy Spirit to perform ministry roles and to engage in community
- Engages in community and ministry with enthusiasm, gratitude and humility
- Engages in community and ministry united in Christ, and sharing in the Holy Spirit

### 3. How Do We Improve Levels of Engagement?

The US Gallup Congregational Engagement Hierarchy

Source: [http://www.gallup.com/poll/7048/Meeting-Members-Needs-Hierarchy-%20Belonging.aspx?g\\_source=position4&g\\_medium=related&g\\_campaign=tiles](http://www.gallup.com/poll/7048/Meeting-Members-Needs-Hierarchy-%20Belonging.aspx?g_source=position4&g_medium=related&g_campaign=tiles)

When new members join a faith community, they first ask, “What do I get?” in an attempt to decide if belonging to this organisation is worth their investment of time, effort and self. If they determine that they will receive enough value from joining, they will then ask, “What can I give?” and look for ways that their unique talents can contribute to the congregation. From there they will ask, “Do I belong?” as they look for signs that they are valued. When they know that they receive something of value from belonging, that they make a meaningful contribution to the life of the congregation, and that they are valued, they will then look for signs that the organisation’s members are growing in their faith. Recognising this process is vitally important for congregation leaders intent upon improving engagement levels among their members.



#### WHAT DO I GET?

- As a member of my parish, I know what is expected of me.
- In my parish, my spiritual needs are met.

#### WHAT DO I GIVE?

- In my parish, I regularly have the opportunity to do what I do best.
- In the last month, I have received recognition or praise from someone in my parish.
- The spiritual leaders in my parish seem to care about me as a person.
- There is someone in my parish who encourages my spiritual development.

#### DO I BELONG?

- As a member of my parish, my opinions seem to count.
- The mission or purpose of my parish makes me feel my participation is important.
- The other members of my parish are committed to spiritual growth.
- Aside from family members, I have a best friend in my parish.

#### HOW CAN WE GROW?

- In the last six months, someone in my parish has talked to me about the progress of my spiritual growth.
- In my parish, I have opportunities to learn and grow.

#### 4. What is Good Practice? National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/volunteering-resources/volunteer-managers/>

##### Standard 1: Leadership and Management

The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.

##### Standard 2: Commitment to Volunteer Involvement

Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation's strategic direction.



#### Standard 3: Volunteer Roles

Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.

#### Standard 4: Recruitment and Selection

Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.

#### Standard 5: Support and Development

Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.

#### Standard 6: Workplace Safety and Wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.

#### Standard 7: Volunteer Recognition

Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.

#### Standard 8: Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

### **NSW Centre for Volunteering – List for Managing Volunteers**

- Involving Volunteers
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Recruiting Volunteers
- Retaining Volunteers
- Due Diligence
- Volunteer Insurance
- Volunteer Recognition
- Volunteers and CentreLink
- Volunteers, Finance and Tax
- Volunteering & Working with Children Checks

<http://www.volunteering.com.au/for-organisations/managing-volunteers/>



## Ministry Engagement Checklist

<b>Backend Support</b>	
• Supported by Leadership (verbally, spiritually, in presence, materially)	
• Ministry Leader(s) well-formed and supported	
• Ongoing communication (keeping in contact with volunteers eg newsletter)	
• Planning (connection with pastoral plan/mission/other ministries) – Parish Pastoral Council	
• Volunteer coordinator – no other role than to look after volunteers	
• Policies (for volunteer engagement, contracts, WHS, WWC, Police Check)	
• Role Descriptions for volunteers (have timeframes)	
• Financial Resourcing (Parish Finance Council)	
• Clear connection with parish staff and other ministries	
<b>What is Purpose of Ministry/Group; Requirements?</b>	
• What is at heart of the role? How is it building up community centred in Christ, and evangelisation – drawing people into communion with Christ?	
• Number needed (not too few, not too many)	
• Recruitment timeline	
• Time commitment required	
• Skills and qualifications and minimum age and checks needed	
<b>Who Would Suit the Role? Invite!</b>	
• Brainstorm a list of best fits (with Parish Pastoral Council and others) and personally approach	
• What are their strengths and passions? (not simply filling a need)	
• Why is the role/community a good fit for them? (eg don't assume because someone is a young adult they should do youth ministry)	
• What benefits are there for them? (eg skills/fellowship/support God's reign)	
• Who would be interested and qualified?	
• Who would be able to meet time commitment?	
• Where can I find these people?	
• What would motivate them to volunteer?	
• What is the best approach to connect with certain people?	
• Offer Gift Discernment Session	
<b>Advertising, appropriate to audience you are recruiting</b>	
• Pulpit talks, Testimonials	
• Flyer, Poster, Video, Bulletin Notice, Website, Facebook, Blogs	
• Letter, Email	
• Schools (parents, students, staff), Sport Groups, Rotary, Local Council	
• Ministry Fair (to showcase ways) and/or Parish Mission (to motivate people)	
<b>Information Session/Advertising Content</b>	
• Swag/food for info session (here are some freebies)	
• Connection to Mission (this is why it matters)	
• What are the time/requirements (project only, end date, try for 3 months)	
• What support/feedback will you get	
• Skills you will gain	
• Connecting with others	
• Show impact (you will help these people)	
• Testimonies	
• Offer Diverse Activities (from very simple to complex/leadership)	
• Thanks for coming	
• Sign Up Options	



<b>After Initial Sign Up</b>	
• Contact with phone/email	
• Intro self as volunteer leader	
• Thank you for volunteering	
• Date and time of service, location, directions, parking info	
• Describe what will occur	
• What to wear	
• Bring supplies	
• Who to contact if change of plan	
• Remind of mission they are supporting – link with prayer	
• Thank you	
<b>Orientate and train</b>	
• Offer overview of the issue – what is the effect of their work, connect them to service, how it helps the community and reign of God	
• Formation in being stewards, not “owning” their role	
• What are the goals and overall strategies of role	
• They know what to expect and what is expected of them	
• Special training	
• Thank you	
• Commissioning	
<b>Commencement</b>	
• Lead Volunteer in service	
• Greet when they arrive	
• Sign them in	
• Use nametags	
• Introduce to each other – encourage interaction	
• Assign buddy/mentor	
• Everyone has something meaningful to do	
• Keep personal connection	
• Keep them engaged or move them on to new task	
• Check in on how they are going	
• If conflict – deal with as soon as possible	
• If appropriate, connect to mission, and to prayer	
• Thank you	
<b>Review &amp; Next Steps</b>	
• Include elements of intentional reflection – on service, self, next steps – group discussion	
• How it effects them and broader community	
• Gratitude Mass, meal, community day, retreat	
• Pathways to develop as leaders or additional skills within ministry	
• Planning and feedback	
• Additional Training and/or Formation Session (refocus on how we serve Christ through ministry how we evangelise)	
• Ensure affirmative ways to leave ministry or group with pathways into other ministries/groups	
• Thank you	



**Example One: Antioch Youth Engadine**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Description</b>	Youth group (16 to 23 year olds) with 14 regular members, same 14 on peak weekend	30 regular members, 42 on peak weekend
<b>What Backend Support is Offered?</b>	Parish priest supportive  Ex-Antiochers support weekend Handful of parishioners support with food etc	Parish Priest supportive Youth minister attends Pastoral Council support School staff support Younger children support weekend 40 parishioners helped out with food etc
<b>What is Purpose of Ministry/Group and Requirements of the role?</b>	Last outreach weekend, no new members but “happy with just being together”	Clear that outreach weekends are to invite new members and minimum of 5 required. WWC check for over 18
<b>Who Would Suit the Role? Invite!</b>	List of names Invited	List of names Invited (coaching given on inviting)
<b>What mediums are we using for advertising?</b>	Pulpit Talks	Pulpit Talks Video, Flyer, Poster, Facebook School Visits Other parishes
<b>What content are we using for advertising?</b>	Explain Weekend	Explain weekend and other things Antioch is involved in
<b>What is involved in the Information Session?</b>	Bring a Friend night to Antioch	Mini-session in school time Connect via pancake days at school and social outings
<b>What happens after they sign up?</b>	Letter advising of weekend	Letter advising of weekend Efforts to connect before weekend socially
<b>What Orientation and training are offered?</b>	Seven week lead up to w/e Existing members roleplay how to connect with new members	Seven week lead up to w/e Existing members roleplay how to connect with new members Code of Conduct
<b>What happens when they commence?</b>	Themed welcome night	Themed welcome night Break into small groups for welcome Follow up info sheet
<b>When and how do we review, and what are the next steps?</b>		Reflection Day for youth Core group to assist planning

<b>For anyone involved in this ministry/group, how does the ministry/group respond to:</b>	
<b>What do I Get?</b>	Youth sharing with youth, faith-sharing, making friends, make a difference
<b>What do I Give?</b>	Get involved as leader, musician, greeter, speaker
<b>Do I Belong?</b>	Youth have developed whole range of sport/movie/LAN/outreach activities
<b>How can we Grow?</b>	Core group and reflection day to discuss how we are going. Members connect into other parish ministries





**Example Two: Sacramental Preparation**

	<b>What was happening</b>	<b>What now happens</b>
<b>Description</b>	Small-group process for parents and children from State and Catholic schools for Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation	Small-group OR home-based due to semi-rural community
<b>What Backend Support is Offered?</b>	Parish Priest, Sacramental Coordinator, school staff and catechist coordinator supportive	Financial Support Offered Leadership team formed including parents in preparation to plan/review Diocesan support
<b>What is Purpose of Ministry/Group and Requirements of the role?</b>	To form children in faith	To form children in faith and parents in faith AND engage in parish life
<b>Who Would Suit the Role? Invite!</b>	Parents must participate	Parents invited to participate
<b>What mediums are we using for advertising?</b>		
<b>What content are we using for advertising?</b>	States when the preparation is on, what is required, etc	States how your child will benefit, why it is great for parent involvement, including testimonies
<b>What is involved in the Information Session?</b>		
<b>What happens after they sign up?</b>		
<b>What Orientation and training are offered?</b>	Parent Information evening Set up is lecture style	Parent information evening Formation Evening for parents
<b>What happens when they commence?</b>		Formation evening involves 1. Set up is café style 2. Refreshments at tables 3. Dialogue on why does faith matter, how do you share with kids, how can we connect with parish 4. Advertising and conversation around what parish offers
<b>When and how do we review, and what are the next steps?</b>		Parents, priest, coordinator, school and catechist reps review

<b>For anyone involved in this ministry/group, how does the ministry/group respond to:</b>	
<b>What do I Get?</b>	Child gets a sacrament. Time to share with child, time to think about my life
<b>What do I Give?</b>	Can discover with child together, group leader, share my wisdom
<b>Do I Belong?</b>	Fellowship in small groups, ways to connect with wider parish
<b>How can we Grow?</b>	Review of parents and others on how it has gone or is going – help lead it



**Example Three: Sign Up Sunday with Ministry Fair**

	<b>What was happening</b>	<b>What now happens</b>
<b>Description</b>	Weekend Masses encourage people to sign up to ministries – tables showing what ministries offer	Parish renewal focused on responding as a disciple with our gifts and celebrating the ways we respond in faith
<b>What Backend Support is Offered?</b>	Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Priest in support	Priest and Council initially Planning Team All ministry leaders and school reps engaged in planning stage
<b>What is Purpose of Ministry/Group and Requirements of the role?</b>	Ministry representatives need to show what they do and people need to sign up	To develop appreciation of our call to respond as disciples Share gifts Celebrate community life
<b>Who Would Suit the Role? Invite!</b>	General push to get people in parish involved more	Affirmation of people’s roles in broader society Invites discernment of people’s time and gifts
<b>What mediums are we using for advertising?</b>	Flagged in bulletin and pulpit in weeks leading up that sign up Sunday is coming	Bulletin, pulpit, website etc School involvement (kids invited to take part in Ministry fair); letters from priest inviting individuals and groups
<b>What content are we using for advertising?</b>	Think about what you want to do or find out more at sign up Sunday	Formation material on stewardship and gift discernment Come and give thanks for community and celebrate who we are
<b>What is involved in the Information Session?</b>	Information session is really the sign up Sunday. Stalls and sign up sheets	Festival atmosphere on day with song, dance, food, stalls, church tours, hand on taste of share groups, face painting
<b>What happens after they sign up?</b>	Some groups slow to get back to people Some groups don’t welcome interested people Some interest/new members	People sign up to information sessions where they find out about certain roles or gift discernment session.
<b>What Orientation and training are offered?</b>	Only for catechists, some liturgical ministries and some hands on ministries. Training mainly practical	Orientation can occur on information evenings. Clear role descriptions of ministries offered and short-term sign up offered (try for 3 to 6 months)
<b>What happens when they commence?</b>	Rostered on	Ministry coordinator trained for Follow up – how are you going? What support do you need?
<b>When and how do we review, and what are the next steps?</b>	No follow up or review	Gratitude Mass later in year, with thank you BBQ for all involved Ministries review with Parish Pastoral Council (or planning team)

<b>For anyone involved in this ministry/group, how does the ministry/group respond to:</b>	
<b>What do I Get?</b>	Get to use your gifts and sense of achievement by serving God’s mission
<b>What do I Give?</b>	Give my gifts of time and talent
<b>Do I Belong?</b>	Is there chance to connect with ministers in fellowship?
<b>How can we Grow?</b>	Review and is there chance to offer feedback and become coordinator?



	What happens now?	How can we strengthen?
<b>Description</b>		
<b>What Backend Support is Offered?</b>		
<b>What is Purpose of Ministry/Group and Requirements of the role?</b>		
<b>Who Would Suit the Role? Invite!</b>		
<b>What mediums are we using for advertising?</b>		
<b>What content are we using for advertising?</b>		
<b>What is involved in the Information Session?</b>		
<b>What happens after they sign up?</b>		
<b>What Orientation and training are offered?</b>		
<b>What happens when they commence?</b>		
<b>When and how do we review, and what are the next steps?</b>		

For anyone involved in this ministry/group, how does the ministry/group respond to:	
What do I Get?	
What do I Give?	
Do I Belong?	
How can we Grow?	