



# Proclaim Christ *and* Make Disciples through the Sacramental Life *of the* Church.

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## 1% Challenge to Get to Know Jesus

### What is the 1% Challenge?

A new initiative of the John Paul II Center for the New Evangelization designed to be used in a variety of repeating ways to invite people to encounter Jesus in the Scriptures through prayer.

- Get to know Jesus by taking 1% of your day (15 minutes) to pray with Scripture for 30 Days.
- Introduces people to the Bible (break the Bible-barrier)
- Teaches people how to pray (and to listen in prayer)
- Designed to sow seeds of a habit (research says 12 weeks to form a habit)

### Why the 1% Challenge?

There is a difference between knowing about Jesus vs. knowing Jesus. Many in our parishes may know about Jesus without actually knowing Him, His love for them, and His presence with them.

- Catholics tend not to say the name “Jesus,” and may not know his saving good news for their lives.
- If people haven’t met Jesus and had some sort of transformative encounter with the Lord, they can’t move any further--relationship with Jesus is foundational to everything we believe and practice.
- Pope Benedict said it this way: “Faith is above all a personal, intimate encounter with Jesus, and to experience [His] closeness, [His] friendship, [His] Love; only in this way does one learn to know [Him] ever more, and to love and follow [Him] ever more. May this happen to each one of us.”
- Many Catholics are intimidated by the Bible or, even if they want to use it, do not know where and how to start.
- Many Catholics do not know how to pray beyond the regular meal prayer or other prayers they have memorized. And many do not know how to pray with the Scriptures.
- Many Catholics have not developed intentional habits of encountering Jesus in prayer and Scripture on a daily basis.
- Building personal relationships with the Lord through daily prayer with Scripture is critical to building a culture of stewardship in our parishes. To connect the 1% challenge to parish stewardship, contact Barb Vite at 414-769-3331 or [viteb@archmil.org](mailto:viteb@archmil.org).

## How Is the 1% Challenge Designed to Be Used?

This tool is designed to be used across parish ministries in multiple situations. The key is *HOW* you use it – always inviting people to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ through the power of Scripture and the daily habit of prayer.

Like establishing a daily exercise routine, establishing a daily prayer habit is easier with community support. So always introduce the 1% Challenge in a relational or communal context so people can support and encourage each other. Even better – invite people to intentionally seek out accountability partners for the journey.

### Use it as a Leadership Development Tool

- Have your leaders do it first. You can't lead someone where you haven't been.
- Use the 1% Challenge as an "entry point" for all new leaders to build the culture.

### Use It as a Parish-Wide Initiative

- Promote from the pulpit for all parish members to do together.
- Include related petitions in the Universal Prayer (Prayers of the Faithful) at Mass.
- Could be done strategically in a particular season (Lent, Advent) or strategically introduces as a part of a special parish event (Parish Mission, Parish anniversary, Parish Festival, Small Group Ministry Launch, etc.)
- Some ideas other parishes have done - banner to sign indicating commitment to 1% Challenge, communication plan (branding it in multiple ways)

### Use It in Targeted Sacramental Moments

- Marriage Preparation – Couples learning to pray and know Jesus together
- Baptismal Preparation – Help parents and Godparents grow in the Lord
- First Communion Preparation – Parents do this together and with their children
- Confirmation Preparation – Invite students and their families to participate
- RCIA – Have the Catechumens and Candidates do it with their spouses/families

### Use it with Specific Target Groups

- New Parish Members – make it normative for all new members
- School and Religious Ed Families – Build the domestic church
- Youth Groups
- Men's and Women's Groups and Couples
- Small Group Ministry
- Committees and Ministry Groups

## Further Implementation Points for Leaders

- Possible witness talks after the initial launch of 1% Challenge - Plan a strategy – Assume that God will move and plan for it! Think about how to collect stories or testimonies and then share those far and wide (your own congregation and beyond).

- Invite/Challenge those who have completed the first 30 days to do it again as an evangelization reach in these ways:
  - Invite someone to do it with you - especially someone who's on the margins or outside of the Church
  - Ask people what they need prayer for - especially those who are not already in the Church. Share with friends, "Hey, I'm doing this 1% Challenge at Church which has me praying every day. Is there something I can pray for you?"
- Be strategic about when and how to bring it back again. Especially if you've done a parish-wide launch. Not everyone will have done it the first time, it's important to bring it back from time to time even if you've already done it to reinforce the habit. (Just like exercise, diet, sleep, etc.)
- Be strategic about handoff after the 30 day challenge. What is your continuing prayer plan? What do you want to invite people to do next?
  - #1 Goal - people continue their personal prayer life after the 30 days as a lifelong habit.
  - Help them make a personal plan to continue praying with scripture after the first 30 days - see website.
  - Introduce them to Lectio Divina or other prayer practices.
  - Scenarios/examples: Invite them into a seeker small group or discipleship group.
    1. Parish A - Had all their leaders do the Challenge, and then launched it parish-wide from the pulpit. At the end of the Challenge they invited all parishioners into small groups designed to help them grow as disciples (Discipleship Training Group).
    2. Parish B - Had done the 1% Challenge parish wide, and then invited everyone in the congregation to invite 2 friends to join them in the Challenge. The parish then invited all Challengers to a seeker friendly small group.
    3. Parish C - Launched the Challenge parish wide and then invited all challengers to the "Oremus" Video series.
    4. Parish D – Launched the Challenge parish wide and then invited people into deeper exploration of the scriptures - Quick Journey Great Adventure or the study of a Gospel
    5. Parish E - Had a few small group leaders interested but not parish-wide interest. Small group leaders introduced the Challenge to their small group members and helped them make a personal plan for continuing after the first 30 days.

### **Materials are Free - This is how you access them:**

- 1% Challenge Cards are available in English and Spanish by contacting Rosalita Villa at 414-758-2217 or [villar@archmil.org](mailto:villar@archmil.org)
- For more information and resources go to: [www.johnpaul2center.org/onepercentchallenge](http://www.johnpaul2center.org/onepercentchallenge)