



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

ignite • renew • energize • ignite • renew • energize • ignite • renew • energize

Help Wanted: Missionaries for a Church “on the move”



Archbishop
Jerome E. ListECKi

Following our 2014 Synod, the archdiocese adopted a clear mission statement summarizing what we are all called to do in our daily lives: “Proclaim Christ and Make Disciples through the Sacramental Life of the Church.” This mission is actually the mission of the Catholic Church, given by Jesus to his disciples in the “Great Commission”: “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Mt. 28:19). We need “missionary” leaders, ordained and lay, who will work together on carrying out this timeless mission.

The Synod pointed us to the priorities we need to be working on as the Catholic Church in southeastern Wisconsin for the next 10-15 years. Leadership was a main area that surfaced in the Synod. Because of changes taking place in our parishes, we need a new style of leadership that is intentional about inviting people to grow in their faith so they become disciples who can reach out to those who are on the fringe of the Catholic Church or are not attending church at all.

New structures and models of parishes are also being developed. Over half of our parishes in the archdiocese are already sharing a pastor. This means priests, deacons, parish directors and other professional lay ministers are stepping up and

SYNOD IMPLEMENTATION LEADERSHIP GATHERINGS

A Vision for the Future:
Evangelization and the Sunday Mass

Friday, September 30 and repeated
Saturday, October 1, 2016

8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Archbishop Cousins Catholic Center,
Milwaukee

For more details: [www.archmil.org/
LeadershipGatherings2016](http://www.archmil.org/LeadershipGatherings2016)

taking on more and more leadership roles and new responsibilities as a result. I am extremely appreciative of our ordained and lay ministers for adapting to the changing needs of leadership in today’s Church. We are blessed to have so many committed leaders serving parishes, schools and Catholic organizations in a variety of professional ministry positions.

What is also quite clear to me is that at the heart and soul of our parishes are all of the dedicated lay volunteers involved in the day-to-day work of the ministries and services provided. So many of you reading this article are people who are living out your faith, being good “stewards” who give of your time and share your gifts with your parish and those around you. Thank you for your compelling witness!

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A Welcome Straight from the Heart

The faith community of St. Alphonsus Parish, Greendale has been busy. This past April, the parish implemented an initiative to encourage members to invite friends and family to Mass, who might not have gone otherwise. This was not just a small blurb in the bulletin, but a community-wide invitation.

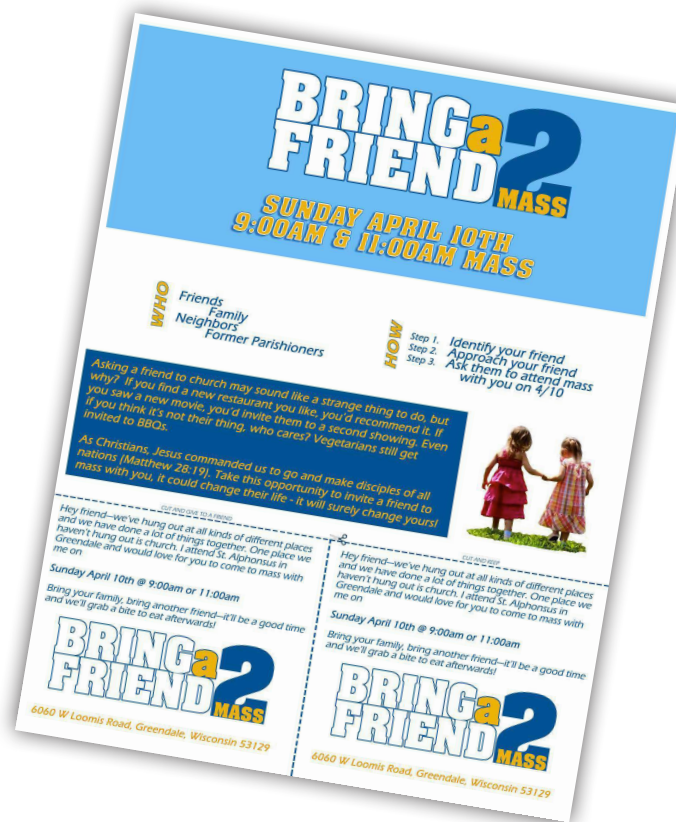
“At our parish leadership retreat last August, Fr. Aaron Esch asked all of us to brainstorm ways to implement the Synod priority, ‘Evangelization and the Sunday Mass.’ The idea emerged from a discussion among the group,” explained parishioner Steve Becker. “At a subsequent Pastoral Council meeting, Andy Miller, Cathie Wilke and I volunteered to lead the effort.” The team gave themselves six months to plan out the day, but found that it was easier than they expected.

“So many people contributed their time and talents to this event,” said Steve. “We had signs posted around town, signage in front of the church, an inspirational video shown at Mass, bulletin write-ups and invitations with suggestions on how to approach a friend.”

Additionally, the parish also utilized many resources made available free by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, such as the #iEvangelizeMKE pass-along cards. There was also a prayer written for that weekend, original artwork with the “Bring a Friend to Mass” theme, extra greeters at the doors to welcome newcomers, branded name tags, a special worship aid tailored to visitors, a nursery service for families with small children (which included a children’s liturgy), coupons to nearby restaurants and more.

“The investment of time and money was minimal. The benefits were numerous and went far beyond the number of new faces that attended that one Sunday,” Steve reflected. “We awakened a sense of evangelization in our parish with things like the ‘Heart of the Mass’ video, the archdiocesan pass-along cards we handed out after Mass, and articles in the bulletin. Some said they didn’t bring someone to Mass on that day, but it got them thinking about people they could approach for a future weekend.

BRING a FRIEND 2 MASS



Others took the opportunity to invite adult children or family members who had fallen away from the Church.”

Was it a success? Without question, it was.

“We had visitors come to our welcome table, we put into the hearts of our parishioners the drive to evangelize, we reached out through social media and community boards to parishioners, friends, and friends of friends. My own friend had a great experience, met a lot of smiling faces, and with God’s help, we will see him in the pews again.”

Each weekend is another opportunity to “Bring a Friend to Mass.” Go and make disciples!



From Maintenance to Mission



Susan McNeil, *Director,
Nazareth Project for
Marriage and Family
Formation*

A few years ago, I was working in a wonderful parish community. I was blessed with an amazing pastor and great coworkers and a generous budget. I was busy. And I mean BUSY. In my ministry, a feast of programs and events were offered to meet the needs of everyone – just like a Greek restaurant. Sometimes I would read our bulletin and think to myself, “I didn’t even know we did that here!”

One day, I read an article that stopped me up short. It dawned on me, in a scary-sort-of-fashion, that most everything I had been doing wasn’t what God wanted me to do. Sure, I ran great programs that provided childcare and snacks. By most people’s standards, I was doing amazing stuff. But, deep in my heart, I came to realize that much of what I was doing was sheer busy-ness, and I wasn’t helping people encounter

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Prayer for the Mission of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

(Shortened Version)

Almighty and ever living God,
we praise you and we bless you,
for you are great indeed!

Grant, we pray,
as on that first Pentecost,
that tongues of fire may descend upon us,
and that the driving wind of your Holy Spirit
may blow boldly into our hearts.

Embolden us, O God,
so that we may go forth to proclaim
your Gospel and renew the face of the earth.

In this Archdiocese of Milwaukee,
we humbly pray for strength and fortitude
to follow your great commission:
to go and make disciples of all people,
living our faith through word and deed.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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This fall we are hosting “Leadership Gatherings” to bring priests, deacons, professional lay ministers, and lay volunteer leaders to focus on how our archdiocese can best carry out the mission set forth by our Synod. Leaders, ordained and lay, throughout the archdiocese will hear how we need to move from membership-based communities to communities of disciples who proclaim and share the Good News.

These gatherings will be a great formation opportunity for our current leaders, as well as for those being called to new leadership roles. We are a Church “on the move” and this is a wonderful moment in our archdiocese to move forward on our mission to “Proclaim Christ and Make Disciples through the Sacramental Life of the Church.”

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Jesus, enter more deeply into a relationship with God, or become disciples in the Church.

That “wake up” moment, while very hard for me, changed everything: it changed what I did, how I did it, what language I used, how I led, how I approached and responded to people, how I prayed.

So what does this have to do with Evangelization and the Sunday Mass? Our weekend celebrations of the Mass are the Church’s “front porch.” For most Catholics, and even non-Catholics, the Mass is where people first encounter the Church, and so this becomes what focuses the lens of our ministry. Every week, in every parish across our archdiocese, we have people attending our parishes who are visiting, aren’t Catholic, have never truly heard the Good News of Jesus Christ, may be loosely connected, or just searching.

When we look out at our communities gathered to celebrate the Eucharist each weekend, we know that Mass attendance has declined rapidly over the years. We hear the statistics that fewer Catholics attend Mass than ever before, and our young people are leaving our beautiful Church for other traditions – or nothing at all. But the great news is there’s still tremendous hope and opportunity. We only have to open the newspaper or log onto



the internet to see that people are hungry for the meaning, truth, and beauty – and the Church has the answer in the Good News of Jesus Christ through the sacramental life of the Church, most especially in the Eucharist.

So what do we do? The time has come for us to be bold by moving from maintenance to mission! It’s time for us, as leaders, to take a hard look at how people experience our parish communities when they arrive on our front porch. As a minister, moving from maintenance to mission

was one of the HARDEST things I’ve ever done. And I can tell you, without a doubt, that it’s the best, most fruitful, and most rewarding step I’ve ever taken – and the results continue to amaze me.

Please join us at our Leadership Gatherings on September 30th or October 1st, to take a fresh look at Sunday worship in your parish, and explore how you can begin to move your parish from “maintenance to mission.” The Holy Spirit is moving powerfully in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee!



ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE MISSION STATEMENT

To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through his saving death and resurrection by calling, forming and sending disciples to go and make new disciples. As a people, we are called to encounter Jesus and grow as disciples through the sacramental life of the Church.