



PARISH TEAM CLASSROOM VISITS

While there are different models that could be employed for classroom visits by the pastoral team, there are guidelines that can help discern what is best.

WHY VISIT?

Recognizing the goal is to draw the staff and the students into the life, mission and ministry of the parish, the parish team members visit the school as an important part of their ministry to support and empower the teachers who minister to the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of their students. Further, these visits invite the students to consider their participation within the parish community.

WHO SHOULD VISIT?

Members of the parish team who have the charism and experience of working with youth.

WHAT TO DO?

The parish team should consider the following:

- Incorporate rich prayerful experiences into the visits – e.g.; lectio divina, Christian Meditation, the Examen of Consciousness;
- Make direct connections between Religious Education and/or Family Life curriculum;
- Offer a ministry of presence and, when appropriate, pastoral care to the staff and students of the school;
- When a chaplaincy leader is present in the school, please work with and under the direction of the chaplaincy leader; and,
- No new programs should be brought into the school. The Religion and Family Life programs of the schools have been approved by the ACBO. Parish programs should be offered through the parish.

WHEN TO VISIT?

It is important to respect the curriculum demands for the classroom teacher. The curriculum that the teacher must address is directed by the Ministry of Education and the Assembly of Bishops of Ontario (ACBO). Respecting the demands experienced by the teacher it is proposed that parish team visits be:

- Arranged in advance (not impromptu) so as to respect the time/planning of the teacher/class;
- Two 15-minute visits per month (up to 20 minutes for intermediate students); and,
- Teachers should communicate with the appropriate member of the pastoral team highlighting major curriculum themes prior to the classroom visit.

BEST PRACTICES

- The classroom teacher should be in the class throughout the visit. They are responsible for the delivery of curriculum, ensuring classroom management, and the physical and spiritual safety of the students.
- Be prepared. Parish team members should work with the teacher to know their audience, the needs and interests of the students, and why they are going in.
- Be in tune with the curriculum expectations of each Grade. (The classroom teacher could help with this).
- Answer questions in an age/developmentally appropriate way.
- Be sure to sign in when entering the school in accordance with your school's "sign-in" protocol.
- Be joyful; the goal is to be genuinely invitational.
- Offer a ministry of presence before classroom visits.