

Norms from the Pastoral Offices for  
On-Going Parish Self-Evaluation

I. From the Pastoral Office of the Word

- A. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God provides religious formation and education for all its members.
1. Parents are "the first to communicate faith to their children and to educate them," (Apostolate of the Laity, #11), and the parish faith-community helps them to fulfill that duty through religious education and catechesis (To Teach as Jesus Did, #52).
    - a. The "integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life is brought about in the Catholic school not only by its unique curriculum but, more important, by the presence of teachers who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives" (To Teach as Jesus Did, #104).
    - b. Religious education is implemented through various models, one of which is the Catholic school model (National Catechetical Directory, or NCD, #224-238).
    - c. Preparation of children for the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) and for the Sacrament of Reconciliation occurs throughout the entire catechetical process with an emphasis on the involvement of the family during the immediate formation time for the sacrament about to be celebrated.
    - d. All religious education and catechetical programs are designed to be family-centered.
  2. Religious education efforts, centered on initiating a person into a faith community, must begin at birth and last until death (NCD, #173-174, #177-189).
    - a. Catechesis, formation and formal religious education programs are provided for everyone in the parish.
    - b. The most important task of catechesis to youth is to provide through the witness of adults, an environment in which young people can grow in faith (The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis: Maturing in Faith, p. 8).
    - c. Catechesis offered to young adults recognizes their stages of development, awareness of their gifts, their struggle with decision-making, their need to be involved, although many of them move away from the Church during

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this phase of their lives.

- d. All catechists and teachers of religious are faithful members of the Catholic Church and participate regularly in opportunities offered for professional growth and for personal spiritual growth.
  - e. Small faith-sharing groups or communities are opportunities of growth, support, and prayer.
- B. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God evangelizes both alienated Catholics and unchurched people.
- 1. Evangelization, the presentation of the Gospel message, or the Good News, is understood as a "duty incumbent on all by the command of the Lord Jesus . . ." (On Evangelization in the Modern World, #5).
    - a. The unchurched and those who have never heard the Good News are sought out (On Evangelization . . ., #52).
    - b. Inactive Catholics are considered brothers and sisters whose absence from worship is regretted and to whom invitation is extended by word and action to return to the community (On Evangelization . . ., #56).
  - 2. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the model and process for welcoming new members into the Christian community.
  - 3. Hospitality exemplified by an attitude of acceptance and friendliness characterize the people of the parish.
- C. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God prays and works with members of other Christian and non-Christian communities.
- 1. The heritage and faith traditions of other Christian denominations as well as those of the non-Christian religions are respected (Decree on Ecumenism, #4).
  - 2. The parish actively participates in local ecumenical activities and takes leadership in local (civic) community events.

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### II. From the Pastoral Office of Worship

- A. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God has the best Eucharistic celebrations possible, especially on the Lord's Day.
1. In order to achieve the best possible Eucharistic celebrations each parish will have a liturgy committee whose task is to assist the pastor with liturgical planning and with assuring that the following liturgical ministers receive spiritual formation and training:
    - a) readers
    - b) eucharistic ministers
    - c) cantors
    - d) organists
    - e) ushers (ministers of hospitality)
    - f) servers
    - g) commentators
    - h) instrumentalists
    - i) choirs
  2. The members of the parish assembly understand that fully alive and fully life-giving celebrations of the Eucharist depend upon their participation as a gathered, listening, and responding people. Opportunities for adult formation and reflection upon the liturgy will help the assembly realize its potential as a life-giving community of faith.
  3. Parish communities schedule times for Sunday eucharist which allow the majority of the community to gather rather than a series of "convenience" liturgies with a scattering of its members.
  4. Participation aids such as hymnals, music for cantors, organists and instrumentalists are provided for each parish.
  5. Handicapped accessibility and provision for the hearing impaired is a concern of each parish.
- B. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God celebrates the other Sacraments, as far as possible, within the Eucharistic celebration on the Lord's Day.
1. The process of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the norm for all sacramental preparation and celebration. The whole community prayerfully supports and celebrates with those receiving the sacraments of initiation.
  2. Parish communities follow the diocesan guidelines for the



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celebration of baptism, confirmation, eucharist, reconciliation, anointing of the sick, marriage and ordination.

3. When parishes celebrate sacramental rites during Sunday Eucharist, the choice of readings depend upon the seasons of the liturgical year.
  4. Care is taken that sacramental celebrations not focus primarily upon an individual or group but rather upon the prayer of the entire community. Preparation for the communal celebration takes into account the participation of the entire community.
  5. The diocesan Church has an annual celebration of the rite of election at the Cathedral for all the candidates and catechumens from the various parishes of the diocese.
- C. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God prays Evening Prayer together on the Lord's Day and on solemn feasts.
1. The divine office is a source of devotion and nourishment for personal and communal prayer.
  2. Parishes schedule opportunities for the communal celebration of Morning and/or Evening prayer, especially on the Lord's Day and on solemn feasts.
- D. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God has space well-suited to the proper celebration of liturgy.
1. Art and environment committees see to the decoration of the liturgical space for the various seasons of the church year. These decorations are done according to the principles in Environment and Art in Catholic Worship, published by the Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, United States Catholic Conference.
  2. Baptismal fonts which allow for communal celebration of initiation are a priority in the liturgical space.
  3. Reconciliation rooms which allow for the option of face to face celebration of the sacrament of penance are available in every parish church.
  4. All building and renovation projects in the diocese are carried out according to the guidelines and process set forth by the Bishop and the Diocesan Building and Renovation Commission.

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### III. From the Pastoral Office of Christian Service

- A. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God responds to the needs (physical, spiritual, emotional) of people.
  - 1. Deal spiritually with people's needs and hurts within the framework of the Paschal Mystery of Christ, who had to suffer in order to enter into glory.
  - 2. Support and/or establish support-groups, like-to-like and other peer ministries so that people can minister to others in similar situations or needs.
  - 3. Use community support systems, such as county social services, part-time professionals or volunteers, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services and other public/ecumenical agencies.
- B. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God works for justice in the civic, political, economic structures of society.
  - 1. It addresses systemic evils by overseeing the implementation of papal and episcopal teachings, especially in regard to abortion, euthanasia, sexism, racism (especially Native Americans and Hispanics), the arms race and economic justice for all.
  - 2. This may be accomplished through parish committees; small faith communities; study of Catholic social teaching, especially the U.S. Bishops' Pastorals, "Economic Justice for All, and "The Challenge of Peace"; guest speakers, discussion groups, parish/ cluster/deanery retreats through resources, such as the Office of Christian Service, Respect Life Commission, Justice and Peace Commission, Women's Task Force, etc.
- C. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God identifies and calls forth lay leaders and sees to their training.
  - 1. Special attention should be given to the parish pastoral council, parish administration and those in ministerial and community leadership roles.
  - 2. An important element in the training of such leaders is developing an awareness and understanding of papal and episcopal teachings and how we may live them out in our daily lives.
- D. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the

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sake of the Reign of God assesses and addresses the needs of its families, broadly understood.

1. The preparation for marriage calls for ministry to engaged couples to deepen their commitment to creative fidelity and sacramental marriage. These programs address all significant topics related to contemporary married life and sensitive to the couple's age and unique traits of individuals.
2. Marriage enrichment for married couples of all economic and cultural backgrounds fosters spiritual growth and continued development of the marriage relationship. Specific attention is given to prayer, Christian life style, sexuality, communication skills, and newlyweds.
3. Enrichment for families emphasizes their lived experience with consideration of varying ages within the family. Special emphasis is given to families' spirituality and how it is lived out through sacramental programs, home prayer formation, family nights, parent-family liturgies and religious/cultural events.
4. In keeping with the Church's teaching in Humane Vitae, educational opportunities in natural methods of family planning is accessible for couples' knowledge (including engaged couples). Awareness of accurate human sexual physiology is encouraged by understanding each couple's own natural occurring cycle changes of fertility and infertility to achieve or avoid pregnancy without the use of artificial means.



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### IV. From the Pastoral Office of Administration

- A. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God assumes responsibility for acquiring and administering those temporal goods necessary to achieve its proper goals in the ministries of word, worship and service.
1. Each parish has a finance council which is responsible for the administration of parish goods (with due regard for the prescriptions of canon 532; see below).
  2. The finance council is ruled by norms issued by the diocesan bishop. These norms can be found in the pastoral letter by the Bishop on the norms and guidelines for Pastoral and Finance Councils. A copy of this letter can be obtained from: Diocese of Crookston / Accounting & Finance Office / P. O. Box 610 / Crookston, MN 56716.
  3. Each parish complies with all of the internal control and management practices listed in Appendix C of the Diocese of Crookston Uniform Parish Accounting Manual. A copy of this manual can be obtained from the Accounting & Finance Office at the above address.
  4. Canon 532: "The pastors represents the parish in all juridic affairs in accord with the norm of law; he is to see to it that the goods of the parish are administered in accord with the norms of canon 1281-1288.
- B. A faith-community committed to full, quality ministry for the sake of the Reign of God assumes responsibility for the on-going formation of its members in proper Christian stewardship.
1. Stewardship is a total concept embracing all areas of life. It is a central theme of the Bible, which tells us that we are not owners of our time, talent, and treasure. We are stewards, called to manage these gifts for a limited time and responsible to God who entrusts them to us.
  2. Stewardship must be introduced and implemented at the parish and individual level. It must be accepted and understood in order to have a lasting impact. Some parishioners have never heard the term "Stewardship," and some have equated it with "another appeal to the pocket."
  3. The concept of stewardship must be grounded in the sound theology of Sacrificial Giving. Success will result from the commitment of those practicing Sacrificial Giving as an important part of their faith life.
  4. After the implementation of Sacrificial Giving the question asked by many parishes is "what do we do for an encore?" A

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solution is to tie the Stewardship message to something that is strongly in place in the Church and the faith lives of Catholics: the Liturgical Calendar.

5. In the three-year cycle, there are many celebrations of Jesus the Steward who leads his people in being good stewards. The message of Stewardship should be spread over the entire three-year cycle, making the most effective use of the differences present in each liturgical year.
6. The National Catholic Stewardship Council and Msgr. Joseph Champlin are in the process of preparing resource materials to assist pastors and Stewardship Committees in effectively using the Liturgical Cycle in delivering the message of Stewardship. Msgr. Champlin has been instrumental in introducing thousands of parishes throughout the United States to Sacrificial Giving with his manual, "Sharing Treasure, Time, and Talent."