
PLANNING FRUITFUL EVENTS

Initial Planning

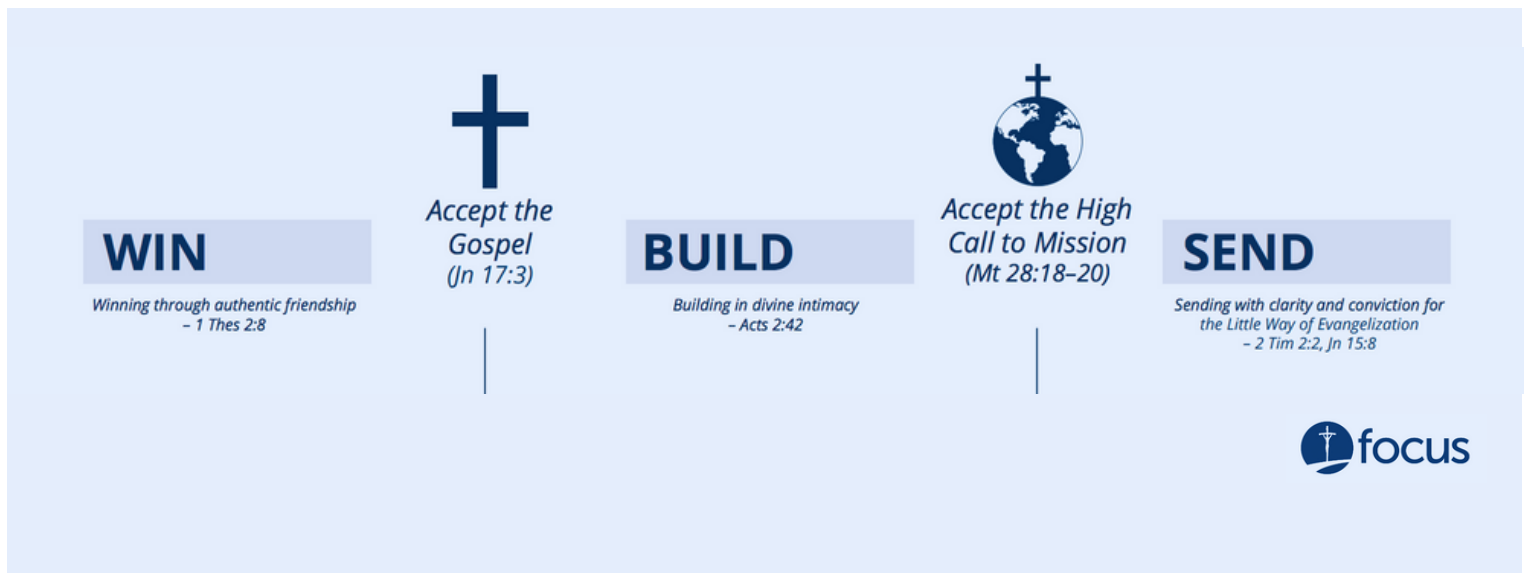
Assessment:

- What fruit do we desire this event to bear (be very specific)?
- Is this a Win, Build, or Send Event?
- What is going to directly lead up to this event? What is the landing place going to be from this event?
- What programs or resources do we need to have ready to meet people where they are at after this event?
- Describe the target audience: age, gender, faith maturity, etc.
- Have we held this event before? Did it bear that fruit?
- How are we going to facilitate opportunities for the participants to boldly make a decision to follow Jesus (or to follow Him with greater trust)?
- What staff or volunteers are available to help lead this?
- What is the budget? Are there addition financial resources we could tap into?

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STEP 1: KNOW YOUR OVERALL VISION AND HOW THIS EVENT FITS IN



STEP 2: INTENTIONAL PLANNING

Hospitality

- We know that the key attitudes that lead to a decision to follow Christ are trust, curiosity, and openness. These dispositions are primarily relationship-driven, but at an event hospitality does a ton to help or hamper them. It's key to think about:
 - The environment: make it as warm and inviting as possible in a way appropriate for your demographic. Think about lighting, visual focal-points for prayer, beautiful artwork, comfortable seating, and house music in the background during transitions.
 - The food and beverage: invest in making your guests feel worthy and honored. Be sure to find out about food allergies in advance or have options on hand.
 - If people are going to be mixing and meeting each other utilize name tags.
 - Professionalism and branding on handouts, slides and signage.
 - Location: if your event is a pure win event consider holding it off-site.



Emcee

- Your choice of emcee should be tailored to the target audience. Consider one or two individuals you want to cater this event toward. The emcee should be chosen to make those people feel comfortable and inspire them to buy in.
- The emcee's role is to welcome everyone -- especially guests -- communicate the bigger context for this event, guide the group through transitions, and make concrete invitations in how the group can fruitfully participate during and after the event.

Music

- Music is a vital way of leading people to prayer and worship. This is a key area to invest in. The quality of the speaking and music are the most common things that people point to after an event.
- Depending on your audience and goals, different types of music can be utilized: praise and worship, typical Mass music, traditional hymns, or Gregorian chant.
- Honing in on the target audience is key in assessing what type of music to utilize.
- If you are printing or projecting lyrics make sure your parish has licensing to do so.

Talks

- The goal of the talk needs to be very clearly defined.
- A good speaker will want to know the following:
 - The ages, gender, and other information about the audience, but especially their faith maturity (Win-Build-Send).
 - A specific goal of this talk, for example: preparing teens for a time of encountering the Lord in Adoration, making a full confession, receiving the truth of their identity in the Theology of the Body, becoming bolder witnesses in their schools, etc.Vague topics get vague results.
- Make it clear that you are asking them to give a talk, not to teach a class.
- The talk needs to have a clear start time and end time. Some speakers like to have a warning from someone in the back when they have 10 minutes and/or 5 minutes left.
- Tips for guiding new speakers:
 - Ask them for a clear outline of their three main points a few weeks out. Let them know if that is going to connect with the audience or not, give direction accordingly.
 - Ask them to practice and time their talk ahead of time. If it's too long: it's very important to shorten it before hand. A huge pitfall is to show up with too much material.
 - Structuring the talk is vital. Listen to Ryan O'Hara's *Better Preach Podcast*. Especially Episode 13 - The Freedom of Structure with Kris Frank.
- Find out what sort of microphone the speaker prefers using and test it ahead of time with them. Don't wing this!



Sacraments

- The goal of all ministry is to draw people into deeper communion with God in prayer and specifically in the sacraments. *Whenever possible build them into an event!*
- However, as with everything else, be intentional. Meet people where they are at. If you are doing formation and training for disciples, provide Mass and Reconciliation. If you are trying to win people to Christ, adoration with praise and worship is more appropriate.
- A healthy trajectory for the event is often to build up to a sacramental time of encounter. Have the emcee name that intentionality and give clear invitations on how people can decisively enter into this sacramental encounter, be it adoration, confession or Mass.



Testimonies

- Your speaker should get practical and personal, illustrating whatever topic they are speaking to with real life examples. Adding an additional voice to the evening that briefly testifies to the power of Jesus in their own life can be really helpful.
- Pick someone that has experienced genuine, lasting conversion in the area you are addressing at this event.
- Give the individual a resource on how to construct his/her testimony and clear guidelines for what you are looking for. Typically we shoot for three minutes and no more than five.
- Make it clear: this is a testimony, not another talk. The goal of the testimony is to open hearts to the powerful love of Christ, not to catechize.
- Unless you have heard this person give this testimony before, always ask to hear it in advance.
- Ask the diocese for resources on this if you need them.

Dramas/Skits

- For teen events, dramas can be very helpful at adding another means of communicating your core message for the evening. Dramas are a proclamation of the Gospel and shouldn't be silly. Skits are a fun way of communicating something human. Be intentional about which you want.
- If someone in your leadership group has a gift with this, use it!
- You can use them with adults too but it is a bit riskier.

Sound System

- When in doubt, use a sound system. Use your church's sound system if it is going to work well; otherwise consider finding or even renting a PA System.
- Test your sound system in advance and soundcheck the day of before people arrive.
- Many professional musicians have their own sound system that they can bring for an additional fee. Your speaker and emcee would typically be able to tap into their system.



PowerPoint Projection

- Using PowerPoint during talks can be really helpful. Remember: the point of the talk is not to teach information but to facilitate transformation.
- If your speaker would like to use PowerPoint ensure that they are going to use it primarily for images and a handful of key quotes. Be direct and ensure that they are not going to read large amounts of text off their PowerPoint.
- Do not cover up the altar, tabernacle or crucifix with your projector screen unless absolutely necessary. Try to place the screen off to a side.

Advertising

- At Mass: briefly cast a clear vision for the context and desired fruit and why you have every reason to believe its going to be worth people's time.
- Use Canva (its free!) to make beautiful flyers.
- Personal Invitation is key: identify influential people for this demographic and build a team of personal inviters.

Schedule

- Make a detailed schedule for the event including transition times, location, and who is doing what.
- Relay information to everyone involved in putting on the event in advance to make sure that they are comfortable with their roles.
- Meet with everyone involved the day of the event to talk through the whole schedule to make sure that all the bases are covered. Be sure to ask if there are any questions or concerns.
- See sample itinerary for a youth rally on the next page.



Pre-Event Schedule

Start	End	Activity	Location	Who
4:00pm	5:15pm	Set-Up/Sound Check, Projection Test	Main Church	ALL
5:15pm	5:45pm	Pre-Event Meeting & Dinner	Room TBD	ALL

Event Schedule

Start	End	Activity	Location	Who
6:00pm	6:10pm	Doors Open/Gathering Music	Church	Nate R.
	6:10pm	Formal Welcome – Upbeat Music	Church	Nate R.
6:20pm	6:45pm	Opening Activity – Engage from stage	Church	Kory L.
6:45pm	7:20pm	Dinner	Gathering Space	ALL
	7:20pm	Praise & Worship	Church	Nate R.
	7:25pm	Transition/Welcome Fr. David	Church	Nate R. // Kory L. (Discuss)
7:30pm	7:50pm	Keynote	Church	Fr. Patrick
	7:50pm	Explanation of Adoration/Transition/Posture.	Church	(Discuss)
7:55pm	8:20pm	Adoration – <i>Fluid time, beginning with a procession to the altar. Mix of p&w, silence, scripture, etc. Benediction to begin promptly at 8:15pm.</i>	Church	Fr. Patrick Nate R.
8:20pm	8:25pm	Transition back to praise and worship music	Church	Nate R.
	8:25pm	Evening Wrap-Up & Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any final pastoral direction - Closing Remarks & Thank You's - Directions/Logistics for Departure - Dismiss everyone for the evening by cueing final song(s) 	Church	Kory L.. Chris H. Other TBD
	8:35pm	Dismissal – Final Song(s)	Church	Nate R.

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"To seek, love and bear witness to Jesus! This is your commitment; these are the instructions I leave you!"

ST. JOHN PAUL II