

MISSIONARY LEADER

Update

Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Office of Missionary Planning & Leadership

The *Update* is sent monthly via email to pastors, parish directors, staff, council members, and committee chairs. The purpose of the publication is to highlight important information for leaders in parishes.



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Special Issue

With the COVID-19 pandemic extending the Safer at Home directive, this issue is dedicated to helping parish communities deal with the effect and after effects of this strange time. The usual articles of Post 2020 Plan, Data Analysis, and MissionInsite Musings should resume in June.

Leading with Faith – Catholic Leadership During a Crisis

By Rich Harter, M.T.S.
Director of Missionary Planning and Leadership

Leading with faith makes all the difference in the midst of a crisis. We know that life is not normal, but Jesus is still the King of the Universe and His saving mission continues uninterrupted. And so we continue to lead with holy boldness and Spirit – Inspired creativity.

Leading with faith means we preach the Gospel, apply it to today's world, bring hope and healing, pay special attention to the most vulnerable, call people to deeper discipleship, and send believers to be balm for a broken world.

In other words, we lead like Jesus! We have so many good leaders in the archdiocese who are leading like Jesus. Here are some examples:

Increased contact with parishioners/parish groups

-) Pastors making contact to find out how the family/individual is doing, to inquire regarding any family members who may be ill or have lost their jobs, to assure the family of prayers, to inform them of the streamed Masses and other services and resources of the parish.
-) One pastor created categories of the most vulnerable groups in the parish and prioritized in this way: elderly, widows/widowers, people with serious illness, and so on. He then worked with his parish staff and leaders in the parish committees to ensure all the groups were contacted according to their need.
-) Pastors sharing the prayer intentions that are gathered in these contacts according to family wishes.

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Leading with Faith – Catholic Leadership During a Crisis *continued*

Parish Staffs/Councils, etc.

-) Pastors showing appreciation of their parish staff by being sensitive to the needs of staff members who have children at home or may be facing other challenges or stressors.
-) Pastors and staff having constant communication utilizing email, Zoom for staff meetings, Zoom meetings with the parish and finance councils, etc.
-) Pastors doing everything possible to keep the staff they have.

Spiritual/ Emotional Support – Grieving

-) One parish is looking into how to provide the services of a psychologist given the trauma many families are experiencing.
-) One parish is exploring offering mental health services to families with the assistance of a psychologist.
-) Other pastors alluded to the great need for assistance with mental health issues and are referring parishioners to contact Catholic Charities.

Streamed Liturgies

-) Daily streamed liturgies
-) One pastor decided he would not stream liturgies on a daily basis so that he would have the time he needs make calls to the elderly and other vulnerable groups.
-) A pastor encourages parishioners to strengthen their unity to the Universal Church by accessing the Masses with the Pope, Archbishop ListECKI, listening to the reflections by our bishops, etc.
-) Some parishes are offering bilingual Masses, as well as Masses in English and Spanish.
-) One parish did a remote choir.

Formation Outreach

-) Youth in the parish are meeting on a weekly basis via Zoom for prayer and catechesis with the assistance of parish staff. This has proven an effective way for the youth to express and pray over the challenges they are experiencing.
-) A parish is offering videos breaking open the Gospel before each weekend's Mass.
-) A parish is doing a remote weekly Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Social media

-) Along with streamed Masses, many priests are offering the Rosary, devotions, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, etc.
-) A pastor has a bible study on Saturday mornings through Facebook.
-) Some pastors are doing social media podcasts.

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Leading with Faith – Catholic Leadership During a Crisis *continued*

Networking/Resource Center for the Spanish Speaking Community

-) Fr. Carlos Florez reports that his parish is a center of information for the majority of the Hispanic community in Kenosha and surrounding areas.

Stewardship

-) In light of the fact that few in the parish used online giving before the quarantine began, Fr. Rafael Rodriguez and his staff created a postcard that was mailed to each household at St. Michael and St. Rose. The postcard provided contact information for different staff members, as well as easy instructions for online giving.

Outreach to the Forgotten and Undocumented Families

-) Pastors are extremely concerned for the undocumented families who are facing job loss, etc. There is help with food, but other help is needed with rent and utilities in many cases. Two parishes have created committees to help in responding to the needs.
-) Priests and deacons have been out to the homeless shelters and meal programs continuously.

Catholic Schools

-) Our Catholic Schools deserve their own special feature article because of so many wonderful examples of leadership. I'll leave that to the Schools Office!

Updated Norms and Appendices Ready for Use

At the 2019 Parish Councils Congress, attendees voted on potential changes to the Parish Pastoral and Finance Council Norms. We know that the process was longer than we had hoped. However, Archbishop Jerome ListECKI and Chancellor Barbara Anne Cusack have now reviewed and approved the norms. We all thank you for your patience.

To access the new Norms, go to the [Pastoral Councils, Norms & Guidelines web page](#) and then click on the second bullet point, [Pastoral Councils & Finance Councils Norms](#). On that page, we have the Norms in both English and Spanish. Keep a copy of the updated Norms at your parish. Also on that page are the updated Appendices with instructions for both councils. The Norms never change; the appendices have sections to update to fit your parish or multi-parish community.

As in the past, if your council updates an appendix, send a copy for our files to Susan Skibba in the Office for Missionary Planning and Leadership at skibbas@archmil.org. The copy can be either a Word document or a PDF. **Please note:** Periodically, with changing staff, a parish cannot locate its original document. If you notify us, Susan Skibba can send you what we have on file. If we have a Word document, you have less typing to do.

With the updated norms, each Finance Council and Pastoral Council are urged to review and update their appendix. With COVID-19 causing disruption of the councils, you may wish to wait for the new council term to start the process.

NOTE: If you click on a document and it doesn't automatically open, it often appears below. If that happens, click to have it open in the folder. Then go to your Download Folder, and click to open the document. It should ask how you want to open it, such as Word. If you have problems, contact Susan Skibba at either 414-769-3355 or skibbas@archmil.org.

Leadership in a Pandemic

“Having faith does not mean having no difficulties, but having the strength to face them, knowing we are not alone.” -- Pope Francis

In the past several months, we all have been faced with navigating challenging situations – at our parishes, in our families and neighborhoods, and in our community. As leaders, we will be called upon to help guide others who depend on us for encouragement, guidance and support.

Asking ourselves, “What is the worst that could happen”? will allow us to face reality and make plans to move forward. During tough times and moments of crisis is when our leadership is challenged, but is also time when our experience, competence and confidence will help us respond to the challenges.

Elements of Effective Leadership During Times of Crisis –

- J **Identify a Crisis Management Team**
Select those who align themselves with the mission and vision, but will freely express disagreement. This may be your Parish Leader Support team if one was developed during the Amazing Parish Conference.
- J **Build Relationships**
Learn more about each other, showing interest and sharing. Respect boundaries while acknowledging and embracing differences.
- J **Build Trust**
Share vision, invite collaboration and welcome feedback. Ask for input and believe in others. Create a safe environment for exchange. Focus on others, giving priority to their well-being.
- J **Communicate**
Be truthful and transparent. Establish regular and consistent communication channels, using technology effectively for “stand-up meetings” and check-ins. Clarify meeting purposes to identify and remove obstacles.
- J **Set a Clear, Focused Direction**
Create an action plan aligned with overall goals and vision. Define it clearly and ensure understanding. Consider all possibilities, taking the opportunity to strengthen the organization and reshape culture.
- J **Delegate, Empower Others**
Identify others’ strengths and passions. Educate, train, support, and follow up with others. Promote ownership and accountability, and recognize accomplishments and hard work.
- J **Listen**
Be fully present, show empathy, and acknowledge fears. Recognize reactions without judgement.
- J **Stay Positive**
Consciously choose to be positive and project fearlessness. Be comfortable with what you can’t see.
- J **Practice Self-reflection and Self-care**
Reflect on events, reactions, thoughts and feelings. Take care of personal emotional and physical health.

Together we are leaders. Together we will draw upon our talents, strengths and vocations to lead effectively.

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Leadership in a Pandemic *continued*

The Office of Missionary Planning and Leadership is available to help you navigate through these challenging times and demonstrate your leadership qualities most effectively. Let me know how I can help and support you. While working from home, I can be reached at engell@archmil.org.

Blessings,
Laura Engel
Associate Director
Missionary Planning and Leadership

Talk Back

In your experience, what leadership skill or training do you find most useful during a time of crisis?

Talk Back is a new addition to *Missionary Leader Update*. Each month we will list a new question and we hope to hear from you. Email your answer, however short or long, to: planningcouncils@archmil.org.

NOTE: If any answers are posted in a future issue, no source will be listed. All answers are confidential.

No Parish Spring Deanery Meetings **Watch website for fall meeting dates**

Many spring parish deanery meetings have already been cancelled, and some have been rescheduled. However, the Executive Committee of the Archdiocese Pastoral Council (APC) has decided that for the safety of our parish members no spring meetings will be held. Fall deanery meetings will be scheduled for some time *after September 19* (the date of the APC meeting). Once we know the date of the parish deanery meetings, they will be posted. To find your next deanery date, go to the [APC web page](#) and then scroll down and click on your deanery page.

Missionary Planning and Leadership **Contact Information**

For questions or to request services, please contact:

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Synod Anniversary Event **Rescheduled**

**Mark Your Calendars with the New Date –
December 5, 2020**

With COVID-19 the Archdiocese has officially postponed the May 30, 2020 Synod Anniversary Event. The new date is Saturday, December 5. If you have not registered for the Synod event yet, you can do so on the [Synod Anniversary Event](#) webpage.

Contact Susan Skibba at skibbas@archmil.org if you know someone who would be interested in receiving the *Missionary Leader Update*.

Rebooting the Pastoral and Finance Councils after COVID-19 Coming Back with Love and Understanding

COVID-19 and Safer at Home directives have disrupted the Pastoral Council and Finance Council meetings. However, once the councils meet again consider the following:

Extend the Council Season – Extraordinary times call for extraordinary efforts. As council chair of my parish, I know that our usual June meeting is a cookout, celebrating another year of working together. This year, the first meeting must cover special items. Consider holding a meeting in June and/or July with the same council members since elections have not yet been held. You can set up a special meeting different from your usual night. The pastor/parish director will appreciate the council members' willingness to help to get the parish back to some normalcy.

Agenda Items – Each parish is different, consider these four items while discussing the current state of the parish:

Special prayer of thanksgiving for once again meeting as a council.

Personal – Parishes are a community and the person is the center of our concern. First, talk about the personal losses. If known, how many people have been infected and survived? Who has the parish lost during this pandemic, either through COVID-19 or other causes? Name them and remember them in prayer. **VERY IMPORTANT** – Not only the parish as an entity, but your many parishioners and their families are hurting, through lost jobs, money concerns, mental anxiety and more. We must consider them. When we meet again in Mass, let them know that we know that we are all hurting.

Financial – Parishes have lost contributions. Both councils need to be told the current status and situation of the parish. How has the budget been impacted? A new budget needs to be developed. What can we do to survive the chaos? How can the councils help? One way is **electronic giving**. If the parish currently does not offer electronic giving, set it up now. Contact Andy Gaertner in Development at gaertnera@archmil.org or 414-769-3322 for more information.

Pastoral – Consider the following as a way to bring the entire parish community together again:

-) *Celebration/Remembrance Mass* – The entire community, all ages, all cultures, should join together in a celebration of the parish, the people involved, and remembrance of those who have been lost. It could be a special Mass with a get together afterward. The councils can discuss possibilities.
-) Honor what has happened by recording the crisis – Set up an archive of this unique time. The Pastoral Council could take on a project to ask parishioners for ways they survived and thrived. It could be pictures of watching Mass on TV, families praying the rosary or participating in other activities together. For those without photos, it could be notes, drawings or posters of what they have done. Then set up a display of the items in the church possibly calling it *My Faith Burning at Home* or something else. Be creative,

In meeting, council members should challenge themselves to consider how the parish will look moving forward? What should we change?

REMEMBER: Currently, the virus is spreading fear. When council members come back, how do we spread love? Call on the people and together – priests, deacons, lay ministers, council members and parishioners – let's make God's love for us become contagious and let's spread this contagion of love to infect as many as possible.

Susan Skibba
Project and MissionsInsite Coordinator