

*They were of one heart and mind:*

# **Building a culture of collaboration in parish ministry**

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LEARNING**

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# Collaboration self-assessment

The checklist below is meant to help identify areas for improvement. After answering “yes” or “no” for each question, identify realistic action steps that could be taken to improve collaboration within your ministry area or team. For best effect, provide this checklist to all the members of your team and have them complete their responses individually. Then, hold a conversation to align responses and action steps.

question for reflection	yes	no	action step(s)
1. Does the team have a purpose statement and charter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Is the team purpose statement aligned to the parish mission?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Are team members familiar with the purpose statement and charter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Are staff/members of other ministry teams familiar with this team’s purpose? Charter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Do members understand how their work contributes to the mission of the parish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Do others understand how this team contributes to the mission of the parish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Do members have a good idea of their responsibility and expectations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Is team membership representative of the entire parish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Is there a regular and consistent time for the team to meet on an ongoing basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Are all members able to be present and participate when the team meets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Does the team have a consistent and effective system of communication?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Is decision-making authority clearly articulated and understood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Are team meetings well-planned and well-managed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Does the team regularly discuss important issues at the heart of this ministry area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Do all members know, love, and respect the people the team serves?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16. Do team members dialogue well, exchanging ideas respectfully?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

17. Do members represent team decisions well to the parish at-large?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Does the pastor support the work of the team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19. Do other staff members support the work of the team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20. Do team members receive consistent, frequent formation and development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
21. Does the team regularly complete evaluation or review?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22. Do team members participate fully in parish life, especially the liturgy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**In addition, what other questions, observations, or concerns need to be addressed?**

**How will the action steps identified above be implemented? When? By whom?**

**When will this checklist be revisited for re-evaluation?**

# Mission, Vision, and Values

## *First step: Mission statement*

Your mission statement describes your overall purpose and objective as an organization, group, or ministry. Your parish/church/school has a mission statement, and you should look to this as a starting point. Make sure the mission statement for your ministry aligns with the mission statement for your parish/church/school.

### **KEY QUESTIONS to consider:**

1. What is the mission statement of our parish/church/school?
2. What is our overarching intent as a ministry?
3. What makes our ministry different from the others? (other ministries at our parish, other ministries like ours at other parishes, etc.)
4. What is the essence of what we're trying to achieve?

### **Mission statement possibilities:**

Draft 1:

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Draft 2:

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Draft 3:

*Read through your drafts, keeping in mind your parish/church/school mission statement. Do they align? If not, make any necessary adjustments to your draft(s).*

**FINAL MISSION STATEMENT:**

## Second step: Vision statement

Your vision statement describes how your community (and the world) will look if you achieve your mission. Be aspirational here, and describe the idea end state.

### KEY QUESTIONS to consider:

1. What role do we want this ministry to play in our community?
2. What is the idealized future state we want to create?
3. How will people live (and pray) differently if our ministry is successful?

### Vision statement possibilities:

Draft 1:

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Draft 2:

---

Draft 3:

*Read through your drafts, keeping in mind the mission statement you wrote for your ministry. Do they align? If not, make any necessary adjustments to your draft(s).*

**FINAL VISION STATEMENT:**

### *Third step: Core values*

Your ministry's core values are the principles that guide decisions and actions at every level of participation (from volunteers to staff to leadership).

#### **KEY QUESTIONS to consider:**

1. In this ministry, what values would I stand by, no matter what?
2. What values do I demonstrate in my own leadership and service?
3. What principles are most important as those who participate in our ministry serve on a daily/weekly basis?
4. What values support our ministry's mission and vision?

#### **Core value possibilities:**

*Make them specific enough to guide daily/weekly decisions:*

FINAL CORE VALUES

# Goal planning worksheet

*How do I start working toward my goal?*

Discerning a goal can be challenging; knowing how to get started working toward that goal can be downright paralyzing. To set yourself up for success, visioning exercises like the one below help to not only set a contextual framework but also identify initial, concrete steps to build momentum.

**Directions:**

Respond to the questions in the chart below thoroughly and thoughtfully. Your careful reflection will provide you with the direction you need to get started and, ultimately, be successful.

My goal:	
Importance. <i>Why is this goal important?</i>	Consequence. <i>What will happen if this goal is not met? [in 1/5/10 years]</i>
Momentum. <i>What are the first steps I can take toward meeting this goal?</i>	Professional impact. <i>What will my ministry life look like when I achieve this goal? [in 1/5/10 years]</i>
Best practices. <i>What have others done to achieve the same goal? What can I learn from them?</i>	Personal impact. <i>What will my personal life look like when I achieve this goal? [in 1/5/10 years]</i>

Three things I commit to do right now to achieve my goal:

1	2	3
Due date:	Due date:	Due date:



# Role description worksheet

A well-written, clear role description is essential for all team members: full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, regular or seasonal. Use and adapt the following categories as you collect information to write role descriptions for your ministry.

Role title
Role purpose
Key responsibilities
Ministry team and supervision
Location(s) where service takes place
Length of service
Time commitment and schedule
Qualifications
Support and training provided

# Strengths-based reflection for teams

## A. Achievement Story

An activity like this accomplishes several goals: it helps to celebrate achievement, it helps team members understand one another better, and it provides a sort of “case study” to practice naming and claiming strengths in others. If there isn’t time for everyone in your team to share, consider doing this with a different person at the start of a weekly team meeting, rotating until all have had a chance to share.

1. Identify a time when you accomplished something you are proud of (personal or professional, big or small, it’s all up to you). Consider which strengths you drew upon for this achievement.
2. In pairs or trios, take turns sharing your achievement story. In sharing the story, also share what StrengthsFinder themes were used/applied/described in the achievement story.

## B. Team Contributions

These reflection questions help members of your team intentionally examine the way they fit within the team, the unique contributions they make, and the value they and their strengths add. It is most helpful if adequate time is allowed for team members to share and discuss their responses.

1. What is your unique contribution to the team?
2. In what ways are you similar to your team members?
3. In what ways are you different from your team members?
4. How do your similarities and differences add value to your team?
5. In what areas could you use some help?

## C. Strengths Manifesto

By asking team members to share their best and worst, their commitments and their needs, you not only encourage honesty and transparency but also increase awareness, empathy, and tolerance toward others. An activity like this works best when everyone is able to share their responses with the entire team and you find a way to refer to them frequently at meetings or other team gatherings.

You get the best of me when...	You get the worst of me when...
You can count on me to...	What I need from you is...

# Self-care check-in and needs review

*Where do I need to take care of myself more?*

Those of us who work in ministry tend to be better at taking care of other people's needs before our own. In fact, we often put the needs of others first for so long that our own personal and professional needs can become invisible to us. Maintaining awareness of our needs – and valuing them – is a critical step toward ensuring our own self-care and overall well-being.

**Directions:**

First, identify your current satisfaction for all twenty topics on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). This number should represent your satisfaction *right now* at this very moment, not where you want to be, wish you were, or think you should be. Don't over think it; record your honest gut reaction.

Next, identify what would need to happen to raise your score. These can be things you need from others, things you need from yourself, action steps, changes, and so forth, but they must be real.

Finally, respond to the questions below the chart thoroughly and thoughtfully.

	<i>How satisfied am I currently?</i>	<i>What do I need? What would raise my score?</i>
1. My energy and motivation	____ / 10	
2. My opportunities to be challenged and stretched	____ / 10	
3. My organization and simplicity	____ / 10	
4. My professional learning and personal growth	____ / 10	
5. My work resources and budget	____ / 10	
6. My work environment	____ / 10	
7. My work relationships	____ / 10	
8. My connection to myself and self-awareness	____ / 10	
9. My self-honesty	____ / 10	
10. My physical health	____ / 10	
11. My general feelings and emotional health	____ / 10	
12. Feeling inspired	____ / 10	

13. Feeling heard or seen	____/10	
14. Feeling loved and appreciated	____/10	
15. Feeling accepted and understood	____/10	
16. Feeling valuable, worthy, and competent	____/10	
17. My time for fun and play	____/10	
18. My time for peace and quiet	____/10	
19. My time for relaxation and pampering	____/10	
20. Something else:	____/10	

What surprised you most about your responses? What challenged you most? Why?

What patterns and themes did you notice in your ratings? What do they tell you?

If you shared your ratings with other people, what would they find surprising? Why?

Review all your responses one more time. What is one action you will take this week to take better care of yourself?

# Ministry satisfaction scorecard

Improving your level of satisfaction in your ministry requires you to honestly examine your current experience and reality. Acknowledging what is working for you, and naming what is not, provides direction for your efforts and increases the chance that your overall satisfaction will improve.

**Directions:**

Rate your response to each question on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). This number should represent your response *right now*, not where you want to be, wish you were, or think you should be. Don't over think it; record your honest gut reaction. Then, respond to the questions below the chart thoroughly and thoughtfully.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. How satisfied are you with your current ministry role?										
2. How much are you enjoying your current ministry role?										
3. How happy are you in your current ministry role?										
4. How overwhelmed, busy, or stressed do you feel?										
5. How effective are you in your current ministry role?										
6. How much do you like the person you are in this role?										

7. What is your favorite thing about your current ministry role?

8. What about your ministry would you like to improve?

9. Thinking about ministry coaching, what are you looking for? Check all that apply.

- More meaning and purpose
- More fulfillment and happiness
- More ease, simplicity, or balance
- More freedom and inner peace
- To change or move forward in my ministry
- To achieve my goals faster and more easily
- To better become my authentic self
- Other:

# Collaboration action plan

The following table can help facilitate a thoughtful review of current practice in your parish community that leads toward action steps. These categories and questions are most helpful when broken open as a group (i.e. members of a ministry group or area, pastoral council, parish staff, liturgy committee, etc.).

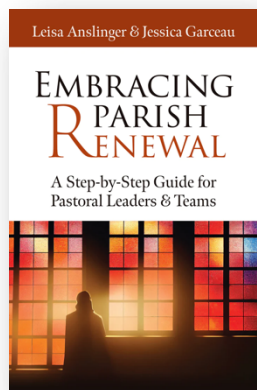
<b>Group or area of ministry</b>	<i>What would a strong culture of collaboration look like in this ministry?</i> <b>Vision</b>	<i>What does the culture of this ministry look like now, in reality?</i> <b>Reality</b>	<i>What steps can we take to move us from “reality” to “vision”?</i> <b>Opportunity</b>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

**Looking for further guidance?** The Center for Learning provides individualized ministry coaching as well as custom consulting and facilitation. We’d be happy to discuss your needs and how our team can help support your goals.

Contact us at [www.learnwithocp.org/book-a-meeting](http://www.learnwithocp.org/book-a-meeting).

# Essential resources

There are many books, articles, and other resources that address issues of hospitality and can assist you and your ministry. Chief among these, we recommend the following:



## **Embracing Parish Renewal: A Step-by-Step Guide for Pastoral Leaders and Teams**

*Leisa Anslinger & Jessica Garceau* | Twenty-Third Publications, 2023

Help your parish navigate change with this step-by-step guide by best-selling author and parish leader, Leisa Anslinger and change-management specialist, Jessica Garceau. Whether you're preparing to welcome a new pastor, merging parishes, or kicking off a new diocesan initiative, this timely booklet offers practical ways to work through change of all kinds—with prayers, reflection questions and activities for individuals and groups. An essential resource for parish councils, pastoral teams, and administrative leaders.

## *LIVE Professional Learning Community course!*

### **Building collaborative ministry teams**

April 15, 16, 17, and 18 | *Facilitated by Matt Reichert*

The staff and volunteers serving your community are the primary drivers of your parish or school mission. That's why it is essential that your teams function well: with clarity of purpose, efficiency in action, and – above all – trust. Over the sessions of this course, participants will learn how to better manage their ministry team or staff through an intentional culture of collaboration. We will address setting a mission and vision, establishing clear goals and processes, supportively managing individuals, leading difficult conversations, and more.

COST: \$60

Learn more and register at: [www.learnwithocp.org/calendar](http://www.learnwithocp.org/calendar)

# Resources and reading list

## Essential documents

Lysick, David, ed. *The Liturgy Documents, Volume One* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2012.

This volume contains the following essential documents:

- *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (1963)
- *Dies Domini: On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy* (1998)
- *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2002)
- *Lectionary for Mass; Introduction* (1981, 1998)
- *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*
- *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and General Roman Calendar* (1969)
- *Ecclesia de Eucharistia: On the Eucharist in its Relationship to the Church*
- *Redemptionis sacramentum: On Certain Matters to be Observed or to be Avoided Regarding the Most Holy Eucharist*
- *Lectionary for Mass: Introduction*
- *Book of the Gospels: Introduction*
- *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*
- *Built of Living Stones; Art, Architecture and Worship*
- *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*
- *Gathered in Steadfast Faith: Statement of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy on Sunday Worship in the Absence of a Priest*

## Formation resources

Baker, Thomas and Frank Ferrone. *The Liturgy Committee Handbook*. New London: Twenty-Third Publications, 2007. **Access the entire book for free at [www.liturgycommittee.com](http://www.liturgycommittee.com)**

Belford, Msgr. William. *Parish Liturgy Basics*. Portland: Pastoral Press, 1992.

Fleming, Austin. *Preparing for Liturgy: A Theology and Spirituality* (revised). Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997.

Foley, Edward. *From Age to Age: How Christians Have Celebrated the Eucharist*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2009.

Hibbard, Angela. *Worship Committees that Work*. Franklin Park: World Library Publications, 2004.

Hoffman, Lawrence. *The Art of Public Prayer*. Portland: The Pastoral Press, 1988.

Huck, Gabe. *Sunday Mass Five Years from Now*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2001.

Huck, Gabe and Gerald T. Chinchar. *Liturgy with Style and Grace*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998.



Johnson, Lawrence. *The Mystery of Faith: A Study of the Structural Elements of the Order of Mass*. Washington: Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, 2004.

Kavanagh, Aidan. *Elements of Rite: A Handbook of Liturgical Style*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982.

Kwatera, Fr. Michael. *Come to the Feast Liturgical Theology of, by, and for Everybody*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2006.

Laughlin, Corinna, Michael R. Prendergast, Joanne Sanders, and Paul Turner. *Guide for Liturgy Committees, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2021.

Mahony, Cardinal Roger. *Gathered Faithfully Together: A Guide for Sunday Mass*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997.

Mick, Lawrence. *Forming the Assembly to Celebrate the Mass*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2002.

Rendler, Elaine. *In the Midst of the Assembly*. Portland; Oregon Catholic Press, 1994.

———. *This is the Day*. Portland: Oregon Catholic Press, 1995.

Thiron, Rita. *Preparing Parish Liturgies: A Guide to Resources*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004.

Walsh, Eugene A. *Giving Life: Ministry of the Parish Sunday Assembly*. Portland: Oregon Catholic Press, 1993.

———. *Celebration: Theology, Ministry, and Practice*. Portland: Oregon Catholic Press, 1994.

Worship Office of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. *We Gather in Christ: Our Identity As Assembly*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996.

Zimmerman, Joyce Ann. *The Ministry of the Assembly*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2016.

Paprocki, Joe and D. Todd Williamson. *Great is the Mystery: Encountering the Formational Power of Liturgy*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2013.

## Seasonal and annual resources

Archdiocese of Cincinnati liturgical assessment pages. **Access and download these pages at <https://resources.catholicaoc.org/offices/divine-worship-and-sacraments/worship-resources#evaluation>**

*Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America*, Secretariat of Divine Worship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. **Access and download these calendars at [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org).**

*Seasonal Preparation Aids*, Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. **Access and download these free seasonal guides at [www.fdlc.org](http://www.fdlc.org).**

*Living Liturgy: Spirituality, Celebration, and Catechesis for Sundays and Solemnities*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.

*Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons, and Weekdays*. Chicago, Liturgy Training Publications.

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