

Research Questions for Family Ministry Parish Goal
Establish or Enhance Family Ministries to Respond to the Diverse Needs of Families by Pentecost 2020

(This document has the same list of questions that are found on pages 14-15 of your Parish Leadership Team Training manual. However, it also includes guidance for assessing what needs to be done at your parish to achieve your goal.)

▪ **Do we need to “establish” or “enhance” our parish family ministries?**

Before answering this question, it is suggested that you conduct research to consider the comprehensive nature of family ministries. The National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers (NACFLM) has developed the [Family Life Cycle Chart](#) (with corresponding [fillable worksheet](#)) that highlights various life stages and their related challenges, spiritual needs, and suggested ministry models. The many and differing variables in the makeup of “families/households of faith” from newlywed couples through “empty nesters” requires two specific strategies:

- a. Development of a specific area of ministry, ministry focus and staffing (paid and volunteer) that seeks to coordinate all opportunities in the parish for families to participate and grow according to the stage and phase (Life Cycle) of their family’s history.
- b. Development of a “family focus” in all areas of ministry with the intentional development of opportunities for families to participate, serve, worship, etc. as a family unit.

(You can also visit www.dosp.org/family-ministry-resources for direct links to download resources.)

▪ **What are some best practices in Family Ministry at the Parish Level?**

Begin your research by navigating the websites of Church and Ministry Organizations that are known for their expertise in this area, such as the ones listed here.. (You can also visit www.dosp.org/family-ministry-resources for direct links to all of these resources).

- a. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) [Office of Marriage and Family Ministry](#)
- b. The USCCB [National Pastoral Initiative for Marriage](#)
- c. The [National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers \(Resource Guide\)](#)
- d. [Strong Catholic Families, Strong Catholic Youth](#) (A collaboration of Professional Organizations for Faith Formation, Catholic Schools and Youth Ministry)
- e. The [Strong Catholic Family Faith](#) Website (Free resources to support parishes, ministry leaders and parents)

▪ **What are the obstacles for our parish in this area?**

Consider a variety of factors such as these:

- a. Resources: Human and Material
- b. Leadership
- c. “Past History” of Family Ministries at the Parish
- d. Formation of the parish community regarding the need for comprehensive Family Ministries
- e. Other: _____

▪ **What are some of the advantages of our parish in this area?**

Consider a variety of factors such as these:

- a. Facilities: Parish Campus, Neighboring/Collaborating Parishes, Catholic Schools, Retreat Centers, Civic facilities, etc.
- b. Support: Financial, Expertise of Local Agencies, etc.
- c. Other: _____

▪ **What do we really want to see happening? (Dream big!)**

- **How much are we willing to let go of current methods, patterns or leadership in order to reap a better harvest?**

- **Who and what do we need to help us?**
 Consider a variety of resources such as these:
 - a. Resources or services from the Family Ministry Organizations or USCCB that we previously researched
 - b. Diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life Staff
 - c. Neighboring Parish Leaders
 - d. Best Practice Models in our Diocese as recommended by the Diocesan Office
 - e. Key Parish Staff Members
 - f. Other Stakeholders: Parents, Grandparents
 - g. Other: _____

- **What training is available to us?**
 Consider a variety of resources such as these:
 - a. National Organizations and Ministry Associations
 - b. Diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life
 - c. Other: _____

- **How can we effectively communicate the goal and its potential to the entire parish?**
 Visit www.dosp.org/communication-resources for simple steps for effective communication.

- **What will motivate us to keep working on this goal and how do we tap into that motivation?**

- **Other questions...**

For direct links to all the resources mentioned in this document, visit www.dosp.org/family-ministry-resources or www.dosp.org/communication-resources.

