



Courageously Living the Gospel Through the Annual Pastoral Appeal

Five **APA** Habits of Highly Effective Parishes

1. **Making a good first impression** — What do your parishioners think of or know about the Annual Pastoral Appeal? If they are a new parishioner, or for that matter, a life long parishioner, do they really know what APA is and how it effects your parish? Make your APA plan through the eyes of a new parishioner...bring a sense of understanding so everyone feels included. Don't make it just an ask for money, give them an understanding of how their Church works and what the needs are.
2. **Metrics Matter** — We hear a lot about giving...do you know how your parishioners give? Do you know why they give? Or how much they give? When you try new things, do you evaluate if they are working or not? Regularly reviewing your parish giving history is essential to the giving future. How your parishioners give and giving them fresh opportunities to give is vital to how much and when you get any gifts. Taking the time to assess these kinds of measurements and statistics will improve your overall results.
3. **Faith Formation is a family affair** — Offering some type of FF for the family as one unit is a gift. Learning the faith together is priceless...Have you ever seen the hunger for Jesus from a family going through RCIA together, it's the best renewal for a lifetime Catholic. To enhance any ministry we must ask? Do our ministry leaders themselves know how our parish works, or how the parish links to the diocesan community? To the Church universal... Do they know what we do as Church for those around us in need? (basically do they CLG through the APA and do they share that?) These are things that we take for granted and think that people just know...there is a higher percentage of those who don't know than those who do. If your leaders know, they can teach better, inform better, and from this better Stewardship overall is found.
4. **Plucking people from the pews** — If we approach the Annual Appeal as a task that has to be done, those that are faithful will participate and that's probably it. BUT if you inquire with the people in the pews who you wouldn't normally engage with... you'll find a whole different perspective and cause for a plan and better strategy to teach about all aspects of giving...most people don't give because they don't understand or what they understand probably isn't exactly right.
5. **Communicate the right message**-If we go back to the beginning of this presentation where we asked the question, What is the Annual Pastoral Appeal? We define the difference between the Assessment and Annual Appeal. It is extremely important to communicate the right message here. A consistent positive source of information demonstrating the good works of your parish and the diocesan community and how they link together distributed in all areas of communications is how the good news starts to build and form something that everyone wants to be a part of.