



Five Habits of Highly Effective Parishes

- 1. Making a good first impression** — Walk through your parish campus with the imagination of a new person visiting your parish, are things easily identifiable? Where are the restrooms? Are some doors opened and some closed, are they labeled? Where are the religious education rooms, how about youth ministry? From the parking lot to the ministry offices to the Sunday liturgy, a welcoming parish is ever changing to serve the visitor in hopes they will stay.
- 2. Metrics Matter** — When is the last time you measured your parishes spiritual health? If and when you make changes how do you know if they are working or not? Gallup places parishioners in one of three categories: *Engaged 16%*: organizing their life around the Church, *Not Engaged 49%*: usual attendance but often more social than spiritual and *Actively Disengaged 35%*: attending Mass only a couple times a year and often unhappy with the Church, parish or both. Knowing how connected your parishioners are- or aren't is vital to helping you meet them where they are. Having your finger on the pulse of your community changes the mentality of "what am I getting" to "what can I give."
- 3. Faith Formation is a family affair** — Changing the dynamic of children's faith formation from a drop your kids off and go to an intergenerational catechesis for the whole family may be a drastic change, but it inspires engagement from the whole family, better domestic Church evangelization and teachings and leads to more involvement and participation from the whole family.
- 4. Plucking people from the pews** — Need a task done in the parish? Do you have the 20% 80% volunteer ratio? Why? Have you asked anyone new lately to join in? The volunteers, filled with time and talent are in the pews, we simply need to invite them personally to help. We have to cultivate...move the 20% out and move part of the 80% in...it is not always comfortable, but it's the right thing to do.
- 5. Communicate the right message**-We are in an era of social media where communication means more than personal interaction. People are on their computers and phones accessing Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube, can they reach your parish website through any of these or is any of your parish outreach done through these sources? A whole different meaning to meeting them where they are.