

9:30 - 10:00 AM	Gathering and Registration
10:00 – 10:20 AM	Opening Prayer & Welcome Message
10:20 – 11:20 AM	Session 1: The Heart of Communication: Balancing maintenance & mission in the role of communication and stewardship.
11:20 – 11:30 AM	Break
11:30 - 12:30 AM	Session 2: Understanding and Optimizing Your Channels: Bulletins, Websites, Email, Apps, Texts, Social Media and Print: Learn the purpose for each channel, common mistakes, traits of excellence, and practical tips to improve. Bulletin Website Messaging
12:30 – 1:30 PM	Lunch – Ask the Expert Q&A Panel
1:30 - 2:00 PM	Social Media Print
2:00 – 2:50 PM	Roundtable Workshop: A fast-paced guided round table discussion on specific plans to take back to your parish.
2:50 – 3:00 PM	Closing and Prayer

Bulletin Tips



Get Organized

The bulletin is the one media channel that is on a defined schedule and requires lead-time and teamwork to accomplish. Organization and defined responsibilities are keys to sanity and success.

Consider:

- A separate public Media Planning Calendar or Event Calendar Overlay for Media deadlines.
- A Bulletin/Media Mailbox. As the editor, have contributors submit articles in 'plain text' and attach accompanying graphics/photos. Work with those who are skilled by providing specs so that they may submit 'camera-ready artwork'.

Teach Your Software

Work smart! Setup your software to your preferences.

- Adjust/turn off hyphenation
- Setup the Normal Style to your unique "sweet spot" settings
- Setup Styles and Color Schemes or better yet, create a Media Styles Sheet

Effective use of Titles and Text Editing

- Provide a "Quick Read" using titles and subtitles.
- Bullet Point articles, keep it brief

Clipart vs. Photo/Graphics

- Clipart is dead! Use Photo/Graphics
- Let them do the heavy lifting. People respond 60,000 times faster to photo/graphics than text.
- Let them put a face on your parish
- Let them show faith in action
- Here are some examples of free websites for images:
 - www.unsplash.com
 - www.pixabay.com
 - www.flickr.com
 - www.pexels.com

Have knowledge and use of a photo-editing program such as;

- Free: Google Photos, Windows Live Photo Gallery, GIMP
- Paid: ACDSee, Zoner Photo Studio, Adobe PhotoShop Lightroom
- Create a Photo Ministry

Connect Print to Web

- Active hyperlinks
- Use QR Codes
- Social Media Icons: @ and # and "For more information please visit our website"

**Looking to update and improve your bulletin?
Diocesan will happily do a free analysis of your current bulletin.
Contact Tommy at 616-438-1944**

Website & Social Media Tips



Website Tips:

- What do you want your website to convey to parishioners and visitors? Your home page is like the front door to your home. It should be welcoming, uncluttered, and make someone want to find out more.
- Are Mass and confession times easily found? Also, remember to update these for feast days and liturgical seasons.
- Clear and concise navigation is a must. If someone has to hunt for information, they'll leave your website. Try to look at your website as someone who is seeing it for the first time. (Better yet, have a friend who is not from your parish do this! You can get great feedback.)
- Websites should look clean and be easily accessible. If a web page has ten paragraphs of text to sift for information, you'll lose your visitor.
- Websites must be mobile-responsive. Almost half of your audience will access your website on a phone or tablet, so it must look good on these devices.
- The website is a central hub between your bulletin, app, and social media. Integrate these on your home page. For instance, put your Facebook feed on your website, with the Facebook logo. If you're using an app, that information should be on the homepage as well, with the logo and download information.
- Here are some examples of free websites for images and videos:
 - www.unsplash.com
 - www.pixabay.com
 - www.flickr.com
 - www.pexels.com
 - www.videos.pexels.com

Social Media Tips:

- Pictures add incredible value to social media posts. When using photos, use personal ones over stock images.
- Be concise. Social media is not the forum for the Great American Novel. Two or three sentences will almost always be enough.
- Know your diocesan Social Media Guidelines. If your diocese does not have any, review the guidelines provided by the USCCB.
- Need help? Find a parishioner with social media skills. If you approach them with something like, "I notice you use Facebook really well. Would you be open to sharing your gift with the parish?", you'll likely get a positive response.
- Challenge yourself: learn a new media skill. For instance, learn how to search for memes (which can add humor), how to search Pinterest for great Catholic content, or how to schedule posts on Facebook.
- Once you have found great images you can use adobe spark to post on social media. It is very helpful and makes it so your pictures look as good as possible. www.spark.adobe.com

App Tips & Takeaways

Promote your App:

Your app needs to be engraved into every aspect of your communications. Offer the message that this app was built for Catholic Parishes, this app was designed for YOUR parish.



Leverage your mobile **Website**. Section off part of your site exclusively for the app or have a pop-up page display whenever someone visits your site.

Include the App in the Parish/Pastor's **Blog**. Tell them how this app can facilitate and make things easy for them. Include the app link, screenshots and videos to help them get a good understanding.

As a parish you may send **emails** - not including the app in each of those is a missed opportunity. Any email that is sent out, whether it be from the parish office, your newsletter or even the payment confirmation email should include a footer with one line advertising your app. Include details such as what can be accomplished through the app and a link redirecting towards the download page.

If you're already in the **social media** game and have a Twitter profile or Facebook page, make use of that space to promote your app. A simple banner with the name of your app and where to find it is all you need.

The best way to drive ongoing app downloads is to leverage your foot traffic:

By including a bulletin article, having promo cards available in the vestibule, verbal announcements and a banner in high traffic area, you're informing your parishioner that you have a mobile app. Something they may not know at the time.

Push Notifications:

Push is here to stay. Make sure you're leveraging this powerful tool as fully and effectively as possible.

Users who opt in to push messages averaged 3x more app launches than those who opted out. One of the most effective uses of push messages is to encourage inactive users to re-engage with an app. Push notifications remind users to continually return to an app, which helps keep it top of mind and strengthens relationships throughout the user lifecycle*.

Push notifications give us the power to engage parishioners, reach lapsing users and deliver urgent messages. Timing matters and so does testing. Send your Push Messages During the Week - and avoid weekends. Afternoon has the highest click rate. Check monthly analytics for Return Users.

Messaging

Informing the user of important updates and changes has the highest click rate. Make the message personal. It's ok to use humor.

Keep messages short. Your message is received on the amount of the words that appear on the lock screen, smartphones vary. Enter 10 or fewer words then include a return. Those 10 words should be clear, concise, and compact. Ask yourself: why should the user open this message? The answer is what you need to highlight in the first sentence.

Tell them; don't ask! Statements perform twice as well as those that ask a question.

Include "Onboarding" messages; help new users engage the app. Messages that lead them through the ins-and-outs of the app.

Keep Your Audience Informed and Updated

A good reason to update your app with valuable content is to keep current subscribers updated, as well as providing necessary information for new visitors to convert to return users. By keeping your audience engaged, you develop long-term loyalty, which translates into returning traffic that adds tremendous value to your app.

*Taken from December 10, 2015 2015: The Year that Push Notifications Grew Up posted by Caitlin O'Connell
info.localytics.com

Why are over 1800 parishes and more than 27 Dioceses using myParish App?

Visit myparishapp.com or call us at 1-800-997-8805
to see what the leading parish mobile app can do for your parish.



The Heart of Communication



"It is not technology which determines whether or not communication is authentic, but rather the human heart and our capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal."

Pope Francis - 50th World Communication Day

The Heart of Communication

- Your Job is Foundational!
- We need to remember why we are here.
- In an information age it is not enough to send out information.

What is Catholic Communication

- More than marketing. Our "product" is the person of Jesus.
- The Word became flesh. A communication channel becomes real relationship.
- Someone set the bible down for St. Augustine. We should take up the same call.
- Every time we create we participate in the divinity of God.
- What is the end goal of the information to be shared.

The Human Heart

- Have we believed lies about our job.
- To counteract these lies we need to pray and receive grace from God.
- Pray and expect success.

Maintenance Vs. Mission

- We should focus on the people we are serving instead of the channel.
- Improve your information to inspiration ratio.
- Be aware of your community.
- Retell what happened and why it mattered.

Use wisely the means at our disposal

- We should look at what we have been given as a gift and use it wisely.
- People respond to those who care.
- Use stories, images, and inspirational materials to promote your message.
- Being real is important.
- Stories are meant to be shared.

Behind each device, bulletin, and post there is a real person who is loved by God

Understanding & Optimizing Your Channels



Bulletin

- Contextual Cover – What’s inside
- Good mix of Info and Inspiration - Check your Info to Inspire ratio
- Consider moving static info to the web
- Stories of what happened & why it mattered
- Balanced design based on 2-pg spread and use of columns
- Pictures of people
- Intentional Organization

Websites

- Inviting and welcoming home page - First impression - I want to go here!
- Clear the clutter - Current content
- Pictures of People before pictures of buildings and things
- Easy to get to the most desired info - Mass Times, Focused Calendar, Bulletin, “I’m New Here”
- Speak to human need compared to menus - Conversational Language - “Get to know people!” vs. “Ministries”
- Everything goes on the website

Messaging

- Notifications – quick timely updates
- Messages – promote & inspire
- Active use of messages: App Push Notifications: 2-3 week
- Timely (limited) use of notifications - SMS: only as needed
- Consistent use of email: on a regular schedule: Newsletters & Resource content
- Cross promoting Social and Web
- Messages are great as promotional tool: Cross promote social and the website
- Use a balance of inspiration and information

Social Media

- Tell personal stories - Pictures of people and events
- Speaking to what matters most
- Be present – respond to everything!
- Share your view - Ask questions
- Do a few things well: Facebook; maybe twitter or Instagram
- Link back to your website
- Teach active parishioners to engage: @yourparishfacebookpage



Website Worksheet

Website #1 | www.stjosephbc.org
Parish Name

ST Joseph

Use three words to describe your first impression of the parish website.

Wordy, bulletiny

What is one thing on this website that could be improved?

What is one thing done well on this website that you would like to see on your parish site?

Website #3 | www.stjosephdayton.org
Parish Name

St Thomas More

Use three words to describe your first impression of the parish website.

Inviting Easy on the eyes modern

What is one thing on this website that could be improved?

What is one thing done well on this website that that you would like to see on your parish site?

Form w/ steps

Website #2 | www.stthomasmore.org
Parish Name

St Joseph

Use three words to describe your first impression of the parish website.

Boxy dated boring

What is one thing on this website that could be improved?

What is one thing done well on this website that that you would like to see on your parish site?

Floating background old templates

Website #4 | www.sacredheartfla.org
Parish Name

Sacred Heart Tampa

Use three words to describe your first impression of the parish website.

Fr. George - techie handles all personally communication

What is one thing on this website that could be improved?

Naval academy - sub mariner .com background

What is one thing done well on this website that that you would like to see on your parish site?
