

2004 Evangelization Conference



Building a Community

Introduction

“A house is not built by beginning at the top and working down. You must begin with the foundations in order to reach the top.’ They said to him, ‘What does this saying mean?’ He said, ‘The foundation is our neighbor, whom we must win, and that is the place to begin. For all the commandments of Christ depend on this alone.’”

The Desert Fathers

What is a Community?

- It is based on love
- It is a communion of people
- It reaches in to everyone who is part of it
- It reaches out to those who wants to be a part of it
- **It leads people to Christ**

Is the Church a Community?

- Do people worship together?
- Do people socialize together?
- Do people support each other?
- Do people draw new people into the church?
- Do people reach out to the surrounding community?

Is the Community a Church?

- Can all people gather from all backgrounds?
- Is there a diversity of gifts
- Is there a unity of spirit?
- Is there a clear service to others?
- Is there a clear leadership of people?

Evangelism 101

- “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” **Matthew 28:18-20**
- “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” **1 Cor 9:22**

Evangelism 101 (A)

- I am “sent” to myself
- I am “sent” to others
- I am “sent” to the world

Internal Evangelism

- Reach out to the people you have
- Build up the parish community
- Take care of of ALL people
- Preach and Teach
- Have a vision for the community

Case Study One

St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

- Newer community in rapidly growing area
- Everyone is from somewhere else
- Constant turn-over of people
- A mixture of everyone
- A younger population

External Evangelism

- Be a part of the surrounding community
- Open the doors
- Reach out to those who seek Christ
- Establish more communities
- Beware of the “gatekeeper”

Case Study Two

St. Matthew Orthodox Church

- Started as mission
- Gathered a diverse group of people
- Established St. Matthew House
- Established a permanent home
- People have a common vision

Artificial Evangelism

- Do not force that which is not there
- Do not market the Church
- Do not proselytize
- Do not “bump up” numbers
- Do not be an “issue” oriented Church
- The bottom line...Be the Church....live the life of the Church!

Case Study Three

All Saints of America Orthodox Mission

- Established as a “break-away”
- In a difficult region to evangelize
- Never had consistent leadership
- Wrong audience
- Key people transferred

Organic Evangelism

- Is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America
- Lives the life of the Gospel
- Is a community that grows together
- Has a full Liturgical life
- Responds to the needs of the parish

Case Study Four

St. Justin Martyr Orthodox Church

- A Planting Grant Recipient
- Planted in a needed region
- Gathered all Orthodox
- Works with the community
- Lives a full parish life

Reaching “IN”

- Liturgical Life
- Church School
- Adult Programs
- Youth Programs
- Active Parish Council
- Sub-Committees
- Strong commitment to stewardship
- Solid Catechism
- Bookstore
- Library
- Social Events
- Active Clergy
- Proactive solutions
- Participates in OCA and Diocesan Activities

Reaching “OUT”

- Involved in the community
- Sponsors community events
- Sponsors community groups
- Opens doors to outsiders
- Knows the neighbors
- Retreats and Speakers
- Volunteerism
- Participates in other events
- Supports an outside charity
- Gives a percentage to charity
- Lost Sheep

Cast Study 5

- Holy Cross Food Bank
- Raphael House
- St. Justin ESL
- St. Athanasius Mission
- Protection of the Holy Virgin Charity
- St. Paul Tigrenya Class
- St. John of Kronstadt College Outreach
- Holy Transfiguration Community Center
- Holy Trinity Nursing Home
- Ohio Parochial School
- Life Giving Spring Retreat Center
- Monasteries

Conclusion

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who works all in all.”

1 Cor 12:4-6

Questions and Comments?

