

Shaping the Parish

Developmental Initiative Report

Initiative Title: Public Daily Office

Level: A

YOUR NAME

E-MAIL

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Establish the permanent practice of a public offering of the Daily Office.

Do in a manner that:

- 1) Draws an adequate number of participants
- 2) Is offered on at least four days (Mon- Sat) for at least ten months of the year.
- 3) In which lay members are either immediately or eventually able to officiate.

The public offering of the Office, and/or the persistent training and coaching of individuals in how to use the Office, have three primary congregational development impacts:

The Place of the Office in Congregational Development (From *Fill All Things: The Spiritual Dynamics of the Parish Church*, Robert A Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2008; p. 170)

Nurturing Spiritual Life and Growth - It can nurture people of Apostolic Faith; which can also help them play a vicarious role in grounding the parish. It offers may people a time of renewal. It can become a way of nurturing our connectedness with God and others; a way of nurturing listening and empathy. It suggests to the whole parish that there is a deeper place to move to in their spiritual life. This offers people who are ready to progress in their spiritual life a concrete way.

Parish Identity - It helps the parish take on an identity of being a place of deep prayer. It is part of what creates a place soaked in prayer. Such places become holy places. Such an identity both attracts and frightens people.

Connection - It connects us to something bigger than ourselves. The parish plays its role in offering the prayer of the whole church and in doing that reinforces its connection with the whole communion of saints.

Making it work

Your project/intervention needs to include most of these items. This is based on the experience of others in successfully introducing a public Daily Office in parishes with no history of it.

Many parish churches are able to schedule the Office. It is relatively easy for a large

parish to schedule the Office. How might smaller and middle-sized parishes do it?

- Make it easy - What time of the day is most convenient for people to attend? (e.g., A business district might find that offering Noonday Prayers that makes use of one of the appointed psalms and readings will work; other places have timed Evening Prayer for people on their way home from work. When is the best time for people willing to be officiants? You may want to do a survey to find out.
- Create officiant teams - Invite people to join an officiant team that is responsible for one day each week. The teams may range from two to four people. Ask people to sign up on the assumption that the whole team is present on that day. It makes it a more pleasurable activity.
- Do a short survey to identify the time of day and potential members of teams. This can both provide you with useful data and have a marketing effect as it draws attention to doing the Office.
- Involve people – Invite people to offer themselves as officiants on one day of the week.
- Connect - On occasion invite people to have coffee in the parish kitchen after Morning Prayer or go out to a bar together after Evening Prayer.
- Make it reliable - Work at making the flow and rhythm of the Office much the same day by day. Provide a customary, training and coaching to those willing to officiate; this shows that it is valued and worth doing well. Make it the same time every day, e.g., Evening Prayer at 5:30 p.m. Do it only if you can sustain in at least four days each week. It needs to be “daily” enough to be the Daily Office. Don’t turn it into an occasional service that may undermine the role of the Office in people’s spiritual life.
- Work with, and teach, the prayer book pattern - Sunday Eucharist, daily office (or almost daily), and personal devotions according to gift and inclination. Offer this as part of what makes for a balanced spiritual diet. Avoid things that will confuse people about the pattern (e.g., using Morning or Evening Prayer once or twice a week, having a daily Mass but no Office, using forms of personal devotions as a corporate prayer in place of the Office.)
- Clergy participate - Parish clergy, even those with very part time positions, need to participate frequently.
- Have a process by which the parish may reflect on its use of the Office and how adaptations will be made to fit new needs and conditions. For the Office to become part of the parish’s practice often requires a good bit of experimenting and innovation. We need to be willing to try things, reflect on the experience and draw our learnings. Assume you will stay with doing the Office and that the task is to find ways it fits this parish now.
- Promote the Office by internal marketing.

Above based in part on *Fill All Things* p. 171 - 173

Related resources:

-*Fill All Things* p 56, 103 regarding the relationship among Office, Eucharist and Personal Devotions; Also 59 – 61; 169 - 178

-*Eucharistic Spirituality: From Audience to Congregation*, Robert A Gallagher, Ascension Press, available early 2011.

-*In Your Holy Spirit: Traditional Spiritual Practices in Today's Christian Life*, Michelle Heyne, Ascension Press, 2011

-*In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practices*, Robert A. Gallagher 2011, Ascension Press Give special attention to the chapters on the daily office and the process of change.

Participant's additions & changes to the description

If you are revising the above in some manner, note that here. Offer a rationale for the change. Changes may not be so extreme as to change the basic thrust of the project description above --

Have you carefully reviewed the above description?

Yes No [Note: You must have done this review for the DI to be accepted]

ACTION PLANNING

1. What are you planning to do? What is the action plan? First steps. How you will monitor and adjust along the way

2. Theoretical base and strategic assumptions for the project

a. Theoretical Base (connect related theory to the project and the particulars of your parish) -

b. Strategic Assumptions (In your parish as it is now – what were you assuming would happen allowing the project to move forward? A strategic assumption has enough significance that if it turns out to not be true, the project will fail) -

A. Results: What are the initial results are you seeking? Note: we are assuming you are working from the basic DI description. This section is more a brief statement of overall objectives expressed in a way that integrates the description with the particularities of your parish.

Do the same regarding longer-term development goals? Relationship to the parish's overall health? Relationship to the primary task of a parish church? -

B. Reflection

1. Strategic (pp 12 – 13 *Intervention Considerations*)

The Developmental Initiatives are by their nature strategic or at least they are in that arena. These elements may help you consider related factors

- Long term, developmental, likely to have a ripple effect -

Not likely					Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment:

- Related to the primary task of a parish church (form people in faith, renewal in baptismal identity and purpose, facilitating the movement between renewal and apostolate) -

Not related					Very related
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment:

- Can anticipate adequate resources of time, money, and energy devoted to the initiative? -

Anticipate inadequate resources					Anticipate very adequate resources
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment:

2. Demand System (pp13 – 14 *Intervention Considerations*)

What is really developmental is usually also not urgent. It may be important but it is not urgent. How do you establish a new demand system that serves what's important?

- How will you cope with all the other demands, expectations and pressures of the parish an your life as you try to focus on the DI? -
- How will you work to create a new “demand system” that will make this initiative part of the parish’s routine business? -

3. Critical Mass (pp. 23 – 29 *Intervention Considerations*)

In general critical mass theories are about building the overall level of commitment, competence and emotional maturity at the center of the parish so that it grounds the system in a mission orientation and an organizational culture that supports the mission. In relationship to a specific Developmental Initiative there may be two considerations.

- What will you do to create enough “weight” to support this particular DI? Will there be enough physical and emotional energy to get the work accomplished? This has to do with the social and political process by which you help the parish move forward. (For example, if working on Group Functioning – can you anticipate enough initial support from members of the groups you want to involved?) - Describe it. -
- In most DIs there is a second consideration. Will enough of a critical mass develop in relationship to the *desired results* of the initiative? (For example, if working on Group Functioning – How will you develop a critical mass of competence and commitment in the groups going through the process? What will you do so people become more skilled?) -
- Is there an “emotional inversion” in the parish, either broadly in the parish in general or in regard to this particular DI? (See bottom p. 26 *Intervention Considerations*) -

4. Internal Commitment (pp. 29 – 31 *Intervention Considerations*)

This is often interrelated with critical mass considerations. You want as many people as possible, at least a critical mass, to have a high level of commitment to the direction or action that was chosen. This makes it more likely that the intervention will continue to have its benefits for the parish over time and under stress. The assumption is that commitment is built upon a base of valid and useful information and free choice. One element builds on the other. The more the information is valid and useful, the more likely the free choice, the more there is truly free choice, the more likely there will be internal commitment.

How will you help people engage an adequate amount of valid and useful information? --

How will you design the process so that people have an adequate degree of free choice vs. acting from habit or emotional pressure)? --

5. Your influence (pp. 31 - 34 *Intervention Considerations*; take note of “OD Roles” and “Circles of Influence”)

Assess your influence in relationship to this specific DI? -

6. Readiness (pp. 34 - 38 *Intervention Considerations*)

- Adequate dissatisfaction – Is there dissatisfaction with the way things are in relationship to the DIs field of interest? -
- Favorable stance of people – Is there a person, or more than one person, who wants this to happen and is willing to spend energy making it happen? A person with enough influence with people who would need to cooperate in order for it to happen? -
- Competence for change – Did you have the skills and knowledge needed for this particular intervention? -
- How does it fit with the parish’s current culture? -
- Resources available – Are there adequate resources of people, money, facilities and such to implement the project/change? Any concerns? -
- Energy and attention – What are the likely problems around having the needed amount of energy? -

- Formal authorization – Most of the efforts that can shape a parish only require the investment of the parish priest. That role assumes the authority to initiate efforts to improve the faithfulness and health of the parish. But there are situations requiring vestry action. Is formal authorization needed from some group within the parish or diocese? -

7. Intervention Choices (pp. 39 - 41 *Intervention Considerations*)

We are constantly making choices about interventions. Who to involve - just the leadership, a working group, everyone in the organization? What to focus on - the issue it would be easiest to make headway on or the most strategic opportunity? The style of work - do we take a problem solving approach or use some appreciative process? How deep shall we go - are we working on deep underlying assumptions about how we work and relate with one another or are we simply trying to get this problem behind us?

- What is the unit focus of the intervention? Is there a need to engage at several levels? Rationale for this -
- What is the opportunity, problem, or issue to address? Not simply the title of the DI but in relation to those listed on p 39 -
- What is the intervention method? (for example those listed on p. 39)-

8. Your stance (pp. 42 – 43 *Intervention Considerations*)

- What leadership style do you see yourself taking in doing the intervention (p 42)? How does that match with your preferred leadership style? Do you find yourself needing a broader range of styles? -
- What is your usual stance in relationship to the parish and its leaders (loving critic, unloving critic, uncritical lover)? How might that impact the intervention? -

RESULTS & LEARNINGS

A. Results: What happened? What are the initial results you're seeing? Also look at it in terms of the project goal/objectives. Is there anything to report in regard to longer-term development goals? Any initial sense about sustainability over the long-term and under pressure? Relationship to the parish's overall health? Relationship to the primary task of a parish church? Experience regarding your strategic assumptions -

B. Theoretical base and strategic assumptions for the project

a. Theoretical Base (connect related theory to the project and the particulars of your parish) -

Mark one

-As expected (in action planning) -

-Differed from what we expected -

If different, please comment -

b. Strategic Assumptions -rate and comment in relationship to strategic assumptions as noted in action planning -

Not on target

Very much on target

1	2	3	4	5
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Comment -

C. Reflection

Make comments connecting what happened with the area of reflection.

1. Strategic (pp 12 – 13 *Intervention Considerations*)

The Developmental Initiatives are by their nature strategic or at least they are in that arena. These elements may help you consider related factors

- Long term, developmental, likely to have a ripple effect; rate and describe -

None					Strong effect
1	2	3	4	5	

- Related to the primary task of a parish church (form people in faith, renewal in baptismal identity and purpose, facilitating the movement between renewal and apostolate); rate and describe -

No noticeable relationship					Strong relationship
1	2	3	4	5	

- Were adequate resources of time, money, and energy devoted to the initiative?; rate and describe -

Not adequate					Very adequate
1	2	3	4	5	

2. Demand System (pp13 – 14 *Intervention Considerations*)

What is really developmental is usually also not urgent. It may be important but it is not urgent. How do you establish a new demand system that serves what's important?

- How did you cope with all the other demands, expectations and pressures of the parish an your life as you tried to focus on the DI? -
- How have you worked to create a new “demand system” that will make this initiative part of the parish’s routine business? -

3. Critical Mass (pp. 23 – 29 *Intervention Considerations*)

In general critical mass theories are about building the overall level of commitment, competence and emotional maturity at the center of the parish so that it grounds the system in a mission orientation and an organizational culture that supports the mission. In relationship to a specific Developmental Initiative there may be two considerations.

- Was there enough “weight” to support this particular DI? Enough energy to get the work accomplished? This has to do with the social and political process by which you help

the parish move forward. (For example, if working on Group Functioning – was there enough initial support from members of the groups you wanted involved?) - Rate and Describe -

Not enough			Enough weight	
1	2	3	4	5

- In most DIs there is another consideration. Is enough of a critical mass developing in relationship to the desired results of the initiative? Rate and Describe (For example, if working on Group Functioning – Is a critical mass of competence and commitment beginning to develop in the groups going through the process? Are people becoming more skilled?) -

Not enough			Enough	
1	2	3	4	5

- Was there an “emotional inversion” in the parish, either broadly in the parish in general or in regard to this particular DI? (See bottom p. 26 *Intervention Considerations*) -

Yes No unsure

Comment -

4. Internal Commitment (pp. 29 – 31 *Intervention Considerations*)

This is often interrelated with critical mass considerations. You want as many people as possible, at least a critical mass, to have a high level of commitment to the direction or action that was chosen. This makes it more likely that the intervention will continue to have its benefits for the parish over time and under stress. The assumption is that commitment is built upon a base of valid and useful information and free choice. One element builds on the other. The more the information is valid and useful, the more likely the free choice, the more there is truly free choice, the more likely there will be internal commitment.

a. What did you do to build internal commitment as seen in this approach? -

b. Assess

Enough internal commitment for what was needed in this case -

Not enough			Enough	
1	2	3	4	5

Base of free choice and valid and useful information to build the internal commitment -

Not enough			Enough	
1	2	3	4	5

Comment -

5. Your influence (pp. 31 - 34 *Intervention Considerations*; take note of “OD Roles” and “Circles of Influence”)

Was your influence adequate to manage the intervention?

Not at all			Adequate	
1	2	3	4	5

Comment -

6. Readiness (pp. 34 - 38 *Intervention Considerations*)

- Adequate dissatisfaction – Was there dissatisfaction with the way things were in relationship to the change projects field of interests? -

Not at all			Adequate	
1	2	3	4	5

Comment -

- Favorable stance of people – Was there a person, or more, who wants this to happen and is willing to spend energy making it happen? A person with enough influence with people who would need to cooperate in order for it to happen? -

Not at all			Adequate	
1	2	3	4	5

Comment -

- Competence for change – Did we have the skills and knowledge we need for this particular intervention? -

Not at all					Adequate
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment -

- It fit with the parish’s current culture -

Not at all					Adequate
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment -

- Resources available – the people, money, facilities and such needed to implement the project/change. -

Not at all					Adequate
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment -

- Energy and attention – The needed amount of energy was available -

Not at all					Adequate
1	2	3	4	5	

Comment -

- Formal authorization – Most of the efforts that can shape a parish only require the investment of the parish priest. That role assumes the authority to initiate efforts to improve the faithfulness and health of the parish. But there are situations requiring vestry action. Was there the needed authorization? -

Yes No Uncertain

Comment -

7. Intervention Choices (pp. 39 - 41 *Intervention Considerations*)

We are constantly making choices about interventions. Who to involve - just the leadership, a working group, everyone in the organization? What to focus on - the issue it would be easiest to make headway on or the most strategic opportunity? The style of work - do we take a problem solving approach or use some appreciative

process? How deep shall we go - are we working on deep underlying assumptions about how we work and relate with one another or are we simply trying to get this problem behind us?

- What was the unit focus of the intervention? Did that end up being appropriate? Was there (or is there) a need to engage at several levels of units? -
- What was the opportunity, problem, or issue to address? Not simply the title of the DI but in relation to those listed on p 39 -
- What was the intervention method? (for example those listed on p. 39)-

8. Your stance (pp. 42 – 43 *Intervention Considerations*)

- What leadership style did you take in doing the intervention (p 42)? Was that effective? Did you find yourself needing a broader range of styles? -
- What is your usual stance in relationship to the parish and its leaders (loving critic, unloving critic, uncritical lover)? How did that effect the intervention? -

C. Learnings

1. About change theory and methods -
2. About spiritual practices in shaping the parish -
3. About emotional & social intelligence in shaping the parish -
4. About yourself as a person and leader

D. Next Steps

1. Thoughts on long-term goals -
2. Next steps in the short term -
3. Comments -