Interview Questions

A worksheet

*Instructions: Use the worksheet to make rough notes as you respond to the questions. You’ll use it in a group conversation. In that conversation you should only share what you are willing to share.*

1. What are the major pressures, demands and expectations in your life? Right now? Long term?

2. How do they impact you? Do some provide structure to your life? Which cause the most stress? In what ways is that stress productive (gets you moving) or destructive (overwhelms, paralyzes you)? In what ways are they helpful and unhelpful?

3. In dealing with the things, people and circumstances of your life where is it most clear to you that you are, what Evelyn Underhill called, “a vehicle of the Eternal Charity?” Where is it clear to you that you are being a servant, steward, and evangelist (serving, being a responsible person, connecting others with the good news)? Where is it not so clear; where you feel challenged or inadequate?

4. How do you work at maintaining adequate equilibrium in the face of these expectations, demands and pressures? How do work at you staying stable, balanced, centered?

5. How are you renew emotionally and physically?

6. How are you renew spiritually?

7. How does your practice of Christian faith and/or your participation in the parish’s life help or hinder each of the areas noted above?

a. Maintaining equilibrium in the face of the expectations, demands, and pressures

b. Emotional/physical renewal

c. Spiritual renewal

8.     How does your practice of Christian faith and/or participation in the parish’s life relate to your work, family, friendships, and civic life?

Using the interview questions and process with a group

In the Shaping the Parish program you have an assignment to make use of the questions with a group. It may be an group that you believe will have some degree of openness to join in the process and accept that it comes from a Christian, specifically Anglican orientation to spiritual life.

The process you are to use goes like this:

1. Group gathers – It may be appropriate to have coffee and cookies or fruit available
2. Introductions and overview– to one another and the work of this time together
3. Pass out the worksheet with the questions and allow people some time to make notes.
4. Sharing answers to the questions – the process for this will depend on the size of the group and factors such as whether it is a group that meets routinely, or this is a one-time group.
5. The whole group gathers – possibly a short break as that is happening
6. Presentation of the Renewal-Apostolate Cycle – note that the worksheet questions are related to the Cycle.
7. Q& A, or small groups to discuss and identify questions, or \_\_\_
8. Close

You’ll notice that we have not provided time frames for the steps. Nor have we noted where prayer or silence might be appropriate. We’re leaving that to your judgement give the group you are working with.

More on the process

Interviews are not only a data gathering process but are also system interventions. They are not neutral; they affect the people being interviewed and those doing the interviewing. This process is designed to be used as a means to help participants explore both the interviewing process and the issues raised in the interviews.

The same basic tool may be used as a parish development intervention, in an expanded process, involving a significant portion of a congregation’s members. Such a process might open up issues regarding a congregation’s living of the Renewal-Apostolate Cycle -- helping a community both come to appreciate what is done well and to improve.

The Process for Use in some training programs

This is a process you may want to use at other times.

1. Interview three members of the parish -- two who are regular and frequent participants in the Eucharist and one who is regular but not frequent. Your task is to listen deeply, with an appreciative ear, and record their responses to the questions. Please do not allow yourself to take on a teaching or explaining role in relation to the issues that emerge. If that seems called for ask if the person would like to do that in a second session. If a person is confused by a question or doesn’t like the question, move on. While you want to complete the interview in a timely manner, you may also want to enter into the process with follow up questions. Please avoid any judgment on what the person is sharing.

2. You will need to make copies of the questions so you can use them to make rough notes during the interviews.

3. Bring your notes to the program.

4. A good preparation for interviewing is to have someone else interview you; asking the same questions.