

## **2016 Parish Self-Study**

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Begin by reading the Introductory Remarks for the category that you will be rating.
2. Review the specific Focus Question that follows the introductory remarks.
3. Give careful consideration to each of the Indicators that follow the Focus Question and then give a Rating Score of 1 to 7 for each Indicator.
4. Following each set of indicators, total the numbers given to all the indicators for this question and divide this sum by the number of indicators in this section.
5. Enter the Result on the line indicated and on the Summary Sheet.
6. When all Results have been entered on the Summary Sheet, complete the further instructions following the Summary Sheet.

### **RATING SCALE**

#### **7 = OUTSTANDING**

The parish's effort in this area is of the highest possible quality.

#### **6 = VERY GOOD**

No significant improvement or development is required.

#### **5 = GOOD**

Little significant improvement or development is required.

#### **4 = SATISFACTORY**

The parish is in accord with the teachings of the Church, conforms to the guidelines of the Archdiocese, and meets the needs and expectations of the parishioners. (In a Viable Parish, most responses may fall in this category].

#### **3 = FAIR**

The parish does not measure up to the standard of other parishes in the Deanery or Archdiocese.  
Definite improvement is needed.

#### **2 = POOR**

Significant improvement or development is required.

#### **1 = UNACCEPTABLE**

Very significant improvement or development is required.

#### **1 = UNKNOWN**

Give a rating of "1" to any statement you cannot answer.

## 2016 Parish Self-Study

### **SECTION I: THE PARISH AS A FAITH COMMUNITY**

INTRODUCTORY REMARK: This area of parish viability relates to a parish's efforts to build a sense of community by including all members actively in the parish, by reaching out to the marginalized, alienated, disenfranchised and to those in the local community who do not belong to any Church, and by the parish's need to maintain special traditions and practices.

#### **A. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the parish's effort to welcome all of its members into the life of the parish?**

1. The parish has an organized welcome program for new parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Parishioners with disabilities are encouraged to participate in every aspect of parish life according to their abilities. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The parish is concerned about the needs of persons with disabilities and impairments (e.g., buildings are handicapped accessible, appropriate programs are provided, hearing assistance devices are provided, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_
4. Older adults, adolescents and young people are all involved in publicly visible roles in the parish. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The parish, if it has multicultural dimensions, recognizes these dimensions and provides opportunities to understand, celebrate, and respect multicultural and multiethnic expression. If the parish is more homogeneous, it nonetheless cultivates an attitude of openness to ethnic diversity and cultural expressions both within parish boundaries and beyond. \_\_\_\_\_
6. A sense of community exists among most parish members. \_\_\_\_\_
7. A significant number of parishioners live in the parish and participate in parish activities. \_\_\_\_\_
8. The number of parishioners is stable or increasing and there is little mobility among parishioners moving from or otherwise leaving the parish. \_\_\_\_\_
9. The number of participating parishioners that the parish has is conducive to sponsoring needed programs and activities within the parish. \_\_\_\_\_
10. The parish offers a variety of community-building social activities. \_\_\_\_\_

#### **B. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the parish's ability to recognize the diversity of talents and needs of its people?**

11. The parish consistently identifies and uses the talents of many parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Parish organizations invite people to participate in a variety of activities. \_\_\_\_\_
13. New leadership is encouraged on a periodic basis. \_\_\_\_\_

## 2016 Parish Self-Study

14. The parish is able to identify the changing needs of parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

15. Parishioners are encouraged to use their talents for the good of the parish. \_\_\_\_\_

16. New members regularly step forward to become involved in parish activities and to assume positions of responsibility. \_\_\_\_\_

**C. FOCUS QUESTION: Every parish is distinctive because it has special qualities, traditions, and practices that have evolved over the years, and the population of every parish as it exists today also represents a distinctive blend of people, needs, and talents. How do you rate your parish as a distinctive community?**

17. The parish responds to the language needs of its parishioners in Masses, homilies, hymns, bulletins, group meetings, counseling, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

18. The parish demonstrates respect for the various ethnic and racial backgrounds and characteristics of its parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

19. The Feast Days and religious practices characteristic of distinctive ethnic and cultural groups within the parish are recognized and celebrated by parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

20. Parishioners are encouraged to celebrate their distinctive ethnic and cultural traditions in the social events of the parish. \_\_\_\_\_

21. Different ethnic and cultural groups within the parish respect each other and work together with understanding and harmony. \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL RATING POINTS \_\_\_\_\_ ÷ 5 = \_\_\_\_\_ (Enter Result on Page 20).

## **SECTION II: THE PARISH AS A WORSHIPING AND PRAYING COMMUNITY**

INTRODUCTORY REMARK: This indicator of parish viability relates to liturgy, sacraments, renewal efforts, seasonal worship, devotions, prayer, and other such opportunities provided by the parish.

**A. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the parishioners' understanding of Liturgy and liturgical practice at your parish?**

22. Parishioners understand Sunday Mass to be the primary focus of all parish life and the foundation for all other parish activities. \_\_\_\_\_

23. Parishioners understand the communal celebration of the Mass through full, conscious, and active participation by the faithful, including reception of Communion, to be the fullest expression of the Eucharist. \_\_\_\_\_

24. The parish is committed to investing sufficient finances and resources for the celebration of good Liturgy. \_\_\_\_\_

### 2016 Parish Self-Study

25. The parish provides adequate resources and a sufficient number of trained personnel for every Mass to be properly celebrated with full participation by the faithful. \_\_\_\_\_

26. The parish observes all liturgical directives of the universal Church and of the local Archdiocese. \_\_\_\_\_

27. The parish provides parishioners with sufficient teaching and proper understanding of Liturgy, especially when new changes are to be introduced. \_\_\_\_\_

28. Provision is made for the reception of Communion under both species of bread and wine at every Mass. \_\_\_\_\_

**B. FOCUS QUESTION: Specifically, how do you rate the celebration of weekend Liturgies (Saturday evenings and Sundays) at your parish?**

29. The congregation is actively involved in the liturgy, responds to the prayers of the Mass, joins in singing, listens to the Scriptures with attention, receives Communion with respect, observes proper liturgical postures (stand, sit, kneel). \_\_\_\_\_

30. All approved liturgical roles are provided and parishioners are properly trained as lectors, EMs, servers, cantors, ushers and greeters. \_\_\_\_\_

31. Liturgical roles, as foreseen by liturgical norms and according to promulgation by the Archdiocese, are open to all interested and qualified parishioners: men and women, teens and elderly, the physically challenged, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

32. Music, appropriate to the members of the congregation, the time of day, etc., is provided for all weekend liturgies (choir, congregational singing, cantors, instrumental, etc.), and the appropriate responses are sung by the congregation. \_\_\_\_\_

33. The church building follows the norms established for liturgical celebrations (position of the altar, lectern, celebrant's chair, etc.) and is conducive to the best possible participation by the whole congregation. \_\_\_\_\_

34. The environment of the church building lends itself to good Liturgy (cleanliness, maintenance and decor, adequate PA system and lighting, appropriate decorating and flowers, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_

35. Weekend Masses are well attended (3/4 to full occupancy). \_\_\_\_\_

36. The number and timing of weekend Masses takes into consideration the number of parishioners, the availability of priests, the size of the church building, the availability of comfortable seating for everyone, and the scheduling of under-attended Masses is avoided. \_\_\_\_\_

37. Homilies are well prepared and well delivered and are relevant to the needs and concerns of parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

38. Hospitality is provided for parishioners to gather and interact supportively. \_\_\_\_\_

## 2016 Parish Self-Study

### **C. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate other worship practices and opportunities for prayer throughout the liturgical year?**

39. During Advent and Lent special liturgical practices and spiritual opportunities (talks, days of recollection, prayer services, etc.) are scheduled. \_\_\_\_\_
40. Feast Days specific to the parish or Archdiocese are celebrated throughout the year. \_\_\_\_\_
41. Appropriate attention is given to the Holy Days of Obligation. \_\_\_\_\_
42. Prayer groups, parish missions, retreats, and faith sharing opportunities are offered. \_\_\_\_\_
43. Periodically, parishioners have the opportunity to participate in parish renewal programs or retreats \_\_\_\_\_
44. Special blessings and prayer services are offered for new parents, anniversaries, vocations, quinceañeras where applicable, the sick and infirm, etc. \_\_\_\_\_
45. Communal Reconciliation Services and the Second Form of the Rite are made available at Advent and Lent and on a regular basis throughout the year. \_\_\_\_\_
46. Opportunities to worship together are provided for a variety of groups with common interests (e.g. teenagers, young adults, parish organizations, religious education classes, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
47. Special devotions and prayer opportunities such as novenas, recitation of the Rosary, communal Liturgy of the Hours, etc., are made available to parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_
48. Communal celebrations of the Sacrament of the Sick are periodically scheduled. \_\_\_\_\_

### **D. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate parish participation in the celebration of the Sacraments?**

49. Regularly the home bound and the ill are brought the Eucharist by parish staff or Eucharistic Ministers to the sick. \_\_\_\_\_
50. RCIA for adult converts is fully and correctly implemented in the parish. \_\_\_\_\_
51. Parishioners have been given proper instruction regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation. \_\_\_\_\_
52. Accessible times have been arranged for parishioners to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis. \_\_\_\_\_
53. Parishioners are properly instructed regarding reception of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and are comfortable requesting the Sacrament when appropriate. \_\_\_\_\_
54. The celebration of funerals in the parish setting is encouraged and welcomed. \_\_\_\_\_

## 2016 Parish Self-Study

55. An adequate preparation for marriage in the Church, as prescribed by the Archdiocese, is required for all couples. \_\_\_\_\_

56. The opportunity for couples married outside the Church to have their marriages regularized in the Church community is promoted and made available. \_\_\_\_\_

57. Parents and Godparents are provided with pre-baptism instruction. \_\_\_\_\_

### **SECTION III: THE PARISH AS A COMMUNITY OF SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION**

INTRODUCTORY REMARK: This area of parish viability includes serving the poor, the alienated, the elderly, families, and needy people in the community, both in and beyond the parish. It is in this area of parish life that peace and justice, advocacy for those in need, and community organization for advancing the Kingdom of God are actively pursued.

#### **A. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the degree to which the parish reaches out to its own parishioners who are in need?**

58. The parish organizes and engages in active social service outreach to the poor. \_\_\_\_\_

59. The parish develops support groups for those with special needs (e.g., the newly married, single parents, elderly, bereaved, new parents, separated and divorced, unemployed, the physically, mentally or emotionally challenged, those with drug or alcohol dependence, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

60. Parishioners respond when invited to volunteer for various parish service programs. \_\_\_\_\_

61. When scheduling ministries, programs and events, the parish is sensitive to the needs of families, the elderly, workers, and others with special time concerns. \_\_\_\_\_

62. A system for securing financial assistance is available for parishioners in need. \_\_\_\_\_

63. The parish sponsors a St. Vincent de Paul Society chapter or similar group. \_\_\_\_\_

#### **B. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the degree to which the parish reaches out in service to the wider local community beyond the parish?**

64. The parish opens its facilities to community groups for meetings (e.g. AA groups). \_\_\_\_\_

65. The parish sponsors or supports local food banks, blood drives, charitable centers, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

66. A system for providing some financial or support assistance is available for people in need who are not parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

67. Parishioners are encouraged to be active in local school boards, community groups, service centers, hospitals and rest homes, local government. etc. \_\_\_\_\_

## **2016 Parish Self-Study**

68. The parish supports and participates in local ecumenical activities (e.g., ministerial associations, seasonal religious services, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_

69. The parish participates in the "Sister Parish Program" or other activities and outreach to assist poorer Catholic parishes. \_\_\_\_\_

70. The parish actively supports community organizing efforts to address social and justice issues in the neighborhood. \_\_\_\_\_

71. The parish is an advocate for local community efforts for justice and collaboration. \_\_\_\_\_

72. The parish willingly invests resources, personnel, and finances in advocacy and community organizing. \_\_\_\_\_

### **C. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the extent of parish involvement in service to the larger world and in advocating on ecclesial, national and global issues?**

73. Parishioners respond generously to diocesan and national second collections, special collections for disaster aid, and other national efforts. \_\_\_\_\_

74. Parishioners support and participate in pro-life activities, peace and justice efforts, voter registration drives, letter-writing campaigns, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

75. The parish supports a mission aid program or otherwise raises consciousness about and assists with meeting the needs of local, national and foreign missions. \_\_\_\_\_

76. The parish calls attention to advocacy needs for state and federal legislation. \_\_\_\_\_

77. Parishioners are generally knowledgeable and supportive of Church social teaching. \_\_\_\_\_

78. Awareness of social issues is raised through homilies, lectures, classes, bulletin inserts, communication of encyclicals and pastoral letters, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

79. The parish sponsors a social justice committee or otherwise demonstrates the importance of Catholic social teaching and advocacy. \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION IV: THE PARISH AS AN EVANGELIZING COMMUNITY**

INTRODUCTORY REMARK: This area of parish viability includes all efforts to ensure that the gospel is proclaimed and that ongoing faith formation is provided to parishioners of all ages depending on their needs.

### **A. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the degree to which the parish engages in the ministry of evangelization?**

## 2016 Parish Self-Study

80. Parishioners understand that evangelization (proclaiming the gospel to those who have never heard it, to those who have not heard it well, and to ourselves who have yet to hear it completely) is the primary ministry of the Church and the parish. \_\_\_\_\_

81. All parish planning, programs, and activities are appraised by how well they contribute to the ministry of evangelization. \_\_\_\_\_

82. The parish supports the evangelization efforts of the Archdiocese. \_\_\_\_\_

83. The parish cooperates with the programs and resources provided by the Archdiocese regarding communications and the new evangelization. \_\_\_\_\_

84. The parish reaches out to alienated Catholics. \_\_\_\_\_

85. The parish reaches out to people not participating in any church. \_\_\_\_\_

86. The parish sponsors formal “come home” or other evangelization programs. \_\_\_\_\_

87. The parish is aware of the Catholics living in each neighborhood. \_\_\_\_\_

88. Parishioners have a vision and understanding of life-long faith formation. \_\_\_\_\_

89. The parish supports the vision of life-long faith formation through adequate resources, personnel, facilities, and finances. \_\_\_\_\_

### **B. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the parish’s efforts to pass on the faith to its children and young people (teens and young adults)?**

90. The parish provides and adequately supports a director and staff for religious education. \_\_\_\_\_

91. The parish operates a Catholic School or otherwise publicly supports and cooperates with the Archdiocesan efforts for Catholic education. \_\_\_\_\_

92. The parish offers viable religious education programs for families, single persons, young adults, teens, and children. \_\_\_\_\_

93. The parish provides for and supports initial and ongoing training for its catechists and volunteers in various parochial ministries. \_\_\_\_\_

94. The parish has identified specific ways to encourage and support parents as the primary educators of their children. \_\_\_\_\_

95. The parish provides or supports a youth ministry program including spiritual, formational, service, and social components. \_\_\_\_\_

96. The parish has fully implemented sacramental preparation programs approved by the Archdiocese. \_\_\_\_\_



## **2016 Parish Self-Study**

97. The parish provides or supports a program for young adults. \_\_\_\_\_

98. The parish arranges for sacramental preparation and catechesis for specially challenged parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

### **C. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the parish's efforts to strengthen the faith of and provide ongoing education and formation for adult parishioners?**

99. The parish offers sufficient adult education opportunities (e.g., Bible study, speakers, discussion groups, faith sharing groups, men's and women's support groups, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_

100. The parish supports its lay ministers and volunteers with opportunities for formation and continuing education. \_\_\_\_\_

101. The parish makes available faith formation materials for parishioners (e.g., books, pamphlets, CD's, videos, magazines, journals, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

102. In designing adult education and formation programs, the parish is responsive to the different backgrounds, ethnic groups, countries of origin, etc. of the parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION V: ADMINISTRATING THE PARISH COMMUNITY**

INTRODUCTORY REMARK: This area of parish viability relates to the leadership, management, and decision-making processes of the parish, as well as to the relationship of the parish to the Archdiocese and the Universal Church.

### **A. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the degree to which the parish incorporates principles of stewardship in managing its financial and physical resources?**

103. The number of parish staff members is adequate to meet the needs and responsibilities of the parish. \_\_\_\_\_

104. Members of the parish staff are courteous, friendly and efficient and do not exceed the limits of their authority. \_\_\_\_\_

105. Priests are regularly available to celebrate Mass, sacraments and religious services and to care for the spiritual needs of parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

106. The parish collects sufficient funds to cover ordinary operating expenses in a timely fashion or has a subsidy arrangement with the Archdiocese. \_\_\_\_\_

107. Aside from any subsidy arrangements, parishioners provide adequate weekly offertory contributions and support special fund-raising activities such as raffles, parish picnics, fiestas, auctions, and special collections sufficient to meet the needs of the parish. \_\_\_\_\_

## **2016 Parish Self-Study**

108. The parish has not acquired debts beyond the ability to repay them and is meeting interest payments on a timely basis. \_\_\_\_\_

109. The parish plant and facilities appear to be well maintained. \_\_\_\_\_

110. The church building and other parish facilities are adequate for present and future needs.  
\_\_\_\_\_

111. A parish master plan has been developed and approved for future development. \_\_\_\_\_

### **B. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the degree to which the parish shares leadership and responsibility with parishioners?**

112. The parish has an active and effective Parish Pastoral Council or equivalent body with clearly defined authority and accountability to the pastor and parishioners. \_\_\_\_\_

113. The Parish Pastoral Council oversees a committee structure that enables the parish to carry out its mission in an effective manner. \_\_\_\_\_

114. A Parish Finance Council is effectively operating in accord with approved guidelines. \_\_\_\_\_

115. Parishioners are kept informed of parish finances, resources, needs and activities. \_\_\_\_\_

116. Parishioners are given opportunities to share in leadership responsibilities and are encouraged to use their skills and experiences for the good of the parish. \_\_\_\_\_

117. Parishioners feel that parish organizations are open to them and responsive to their needs and reasonable expectations. \_\_\_\_\_

118. Parishioners feel that they can approach parish leaders with their questions, concerns, suggestions, and proposals and that they will be given a fair hearing. \_\_\_\_\_

### **C. FOCUS QUESTION: How do you rate the degree to which the parish cooperates with other parishes in the Deanery and with the Archdiocese?**

119. Pastor and parishioners support sharing resources and programs with other parishes. \_\_\_\_\_

120. The parish participates in Archdiocesan activities and groups (e.g., Archdiocesan Events, Retreats, Conferences, Lay Formation Program, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

121. The parish actively participates in programs to identify, recruit, and support vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life. \_\_\_\_\_

122. Clergy of the parish participate in Deanery meetings and activities. \_\_\_\_\_

123. Parishioners are informed about and support Archdiocesan policies and guidelines affecting parish programs. \_\_\_\_\_