

Leadership: Pastors, Councils, Leaders & Educators **Let's work together!**

Taking the first step, being involved and supportive, bearing fruit and rejoicing.

“The Church which “goes forth” is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4:19), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast. Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father’s infinite mercy. Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved.” (Evangelii Gaudium,24)

Strengthening parish social ministry depends on the skill and commitment of particular parish leaders. Pastors and parish priests have special responsibilities to support integral social ministry but it should not be left entirely up to them. Life should be the mission of the whole parish, not just a preoccupation of the few. Make an effort to know your parish community.

Parish Council

Parish staff members and other leaders play crucial roles in shaping the quality of Life ministry. Parish councils in their important planning and advisory functions can help place social ministry in the center parish life. Councils can be a means of collaboration and integration, bringing together liturgy, formation, outreach, and action into a sense of common mission. Councils can play a valuable role in assessing current efforts, setting priorities for the future, and building bridges between parish ministries.

Many parishes have special committees focused on social concerns. These structures can play crucial roles in helping the parish community act on the life dimensions of its overall mission. Some parishes have staff members who coordinate social ministry efforts. This is a promising development. These committees and coordinators best serve parishes by facilitating and enabling the participation of the parish community, rather than simply doing the work on behalf of the parish.)

Educators

Educators in parish schools, religious education, and formation efforts have special responsibility to share our tradition of respecting life as an integral part of our faith. They shape the leaders of the future and by their teaching and example share the social dimensions of our Catholic faith. Teachers can connect you to students and parents, and help you find valuable volunteers!

Leaders, Lay professionals and Volunteers

Creative and competent leaders-clerical and lay, professional and volunteer-are indispensable for effective life ministry. They deserve more assistance, encouragement, financial support, and tools to help them fulfill these demanding roles. Leadership development efforts and ongoing training help parishes strengthen their social ministry capacity.

Your collaboration and commitment matter! By working with your parish community and team, you can foster a culture of life and a respect for every human person.