

**Encounter the Joy of the Gospel  
Set the World Ablaze**

**I am an Evangelizer!**

**My Experience of the *Good News* in My Life**

*Recall this past week and jot down a response to the following:*

Good people I was with

Good experiences I had

Good things I did for others

My encounters with God

Chose ONE partner and share your ENCOUNTER with God!

## Parish Stories

<p><b>Monday Morning</b> Monday morning. I gaze up at the poster above my computer...<i>"Preach the gospel daily, if necessary, use words"</i>. My favorite prayer of St. Francis, I say to myself, as I grab the ringing phone. Good Morning, I begin brightly and as the caller begins to speak, she starts to sob. Words come between sobs, mother-in-law, dying, could Father anoint her and the sobbing takes over</p>	
<p>Gently, I say ....</p> <p><i>Father went to the hospital within the hour and by late afternoon, the woman had died, peacefully in the sacramental embrace of God.</i></p>	<p>I sigh, and Father is off on Mondays. <i>Have you tried calling another parish or...</i></p>

**Key evangelization emphasis:**

<p><b>Voice mail</b> I reach for the phone message pad and start to listen to the recorded messages on the church phone. A youthful voice asks for a return call. The message is about a baptismal certificate, lost or something and she needs it right away since she is getting married in a few months.</p>	
<p>I smile at the wonder of new love...and that this couple is choosing to marry in the Church. I dial the number and .....</p>	<p>Well, I think to myself, <i>honey, you're going to have to wait a couple of days. Our volunteer records keeper only works on Fridays.</i> I write down the contact number and put it on Hazel's pile. <i>I wonder if .....</i></p>

**Key evangelization emphasis:**

<p><b>Are you Registered?</b> I open the parish office door and a young couple is standing there with baby in arms. Come in, I say. Please sit down. I'll be with you in a minute. <i>It sounds so familiar...people want to get their baby baptized but I don't recognize the name. Are they registered I wonder to myself?</i></p>	
<p>I get a recent bulletin with our parish Mass times and the name of our Baptism Coordinator. I offer them coffee or water and then sit down to get acquainted with this lovely young couple. Welcome to St. Guadium Parish. What is your baby's name?...</p>	<p>I get the parish registration form and bring it to the couple. <i>Our parish requires classes for the parents and they are scheduled three times a year....</i></p>

**Key evangelization emphasis:**

<p><b>Hospital</b>          One of our parish Eucharistic Ministers and a nurse, Madelyn, encountered a mother in the hospital emergency room. The mother was very distraught because her 5 year old son had a very high fever and was being admitted to the hospital according to the paperwork she showed to Madelyn. Madelyn doesn't speak Spanish but...</p>	
<p>She held out her rosary to the mother to assure her of her prayer. Madelyn called a neighbor who spoke some Spanish and they went back to the emergency room to find the mother. Madelyn called the parish to ask that Pedro's name be added to our sick list and ...</p>	<p>She went to the nurse's station to report that someone who spoke Spanish ...</p>

**Key evangelization emphasis:**

<p><b>Updating Parish Records</b>          A database is only as current as its records, I always say. I began the task assigned by the Administrator to purge the record of any registered member who has not contributed financially in the last 5 years. Phase Two of the Updating project will include ...</p>	
<p>Immediately creating a special group of parishioners who will make a personal contact/visit with each of the members to share the concern of the parish and welcome their return. In addition...</p>	<p>Emailing this purged group to inquire about reinstating their active status and ...</p>

**Key evangelization emphasis:**

<p><b>Facility Furniture</b>          Our parish commons area was recently renovated. We use it for small receptions, Coffee/Donuts after Mass on Sundays and even small meetings. Everyone loves the new furniture! Recently more children have been jumping off the couches and last week a lamp got broken. Some parish members are complaining about the stains on the fabric and our NO JUMPING signs have not worked. We are talking about a new commons policy to address this issue.</p>	
<p>Our families include small children so perhaps our facilities committee can arrange a grouping of small tables/chairs specifically for young children. Then, when something is broken, we can ...</p>	<p>I recommend that parents be responsible to ...</p>

**Key evangelization emphasis:**



## Keys to Understanding Evangelization

### Evangelization involves recognizing that...

- ❖ We are inviting people more deeply into the Kingdom of God
- ❖ We are servants of Jesus and his Spirit, so we must constantly pray
- ❖ It is the Spirit who brings about conversion and evangelization
- ❖ The Eucharist is the heart of our energy to reach out
- ❖ We are striving to serve those who are as yet untouched by faith or who have grown distant from faith
- ❖ Our task is *more to be faithful than successful*, as Mother Theresa taught
- ❖ When we evangelize, we are not forcing things on others but helping them receive what they need at the deepest levels of their lives.

### Excerpted from:

**“Preparing to Share Good News – How to Begin Evangelization in a Catholic Parish”**  
Paulist Evangelization Ministries, [www.pemdc.org](http://www.pemdc.org)

## Phone Skills Refresher

1. Attitude/Motivation
  - a. What do you want people to think about you?
  - b. How do you want them to view the parish?
  - c. What part do you play in forming someone's perception of the parish?
2. Preparation
  - a. Physical (deep breath, smile)
  - b. Tools (good pen, phone message pad, etc.)
  - c. Information (parish directory, diocesan directory, parish calendar, parish website information)
3. Greeting
  - a. Tone of voice - friendly, inviting/welcoming, patient
  - b. Clearly and slowly state the parish name
  - c. Clearly and slowly state your name
  - d. How may I help you?
4. Listen
  - a. Focus on the call/caller
  - b. Don't multi-task (i.e., work on computer while on the phone)
5. Facilitate a Solution - Don't just take a message
  - a. Decide the next/best step to answering the caller's question or connecting them to the person who can best help them
  - b. Take the caller's name and number
  - c. Ask them to spell their name
6. If Transferring the Call
  - a. Tell the caller you are transferring the call
  - b. State the name and number of the person you are transferring them to
7. If the Person They Need To Speak With Is Not In
  - a. State what action you will take (give the message to Ms. Jones, when they can expect a call back, etc.)
8. Ask them if they have any other questions
9. Closing the call - End on an upbeat, positive note
  - a. Briefly repeat/reaffirm what you are going to do for them
  - b. Thank them for calling
  - c. Log the call on your Parish Call log and note any follow up needed
10. Pray for your parish's evangelization efforts

Excerpts from Catholics Come Home Georgia

## Communication Scenarios

### 1. Friday Afternoon

The parish has a busy weekend of activities and you have just finished preparing all the necessary information. Your volunteer has left for the day. The phone rings and the caller asks for sacramental information from your sacramental register for their Family Genealogy work. The family gathering is Sunday and could you please give her the information today.

### 2. Monday Morning

The phone is ringing when you arrive at 9am. Before you take off your coat, you grab the phone. The caller begins to speak and then starts crying. You can't really understand the request. Through sobs, you hear that the request is for the Pastor to anoint the caller's family member (not a parishioner) in the local hospital. Your Pastor is not in on Mondays generally.

### 3. Parishioner

The Volunteer who answers the phone takes a message and gives you just a name and phone number when you arrive. You return the call and the caller is interested in becoming a member of your church.

### 4. Messages

You arrive at work on Tuesday and listen to the voice messages as usual. One message asks for the wedding date for her daughter's wedding to be scheduled for the first weekend in September, as the invitations are at the printer.

### 5. Mass

You receive a call transferred to you from another staff member. The caller seems quite upset about the Sunday Mass and wants to speak to someone about his concerns. When you ask his name, you recall that this gentleman has called several times in the past.

### 6. Doorbell

You answer the door at 12noon just as you were about to leave for lunch. A man and woman with three small children ask for Baptism for their three children in "broken" English. It seems that they may not speak much English and you do not speak any Spanish.

### 7. Parish Financial Report

The parish finance council is considering a debt reduction plan for the parish inviting members to increase their weekly offering. You are assembling the household financial statements of the parish over the last 5 years. It seems many households have stopped or reduced their contributions and you wonder why? You suggest that the first approach should be to those who "don't give" anymore.

## Evangelization Skills Checklist for Administrative and Support Staff

I seek to be a member of the parish staff who:

- Sees themselves as evangelizers of the Catholic Church, regardless of faith background
- Treats every individual with respect regardless of their personal situation
- Prays for the individuals by name who are encountered in a particular day
- Seeks to first understand the situation rather than enforce the parish rules and guidelines
  
- Doesn't interrupt the individual when they are speaking
- Provides listening cues, like nodding, eye contact, or verbal cues
- Is fully present to the conversation, the mind doesn't wander during conversation
  
- Removes all distractions from the environment when having a conversation
- Empathizes with individual
- Is not quick to judge an individual or situation
  
- Is patient with the individual
- Doesn't gossip about internal church politics or other church members
- Treats the entire parish staff with kindness and dignity
  
- Answers the phone with a kind and welcoming tone
- Conveys a sense of joy for and pride in the work that is being undertaken
- Is publically supportive of diocesan and parish leadership
  
- Seeks to be proactive in situations and be one step ahead of the individual
- Limits the use of jargon and church-speak with new visitors
- Embraces differences in culture, language, knowledge, socio-economic status
- Introduces themselves first in a conversation, in-person, via phone or email