



INSTITUTE FOR
Evangelization
ARCHDIOCESE of BALTIMORE

Pastoral Council Recruitment Homily

In early 2021, Archbishop Lori laid out his vision for evangelization in the Archdiocese in his pastoral letter “A Light Brightly Visible 2.0.” At that time, he created the Institute for Evangelization and Office of Parish Renewal, meant to accompany parishes as they live out their mission. He also revisited the Core Mission Priorities that flowed from “A Light Brightly Visible.” Those Core Mission Priorities are: Liturgy, Welcome, Encounter, Accompaniment, Sending, and Mission Support.

The Core Mission Priorities of Welcome, Encounter, Accompaniment, and Sending create a discipleship pathway that guide how the parish connects with parishioners and those in the community. There are lots of ways that we do that each week, but it is also important to look at the big picture of the parish, the long-term vision and strategize how to bring that to fruition.

You are likely aware that the face of the Catholic Church is always changing, and since we are all called to evangelize, it is important to regularly find new ways to connect with those in our parish community as well as those in our neighborhood. How do we create a place where people experience WELCOME, a place of belonging for all we come into contact with?

It is also important to provide opportunities for those in the parish and those in the neighborhood to lead people to an encounter with Christ. How do we invite people to ENCOUNTER Jesus and his unending love and mercy? We recognize the need to meet people where they are, to ACCOMPANY so it's important for our pastorate to have “shallow entry” events and experiences that are a little less intimidating, “deep dives” for those who want to explore their faith more deeply, as well as everything in between.

In order to live out our mission, the community needs to BE SENT OUT. That's where you come in – we are looking for folks to create a renewed pastoral council, one that is tasked with forming the Vision for the community, the big picture, the years ahead. How can we connect with people where they are? How can we continue to grow in holiness? How do we invite others into our community of faith? This council will focus on dreaming and dreaming big on how [Parish/Pastorate Name] can continue to grow on the discipleship pathway: Welcoming, Encountering, Accompanying, and Sending.

You are invited to prayerfully discern joining this renewed pastoral council. The

commitment would be a [3-year term and meetings are once per month].

We need a variety of gifts - those who are good at administration, but also those who are creative, those who are good at building relationships, those who have a heart for the needs of the neighborhood community.

It's also important that the council represent the entire community. St. John is blessed with a diversity of ethnicity, race, careers, spirituality, generations/age. It is so important that all are represented. It is with humility that we respond to our baptismal call to holiness, to service. During Mass we say the words "I am not worthy," but the Lord comes to us anyway, the Lord calls us to serve, to be witnesses to His great love.

Oftentimes, pastoral councils see themselves as the planners and decision-makers for the parish, but the goal is to not get in the weeds about the day-to-day, but to be above the weeds; to not be a decision-making body, but a visioning body.

[NEXT STEPS - Discernment meeting, available for questions, etc]