Parish Impossible!

Marti Jewell
Sal Della Bella
UDMC 2014
"Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction."

- Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est, 2006
Evangelization – welcoming people home where they may encounter Christ
Disciples Called to Witness

“Currently, there are numerous pastoral programs meant to encourage and support people in their journey back to the faith.

However, for these programs to be effective ... all Catholics reaching out to our missing brothers and sisters must touch the lives of others, interact with them, and show them how the faith answers the deepest questions and enriches modern culture.”

USCCB
Evangelization

Radiation
Radiation

Positive

Negative

Deflection
Radiation

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

Mt 5: 13
Evangelization

Radiation

Positive

Attraction

Negative

Deflection
Radiation

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden... Let your light shine!”

Mt 5:14
What Does Your Parish Radiate?
Beware of mixed messages
A welcome hand or a cold shoulder?
Parish Impossible?
Welcoming, Eucharistic Communities
Welcoming leaders ensure that all who desire a closer relationship to God are genuinely received and welcomed, in a spirit of heartfelt hospitality, openness, and eagerness both to give and to receive.
Welcoming

Create a sense of belonging
How do we get there?

1. Not to necessarily do more
2. Do what we already do but do it differently
3. We know how to do this.
Strategies
Facilities

- Good signage
- Parking lot flow
- Parking lot ministry
- Offices clearly marked
- Mass times on front sign
- List of parish services
- Attention to different needs
  - Handicapped
  - Multicultural
  - Elderly
In the church

- Welcoming gathering spaces
- Newcomer orientations
- Coffee and doughnuts
- Ensure people know if there is child care
Pastoral Practice
Pastoral Practice

1. Be a person of prayer
   ▶ Spend time on your own relationship with Jesus

2. Know the importance of “first response”
   ▶ Acquire knowledge and information needed

3. Be present
   ▶ Actively listen

4. Be compassionate
   ▶ Show genuine concern
POPE FRANCIS ON REAL HOSPITALITY AT OUR PARISHES:

"Think of the good Christians, with good will, we think about the parish secretary, a secretary of the parish ... 'Good evening, good morning, ... the two of us - boyfriend and girlfriend - we want to get married'.

And instead of saying, 'That's great!'. They say, 'Oh, well, have a seat. If you want the Mass, it costs a lot ... '. This, instead of receiving a good welcome- It is a good thing to get married! '-

But instead they get this response:' Do you have the certificate of baptism, all right ... '. And they find a closed door. When this Christian and that Christian has the ability to open a door, thanking God for this fact of a new marriage ...

We are many times controllers of faith, instead of becoming facilitators of the faith of the people”
“Are we still a Church capable of warming hearts?”
Marti R. Jewell
University of Dallas / School of Ministry
mjewell@udallas.edu

Sal Della Bella
Archdiocese of Louisville
sdb@archlou.org