Ideas for an Evangelizing Parish

General
- Establish a welcome center just inside building entrances to the church, office, and hall. Include coffee, tea, and cookies along with CareNotes and information on parish activities and services.
- Create a “View From The Pew” column or newsletter which invites Catholics to share personal stories about the importance of their faith.
- Consider creating a parking lot ministry. Provide directions and information to people as they arrive.

Summer
- Offer a “Bring Your Own Dish” cookout to the neighborhood. Provide opportunity for attendees to meet parishioners and staff. Ask them to provide ways in which your parish might be of service to them and/or the greater community.
- Identify young adults leaving home for college and present them with a care package with spiritual support, a local parish contact person and an invitation to return for the holidays with contact information. Invite them for a special blessing offered at a Mass before they leave. Acquire text or email info and send them encouragement during mid-terms, finals, birthdays and invitations to parish events and liturgies while they return home.

Fall
- Designate a Sunday this fall as “Come and See” Sunday, for anyone who would like to observe and experience a Catholic liturgy. Ask parishioners to seek out Catholics who have left the church, inviting them to “come and see.” Provide invitation cards to parishioners and/or enlist names and addresses and send the invitation in the name of the parish. Advertise around the neighborhood using fliers, invitations, posters, door hangers, etc.

Winter
- Offer a “Chill Out Night” at the parish that invites both parishioners and non-parishioners to an evening of Taize Prayer or Gregorian Chant as a way to experience silence and peace during this busy season. Close with a “meet the leadership team” over hot cocoa.
- Send an Advent card to all those who have been married or had their children baptized at the parish this past year. Include a wallet-sized card listing Mass times and other upcoming seasonal events.

Spring
- After the Ash Wednesday evening service, invite young adults to a time of discussion. Provide meatless soup, bread, and drinks. The topics could include Catholic traditions, Lenten practices, or other topics of interest.
- Young adults today enjoy the rites and rituals of tradition, tangible signs of the mystery of God. Consider offering Eucharistic Adoration, Vespers, Taize, or other prayer opportunity during Lent. Promote it via Twitter and Facebook.

Additional strategies can be found at:
- Parish Vitality - [http://www.parishvitality.net/what-a-parish-can-do.html](http://www.parishvitality.net/what-a-parish-can-do.html)
- Diocese of Buffalo - [http://evangelizebuffalo.org/Home.aspx](http://evangelizebuffalo.org/Home.aspx)
Resources

Books

- **A Community of Disciples: Making Your Parish All It Can Be**
  Des Robertson (Twenty-Third Publications, 2012)
- **Engaging a New Generation: A Vision for Reaching Catholic Teens**
  Frank Mercadante (Huntington: OSV Books, 2012)
- **Forming Intentional Disciples: Path to Know and Follow Jesus**
  Sherry A. Weddell (Our Sunday Visitor, 2012)
- **From Maintenance to Mission: Evangelization and the Revitalization of the Parish**
  Robert S. Rivers (Paulist Press, 2005)
- **Hispanic Ministry in the 21st Century: Present and Future**
  Hosffman Ospino, editor. (Convivium Press, 2010)
- **Listening Ministry: Rethinking Pastoral Leadership**
  Susan K Hedahl (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 2001)
- **Reactivating Our Catholic Faith: Reflections to Get Real About Faith**
- **The Parish Guide to the New Evangelization**
  Robert J. Hater (Our Sunday Visitor, 2013)
- **The Assertiveness Workbook**

Websites

- Archdiocese of Louisville – [www.archlou.org/evangelization](http://www.archlou.org/evangelization)
- John Paul II Center - [http://www.johnpaul2center.org/Evangelization.htm](http://www.johnpaul2center.org/Evangelization.htm)
- Paulist Evangelization Ministries (PNCEA) - [http://www.pemdc.org/](http://www.pemdc.org/)

Documents

- **Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel).**
  Pope Francis's first apostolic exhortation, November 24, 2013.
- **Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization, USCCB, 2012**
  Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis (USCCB)

Downloadable Resources

- **Parish Impossible Video** - A video produced for pastoral leaders as a way to stimulate thinking and discussion about how parishes can become more welcoming and hospitable communities.
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8KAUXPh2NE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8KAUXPh2NE)
- **Christian Hospitality** - This handbook provides a theological basis for hospitality, a look at liturgical hospitality, tips for welcoming all people, and a sampling of models and programs in use across the United States.
- **Welcoming-Parish-Assessment** - This assessment from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati offers parish leadership some concrete, practical criteria and descriptions of how a welcoming parish looks and “feels.”