

July 2019



A Christian Steward is:

- one who receives God's gifts gratefully
- cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner
- shares them in justice and love with others
- returns them with increase to the Lord

WISDOM

from ICSC strategic partners

This month's contributions come from the following ICSC Strategic Partners:



DIOCESAN



Each month ICSC sends you practical information, whitepapers, and tips, as well as other insightful information from our Strategic Partners to assist you with your responsibility as stewards of the Church. We are very grateful to our Strategic Partners for their partnership and commitment to ICSC, and their professional wisdom is a wonderful gift to ICSC members.

In this edition ICSC brings you:

- * the importance of branding for your diocesan campaign compliments of **CCS**.
- * three tips on how to become a master of analytics courtesy of **Diocesan**.
- * a fresh framework for inspiring faithful generosity provided by **Greater Mission**.
- * ways to help your parishioners re-integrate faith and life from **LPi**.
- * ideas for hosting engaging adult formation programming from **OSV**.

For additional information and resources from our strategic partners visit the ICSC website at: [ICSC](http://www.icsc.org)

To learn more from our strategic partners and other experts in their ministries, join us at ICSC's 57th annual conference.

October 6-9, 2019
Sheraton Grand Chicago
[Register Today!](#)



One Voice: The Importance of Branding for Your Diocesan Campaign



By Dan Altano, Senior Director of Corporate Communications, CCS Fundraising — July 2019

Consistent communications across every parish and inside every church community can make an enormous difference in your campaign. This task can seem like a challenging undertaking given the complexities and nuances of your communities, but the answer to conveying a sense of unity throughout your diocese is effective branding. But how do you get started?

The Elements of Effective Branding

Simply put, good branding is all about presenting a clear and direct message to your audience. When there is an unwavering look and feel to your messaging, your communities will feel as though all the dots are already connected across your diocese even before your campaign has begun. Good branding is recognized and felt instantly by an audience. Consider well-known consumer brands like *Pepsi*, *Geico*, and *Verizon*. Whether advertisements from those companies appear on the side of a bus, as a digital promotion online, or as a commercial on television, their style and tone are always consistent.

Reaching this sense of unity across communications begins with solidifying your core messaging. Your campaign's talking points, printed materials, website, and social media channels should be telling a cohesive story of what your campaign is attempting to accomplish, why financial support is needed, and how people will specifically benefit as a result. If done well, anyone speaking on behalf of your campaign will be able to quickly and efficiently articulate a unified case for support. Think of your core messaging as your 30-second elevator pitch. Across channels, your messaging should waste no time in getting right to the heart of your campaign's mission.

Leveraging Your Existing Strengths

When getting started, it is important to identify and leverage what is already working for your diocese. Ask yourself: What is it that continues to keep our communities engaged and inspired by our churches? Chances are you already have many success stories to draw from in articulating your value. The common denominators of those stories will help you pinpoint your best attributes. The next step is distilling those attributes into concise language that best represents your values. For example, if one of your campaign elements is improving youth education in the church, consider the strides your diocese has already taken in supporting these programs. Choose two or three stories that best represent this work and weave those stories throughout all of your communications materials.

It's All in the Details

On the micro level, once your campaign vision is clear and your stories are solidified, the rest is in the details. For example, choosing one text font and size for all your materials will ensure a unified look. This also goes for your campaign's colors and photography which go a long way in conveying one voice. Once you have ironed out the details, it is important to enforce these branding pillars across your parishes through a branding guidelines document. The guidelines spell out core messaging, grammar, and stylistic elements for everyone to follow. You can also use the guidelines to enforce any words or messages that shouldn't be used during the campaign. It may also be useful to create document templates with colors/fonts/and imagery already in place for anyone involved to use easily.

Once your branding is clearly articulated, allow room for creativity within each parish. As long as they are using the core pillars of your brand, they can add in their own stories and language to connect with their specific communities. Taking these steps may seem secondary to other campaign practices but are the essential building blocks of a successful campaign.

Become a Master of Analytics

We all know the struggle of sending out a beautifully designed and concise email and only receiving a 15-20% open rate. The message of stewardship is too important to go unnoticed, but often our lists are not up to date and we are not able to target the audiences that we would like. Here are a couple of tips that we recommend to help get your message out to as many people as possible.

1

Know your audience

You can use google analytics and Facebook insights to learn about who your audience is and how to reach them better. You can find out information such as age, gender, location, interest, and engagement. You can learn what parts of your diocese or parish community are most engaged in your content as well as who your target market is and whether or not you should go after a different audience. Knowing your audience is key in communicating to them effectively.

2

Learn Analytics

If any of the above seemed complicated, have no fear. Google Analytics offers a free school that walks through everything you will need to know when it comes to using analytics well. Just search "Google Analytics Academy" and give your email, and you will receive access to every video you can imagine explaining analytics and how they work. Facebook has a similar capability with Facebook Business Center. Look up the business center and it will walk you through how to use insights and how to effectively target your campaigns and run ads.

3

Make a Plan

Once you start using analytics, make sure that you have a goal in mind which will help you track your results. We recommend using the S.M.A.R.T goal strategy.

Specific: Make sure your goal is specific. Instead of having a vague goal like getting more people to see posts, use a goal like increasing engagement on a certain channel by 20%.

Measurable: Make sure that you can track your campaign with real numbers.

Achievable: Don't make the mistake of aiming too high. You want a goal that stretches you, but one that can be met.

Realistic: This goes hand in hand with achievable. Don't put the cart before the horse. Make sure your goals are grounded in reality.

Timely: Set a time period to measure your success and don't go beyond it.

Analytics can be a tough world, but these simple steps should help you become a master in no time. From all of us here at Diocesan, God Bless!

Amen Generosity

A Fresh Framework for Inspiring Faithful Generosity



"Through Him, with Him, and in Him..." We hear these words at every Mass and sing our collective yes, known as the great *Amen*. Then, receiving the great gift of Jesus in the Eucharist, we humbly repeat in reply...*Amen*.

Along with St. Paul, we can say, *"I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me."* (Gal 2:20) It is by our *Amen* that we respond with our own yes to living through Him, with Him and in Him to transform the world. *Amen* is at the heart of our faith; and the way we live and give as disciples of Jesus.

The True Beginning of our Generosity Story

Amen Generosity gives new language to how we can be freely and faithfully generous – a way that puts God at the beginning of our generosity story. The principle of *Amen Generosity* echoes the truth that we are humble stewards of all God's gifts; while also showing us a way to be faithfully generous.

Our generosity is not only our act of faith in God. It is an act of God's faith in us. The Lord entrusted us with life and the mission to love one another by our selfless service and our radical generosity. God lives and gives through us if we are willing to say *Amen*.

Giving Flows from God if we Allow

No longer do we need to give just from ourselves. Instead we learn to give *from* God. Our generosity becomes a *joining* in the giving that God is already doing in our lives. Ours is really only a humble and joyful "yes" — a free and faith-filled *Amen*. God is the source and we are like the faucet that controls the flow. Are we barely open to allow a trickle; or are we really open to allow God's grace and generosity to flow freely from God through us in a way that is life-giving?

Abiding in Christ and Bearing Great Fruit

We hear Jesus teach us in John 15, *"I am the vine, and you are the branches. Without me, you can do nothing."* We find our life purpose to bear great fruit only if we abide in Christ — like branches connected intimately to the vine. Jesus himself taught us that it is He that lives through us and blesses the world with His great love.

Remarkably, we have been chosen by our Lord to bear fruit that will last. Letting God live and give through us can be the greatest joy of our lives.

The Decision is Ours

We don't just "get" from God and begrudgingly give some back. *Amen Generosity* celebrates the truth that the Lord has given us life itself; every breath, everything we have, and everything we are. God is who we are from. In awakening to this realization, we become God's gift.

However, our Lord loves us enough to let us choose freely to cooperate. Without that freedom, the generosity would only be God's and not ours too. We can say no and many have. Our "yes" is needed to what God is already doing and wants to do in our lives. Now it is up to us. Will we say yes to God's generosity through us? Will we say *Amen*?

Amen.



In our next Wisdom article, we will share the three key characteristics of *Amen Generosity*. To learn more about how Greater Mission puts teaching faith-inspired generosity at the heart of its capital campaign and offertory increase models, call us at (800) 741-9210 or email info@greatermission.com.





HOW TO HELP YOUR PARISHIONERS GET OUT OF THE “ONE AND DONE” MINDSET

Sundays have changed a lot in culture over the years. What once was a sacred day for faith and family, a day that nourished and refreshed for the days ahead, has become like every other day of the week. As Monday through Saturday seep into Sunday, all too often Sunday loses its power to influence them in return. Georgetown’s CARA study and Pew Research say about half of Americans attend church at least one Sunday a month, and 23% of Catholics report attending every week. For those who do show up on Sundays, all too often it’s one and done. We are not a Sunday-only Church! We’ve compiled a few essential ways to help your parishioners re-integrate faith and life.

OFFER ENGAGING SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Having fun with friendly people can be one of the easiest first steps to re-engage with a community. Get creative with your offerings! Think outside the box to catch people’s eye. Here are a few ideas:

- Host a picnic at your local park
- Project a family-friendly movie on a blank wall in the parish hall, or outdoors with a projector screen or taut sheet
- Offer a Bacon & Brews Night for men ... or women!
- Tailgate in the church parking lot and charter a bus to the local major or minor league game

SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY

Everybody wants to make a difference. Offering diverse opportunities to serve others could draw a new crowd into parish engagement. For some members, pouring coffee on Donut Sunday isn’t their idea of changing the world! Serve a meal at a food pantry or partner with Habitat for Humanity for a build day. Sponsor a blood drive. Or — a little closer

to home — don’t hire a professional landscaping crew next summer, but instead recruit a parishioner with a green thumb and some leadership skills to direct an outdoor service project.

ANSWER ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Most of your parishioners have likely learned the facts of the faith somewhere along the way. But, for many of us, the bigger questions of life are never quite one and done.

In the midst of the change and transition that continues throughout life, who am I really? Whether I’m just starting out in the professional world or a tragedy has rocked my perspective ... why am I here? And where are we going? Evangelistic programming — like Alpha courses and renewal retreats — can engage parishioners with the most basic questions of life and draw people into deeper faith.

CHECK THE PULSE OF YOUR PREACHING

Remember, these are people in the pews! How are you helping them live well outside of them? The homily may be the only encouragement in faith that some parishioners receive. Pew Research surveyed adults looking for new church congregations. 83% said the quality of sermons played a role in their decision. Of course we don’t want to pander or water-down truth. However, it’s good to assess the homilies from time to time.

Consider the invitation the homilies extend. Is it meeting the needs of the culture and demographics of the congregation? Do the homilies emphasize the intersection of faith and daily life? Are they inviting parishioners to lifelong discipleship? These teaching moments can go a long way to inviting people into relationship with Christ and involvement with the community.

CHURCH MATTERS



KATIE HERZING, SENIOR PARISH COACH

One of the struggles most parishes have is hosting engaging Adult Formation programming. What will appeal to adults who are in different stages of life and different places on their faith journey? One of the parishes established a Church Matters series as part of a vision plan for their parish last school year. The series was named to highlight two aspects of Adult Formation. First, being part of this Church matters in your life. Second, these are matters concerning the Church. I'm all for clever names, and Adult Formation programming that's not serial. Each session is self-contained meaning you can attend all or just one and not feel like you've missed out.

Summer is the perfect time to plan an upcoming series. Plan to meet monthly on the same night (2nd Monday, 3rd Wednesday, 4th Thursday, etc.) for some food, fellowship, and formation!

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO KICK OFF YOUR FIRST SESSIONS:

Frittatas with Francis: Choose a new Encyclical or Apostolic Exhortation (Laudato Si, Lumen Fidei, Amoris Laetitia, Evangelii Gaudium, Christus Vivit, Guadete et Exsultate) and have someone give a presentation and lead a discussion. Papal Documents can seem overwhelming to the average Catholic, but when presented by an engaging speaker, they can be transformative. Choose just one point from the document and host an event. And serve Frittatas, because alliterations stick in people's minds and everyone loves breakfast for dinner!

Quirky Catholic Things: So much of what we do as Catholics would seem a little weird to an outsider (or someone who missed many years of Faith Formation as a child). Take an evening to talk about the things that make us just a little odd – but are true, beautiful, and necessary to our faith. Some topics: relics, fasting (& ember days), incorruptible saints, pilgrimages, gestures during Mass, novenas, and more!

Wills, Funerals, and Planning for the Future: A topic more and more people are interested in but don't know where to start. Having an opportunity for learning more about how to plan for their future is a useful topic to talk about at Church. Consider the many young people who disaffiliate from religious practices. When their parents, who are faithful Catholics, pass, they may not receive a Catholic Funeral if the planning is left to the family.

Paul'ing Around: Take a journey with St. Paul from Tarsus to Jerusalem to Corinth to Thessaloniki to Ephesus to Athens to Philippi to Rome. St. Paul is the most prolific writer of the New Testament, but most Catholics only know that fact about him. Choose one story from each place and travel with Paul from his persecution of Christians through his Conversion to his time spent shipwrecked and in prison. His life was so interesting it could have been a movie – wait! It was ... Paul, Apostle of Christ was released in 2018!

"I do not think that means what you think it means...": Take an evening to talk about misunderstood words. For instance, many people believe "Stewardship" is all about Money or "Evangelization" is about standing on the street corner shouting into a bull horn. Take an evening to talk about what the Church really teaches about some of these misunderstood terms.

Want more great ideas like this delivered right to your inbox a couple times a month? Join me at <http://transformyourparish.com> for great ideas to create a vision plan to promote stewardship at your parish!



| (800) 348-2886 ext. 2534 | www.osv.com