

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:



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:

- * five must-haves to engage millennials in your parish compliments of **ACS Technologies/Parish Data System**.
- * the top four technologies your parish needs to be successful in 2020 courtesy of **Blackbaud**.
- * four ways to ensure stewardship and development success during staff transitions provided by **GP Catholic Services**.
- * goals you should include as you plan for 2020 and beyond provided by **Guidance In Giving**.
- * eight reasons why your parish needs an app compliments of **Pushpay**.

For additional information and resources from our strategic partners visit the ICSC website at: **ICSC**

ICSC promotes and supports Catholic teaching on stewardship by providing education and resources for dioceses, parishes, and institutions of the Roman Catholic Church.

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MUST-HAVES



TO ENGAGE MILLENNIALS IN YOUR PARISH

Despite what you may have read, millennials still believe in God, hold to absolutes of right and wrong, and pray as much (or in some cases more) than their age group in the past.

As you look at the trends and follow the conversations, there are 5 must-haves that are keys to unlocking engagement for your millennial parishioners.

#1

CAST A BIG VISION

Seeing the big picture is appealing to anybody. It's especially appealing to young adults who are planning for their future. If your vision is small and your expectations are not communicated, it will be tough to get millennials engaged in your church's mission.

Communication of all types is required to reach people in the ways they are listening. Targeted messages delivered in context are much more likely to be heard.

#2

BE CONNECTED

It's all about relationships. Millennials, like all generations, want to connect, be in the loop, and form relationships that mean something. According to the Barna Group, community relationships are the #1 most important reason millennials go to church.

Groups are one of the best ways to develop relationships. People are connected like never before because of technology but are also disconnected because of a busy and hectic lifestyle. The challenge for parishes becomes how to foster more connections.

#3

BE TRANSPARENT

While the #1 reason millennials will stay at a parish is relationships, the #1 reason they'll leave is hypocrisy. Keeping things in the dark is not an option when dealing with a bright generation.

#4

DO IT TOGETHER

One of the best ways to engage millennials is to share a common purpose. It's not enough just to hang out. You have to live outward.

Doing real ministry means getting together and actually doing ministry. Whether that's service projects, outreaches, or food drives, give them ways to get involved and to have a purpose within your parish.

#5

CALL THEM OUT

Millennials aren't scared of a challenge. They come to church to discover, to grow, and to matter. Your discipleship plan for millennials should include a clear path for every person to take that calls them to greater things. They want to be participants, not spectators. Millennials are serious about growing in their faith.

The future of the Catholic Church rests in the hands of the largest generation in the country. Engaging millennials matters more than most might think.

So what are you waiting for? Get the full version of this guide at ministry.acst.com/guides/millennials-catholic/

Parish Tech Checklist

The technology your parish needs to be successful

By Joel Guthrie

blackbaud



Over the past decade, technology continues to lap itself yearly and trendy tech seems to come and go. With all these advancements, it can be difficult to tell what your parish needs and what's just a fad. In this checklist, you will find the top 4 technologies your parish needs to be successful in 2020. We will cover everything from an engaging website to a parish management solution. All this tech is designed to not only save you and your team time, but also increase engagement with your community. Without further ado, let's get to it!

AN ENGAGING PARISH WEBSITE

WHY: In this day and age, having an updated website is crucial to your parish's success. eCommerce Foundation's 2017 data shows that roughly 88% of people research online before making a purchase or visiting a store in person. Think about how often you check out a new store, restaurant, tire shop, or hotel website before physically going to the location. What makes you think parishioners are any different?

Your website is the online front door of your parish—and if it doesn't work well or accurately represent your message, you will be missing out on all those people before they ever set foot in the door. Resources like Wordpress®, SquareSpace®, or Wix® make it incredibly easy to have a beautiful, functional website at a reasonable price.

OPTIMIZE YOUR PARISH MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

WHY: You might have a solution in place to keep up with your parishioners' addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. While this is valuable, few management systems can offer parish-specific solutions. Look for parishioner-facing tools that allow your members to sign up for events, give to the parish, and track their volunteering. When you have all these interactions stored on one comprehensive member profile, you can more fully understand your parishioners' needs and interests.

Even further, look for a parish management solution with easy-to-use reporting and insight, so you can identify when someone's involvement has diminished. Notice that a regular participant in the St. Vincent de Paul Society hasn't attended a meeting in the last month? It's time to give them a call, let them know you miss them, and see if they need your support.

A COMMUNICATION TOOL

WHY: Keep your parishioners up to date on everything going on at your parish outside of Sunday Mass. You may make announcements after Mass, and course all of the information is in your bulletin, but it's hard to remember all of the details. Sending updates to specific groups in your parish is essential to helping them grow in their faith and getting more engaged in the parish community.

NOTE: I am not telling you to spam your parishioners! That would just be rude. Make sure there is real value in every communication you send out—if there isn't, they will stop looking at the emails, and then you're back to square one.

A FACEBOOK PAGE

WHY: Facebook isn't an afterthought; it's a must for your parish to continue thriving in this digital age. You might be thinking you don't need to hear another argument about how you need to be on Facebook. You've seen the data about how everyone is on social media, and you know that it's one of the most used platforms in the world. However, it's still worth repeating.

There are 168 hours in a week, and your parishioners spend about one hour each week engaging with you during your weekend Mass. Using social media, you can stay connected and keep the conversation going for the other 167 hours. Use it to call them to action, ask questions, and share impact stories.

Technology is the greatest asset parishes have to continue nurturing and growing their community. It's also ever-changing, complicated, and, with so many options, difficult to know where to start. This checklist is your starting point. Whether your parish is small or large, these technologies will help you engage and grow your community.

Leading uniquely at the intersection point of technology and social good, **Blackbaud** connects and empowers organizations to increase their impact through cloud software, services, expertise, and data intelligence. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, companies, education institutions, healthcare organizations, and the individual change agents who support them.

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4 ways to ensure stewardship and development success during staff transitions



ensure a smooth transition

- View through an **optimistic lens**: change presents opportunities.
- **Exude confidence**: the many positive things about the Church remain positive.
- Leverage your colleague's **personal capital** before his or her departure.
- Celebrate outgoing staff; **communicate proactively**.



expand the donor pipeline

- Emphasize the **relationship with the Church's mission**, not an individual.
- Ensure that donors have **multiple points of contact**, and consider a co-assignment when appropriate.
- Focus on relationship-building, **growing capacity** through continued qualification and cultivation efforts.



inspire talented fundraisers

- Hire for **cultural fit** and **job alignment**. This is an opportunity to re-assess those qualities most needed to advance your mission and achieve your goals.
- Focus on a **culture** of stewardship and development.
- Ensure staff are **mentored** and have **growth opportunities**.
- Set **realistic goals** using a collaborative approach.



maintain momentum

- Focus on **phase-appropriate planning** and engage stewardship and development counsel.
- Use this time to **share stories** of the ways donations fulfill the Church's mission.
- Train the stewardship committee in **major gift cultivation** best practices.
- Position fundraising momentum as an **attractive recruitment tool** for a new stewardship and development staff person.

Five philosophies to guide your activities during times of transition:

Evaluate the landscape

Resist the desire to augment everything—it may be wiser to delay difficult decisions until a new staff member is engaged.

Bridge past, present, and future

Value the qualities of your former colleague, but open your community to new ways of thinking.

Empathize with your stewardship committee

Help your committee adapt to the idea that the new staff member will likely have a different approach. Encourage volunteer leaders to focus on their own development and self-evaluation.

Heed respected leaders

Other development and stewardship professionals, as well as trusted counsel, can be helpful advisors in guiding you toward what must be done versus what can wait.

Ask with confidence

Understand the temptation of others who view a period of transition as an opportunity to let up on initiatives underway. Encourage them forward in order to maintain the momentum!



MISSION 2020

Preparing for a New Decade



A new decade begins in just a few weeks. Like every new year, it brings excitement, goal setting and blessings ahead. However, a new decade brings even more reflection on where we are, and where we should be heading. Here are some goals that you should include as you plan for 2020 and beyond.

Communication

Traditionally, churches have been behind the times with technology, and it's been forgiven. However, it's 2020 and it's time to step up. If you want to continue to engage your parishioners, you need to meet them where they are. Technology can give you amazing avenues to spread the mission of your parish by emailing and texting inspirational quotes and readings, keeping parishioners up to date on events at the parish, and keeping them engaged with you daily, not just as Mass.

Email and Text

If you do not have email addresses and cell phone numbers for your parishioners, do a parish wide survey and get them. Parishioners will be happy to share with you the best way to connect with them. You can use traditional email to connect with your parishioners, or use tools like Flocknote or Constant Contact which provide better platforms for this type of communication. Email regularly to connect with and inspire your parishioners.

Social Media

Baby Boomers, Gen Xers and Millennials are all on social media, and you should be too! Utilize Facebook, YouTube Instagram and Twitter to connect with your parishioners. Start with one, develop it well, and then expand. Choose relevant, important content that will inspire your parishioners to get involved and participate in your parish.

2019 This Is What Happens In An Internet Minute



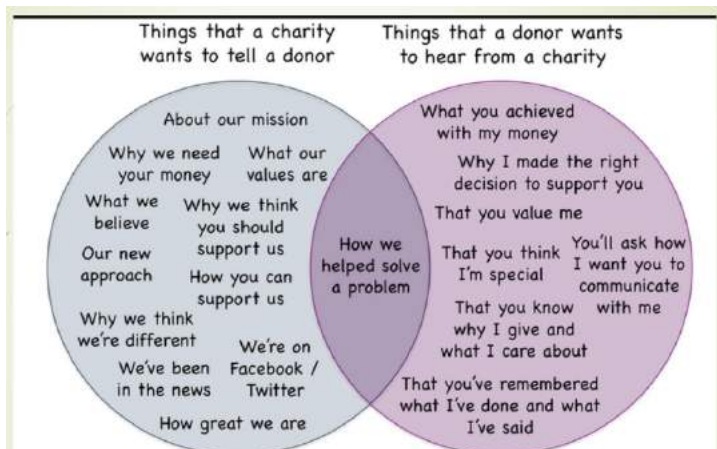
We spend 3 hours and 15 minutes a day on our phones.
Most people check their phones 58 times a day.
(with 30 of those during working hours)

Giving

Define your mission and your needs. Reach your parishioners on the level that exemplifies to them why they want and need to be supporting you and inspire them to give.

Offer ways to give that are convenient. Few people still write checks. If online giving is not something you offer, this needs to be a priority. Parishioners should have an ability to give regularly via their credit card, debit card, and/or bank account. Add a 'donate now' button to your website. Offer QR codes to make direct giving easy.

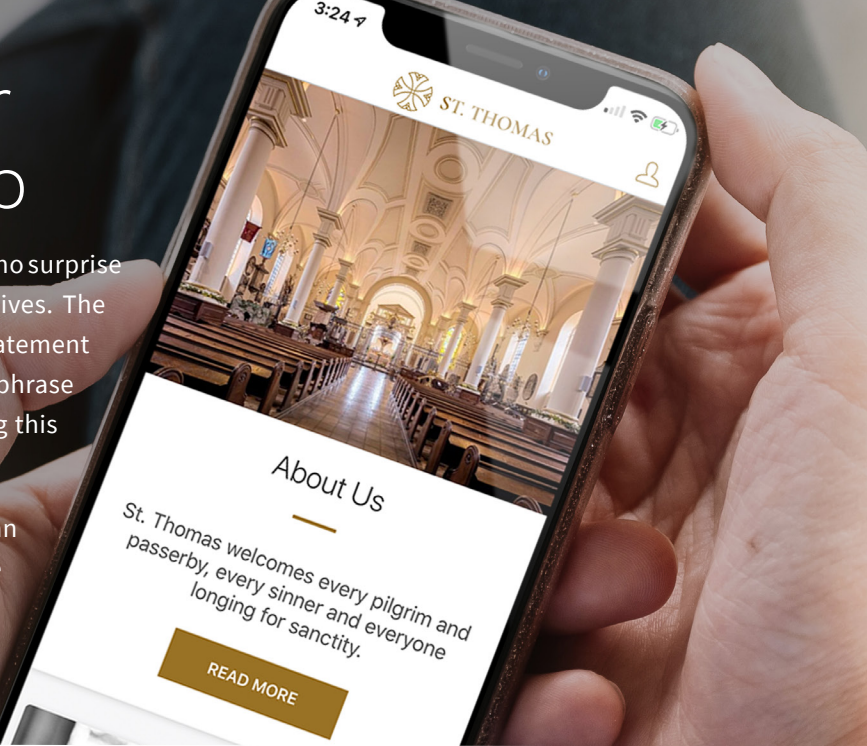
Thank your donors and keep them informed. There should also be regular updates on your website and bulletin regarding how much you are collecting and where it is going. Donors give to causes they connect with and need to know how they are helping.



8 Reasons Why Your Parish Needs an App

With more than 5 billion mobile users across the world, it's no surprise that apps have become an extension of many people's lives. The 'app' celebrated its tenth birthday last year, and the statement "There's an App For That!" has gone from a simple catchphrase to a fact of life. And yet, many parishes are not embracing this technology as a tool for engagement and evangelism.

Before you reject the idea of using technology as an evangelization tool, let's consider the fact that nearly five billion people worldwide have smartphones. This creates a wonderful opportunity for sharing the message of Christ through digital means.



Here are 8 reasons why you should engage your parishioners with an app:

1. CONVENIENCE Having access to apps allows people to integrate spiritual messages via an app anywhere and anytime.

2. BULLETINS An app is an easily accessible place for people to read and review the bulletin. Our Holy Father has asked us to be better about limiting our carbon footprint in his writings of Laudato Si'. With access to the bulletin digitally, you can reduce your use of paper and save money on printing costs.

3. PRAYER You can use your app to guide people through contemporary and traditional prayer practices within the Holy Catholic faith. This is a great way to help parishioners develop their prayer life, and they will have it in their pocket everywhere they go.

4. CONFESSION You can set a tab on your app to include an Examination of Conscience in preparation to confession, review the schedule of available times for confession, and even have a copy of the Act of Contrition available in the palm of your hands if you don't know it by heart.

5. OFFERINGS Eliminating the need to remember to write a check and put it in an envelope is a great option for many Gen X and Millennial members. Being able to do an autopay or in-pew offering from the phone is so much easier and in alignment with Laudato Si'.

6. ROSARY One of the most valuable elements of a Catholic App is a tab for saying the rosary. So many say they don't have the time to say it. Folding it into an app that sets a timeframe for completion that is audio-driven enables people to incorporate it into their busy day.

7. CALENDAR Having the calendar always available and in the palm of a parishioner allows them to more easily plan on attending parish events and Holy Days.

8. MESSAGING Apps are awesome for sharing daily devotional messages, reminders, announcements, and the prayers of the faithful.

Creating contemporary means of practicing our Catholic faith has even been encouraged by Pope Francis, as referenced in his address last year on embracing the digital convergence. Ready to implement a custom app in your parish? [Talk to an expert](#) today to see how an app can increase parish engagement and generosity.