



Setting up a Parish Evangelisation Team

We must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:16). This passion will not fail to stir in the Church a new sense of mission, which cannot be left to a group of "specialists" but must involve the responsibility of all the members of the People of God.
(*Novo Millennio Ineunte* 40)

As with any important activity, the first step is to ask yourself why you are doing it.

The point of setting up a parish evangelisation team is to turn the desire to “do something about evangelisation” into a reality in your parish. There are other ways of doing that, but setting up a team is a very helpful way, provided that it is clear that evangelisation is the task of the whole parish: the team is simply there to encourage and enable all to be involved who want to be.

Here are some simple steps towards setting up a Parish Evangelisation Team.

1. Preach and speak frequently about evangelisation, and write about it in the parish newsletter. This helps put it on the agenda in people’s minds. Speak about the responsibility of the entire parish to evangelise, in accordance with the quotation above from *Novo Millennio Ineunte*. Clarify the role of the team as enabling that to happen.
2. Find some suitable members for the team: 3-6 people would be enough. The best way is probably to approach suitable “candidates” personally, but a more general appeal through the newsletter and notices is possible also. Make it clear that the team members don’t have to do the evangelisation all themselves: in fact, being able to think and plan is a more important quality than being an obvious evangelist.
3. Give them some basic training, covering topics such as recent Church teaching on evangelisation, and some of the main methods and processes used in evangelisation. Needless to say, CASE is very happy to help with such training, in collaboration with local partners.
4. Decide and articulate what the relationship of the team with the parish priest, any other clergy, and the parish council (if there is one) will be. If the parish priest is not to be the leader of the team, decide who will be, and how communication will take place between the team and the parish priest.

5. Ask the bishop or his delegate to come and commission the team publicly, to highlight its importance in the life of the parish.
6. Get the team to do an inventory of every activity in the parish, and to note the potential for evangelisation of every aspect of parish life
7. Give the team a clear brief to develop and put into practice plans by which the parish can reach out to non-Catholics and the lapsed, both by serving the needs of the neighbourhood and by inviting others into the fullness of communion we share in the Catholic Church.

These are just a few ideas to get you started. CASE will be very happy to discuss the nuts and bolts of doing this in your parish. To contact the Director please e-mail: keith.bartrop@caseresources.org.uk For more downloadable resources please see: http://www.caseresources.org.uk/resources/resources_downloads.htm