



# DIOCESE *of the* MIDWEST

Department of Christian Service & Humanitarian Aid

## Parish Ministry Plan: Outreach Initiative

In our vibrant community of faith, the call to serve one another is not merely an option—it is an imperative rooted in the teachings of Christ. The Gospel encourages us to reach out to those in need, to offer compassion, and to provide support during times of hardship and loss. The proposed Parish Outreach initiative aims to foster a spirit of love and solidarity within our congregation by actively engaging with members who are facing challenges such as illness or bereavement. This ministry not only reflects our commitment to living out the Gospel values but also strengthens the bonds of our parish family. By extending our hands and hearts, we can create a network of support that embodies the essence of Christian community.

## Specific Steps to Execute the Parish Outreach Initiative

### Step 1: Establish an Outreach Committee

- **Form a Dedicated Team:** Recruit volunteers who are passionate about outreach and willing to commit time and resources to this initiative.
- **Assign Roles:** Designate specific responsibilities within the committee, such as card preparation, financial assistance coordination, and social services navigation.

### Step 2: Develop a Communication Plan

- **Create a Contact List:** Compile a list of parishioners who are currently sick, grieving, or in financial distress. This list can be updated regularly based on feedback from the congregation and pastoral care.
- **Regular Updates:** Inform the congregation about the outreach efforts and encourage them to share any needs they are aware of within the community.

### Step 3: Card Sending Initiative

- **Card Design and Supplies:** Choose or design uplifting and comforting cards. Ensure that supplies such as stamps and writing materials are readily available.
- **Personal Messages:** Organize a card-writing event where volunteers can gather to write personalized messages to the recipients, expressing care and support.

### Step 4: Financial Support Program

- **Identify Resources:** Research local charities, government programs, and community services that can assist parishioners in financial need.
- **Create a Fund:** Establish a dedicated fund for financial assistance that can be accessed by those in need. This may involve fundraising efforts within the parish.
- **Confidential Support System:** Set up a confidential process for parishioners to request financial assistance, ensuring that privacy is maintained.



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## Step 5: Social Services Navigation

- **Resource Guides:** Develop a guide that outlines available social services, including contact information, eligibility requirements, and application processes.
- **Training Volunteers:** Arrange training sessions for volunteers to familiarize them with local social services and how to effectively assist parishioners in navigating these resources.

## Step 6: Regular Evaluation and Feedback

- **Set Evaluation Metrics:** Establish criteria for measuring the success of the outreach initiatives, such as the number of cards sent, financial assistance provided, and feedback from recipients.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Create opportunities for parishioners to provide feedback on the outreach program, ensuring continuous improvement and responsiveness to the community's needs.

## Step 7: Celebrate and Acknowledge Contributions

- **Recognition Events:** Hold periodic events to celebrate the efforts of volunteers and the positive impact of the outreach program on the parish community.
- **Share Stories:** Highlight testimonials and stories of support in parish newsletters and announcements to inspire others to get involved.

## Conclusion

The Parish Outreach initiative serves as a vital expression of our commitment to love and support one another in times of need. By implementing the outlined steps, we can create a robust support network that not only helps individuals but also strengthens our entire parish community. Let us move forward with faith and compassion, embodying the essence of Christ's love in our outreach efforts.