

TOTAL PARISH DEVELOPMENT

UNDERSTANDING, ORGANIZING
and IMPLEMENTING Your Plan for
an Engaged Catholic Community

FRANK DONALDSON



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FOREWORD

“Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity. Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” SAINT JOHN PAUL II

In order to be successful in anything we do, we have to have passion and a desire to be the very best that we can be. I often refer to that as “fire in the belly.” By that, I do not mean being “top dog” or the “star” or the “hot shot.” I simply mean, taking the gifts that God has given us, developing those gifts, continuously working to improve them, and then making them work for the good of our cause(s). In our work across the country at the Institute for School and Parish Development (ISPD), we see many Catholic leaders who possess that “fire in the belly.”

As parish leaders, we all have similar missions: to develop and advance our parishes by engaging people to help us build the kingdom of God. This is an awesome responsibility. As many of us know, this work is not for the weak of heart; it is not for those who quit early; and it is not for those who want to raise a “quick buck” or “hit somebody up for money.” Being part of a vibrant Catholic parish development effort is rewarding, enriching, and fulfilling. Done properly, for the right reasons, this ministry helps us to develop and grow as stewards. It puts order into our lives, as we realize that our lives are not just about us; they are about doing God’s work and what God wants to *develop*. Properly understood, our ministry calls us to reach out as Jesus did and, despite the naysayers and those who only want to guard their kingdom, bring people

closer to him. In our Catholic parishes, we can have an impact on so many lives—from the new family who arrives with eager anticipation at their first Mass, to the person we see only at Easter, to the family who is going through challenging times.

But where do we develop this passion? How do we come to realize that this work of Catholic parish development is so much more than running a fund-raiser or “tapping” someone for money? How do we get away from always measuring what we do by the question, “How much money did you raise?” True Catholic parish development is much deeper.

My own journey into true Catholic parish development started with a family tragedy. In 1986, I lost my five-year-old son, Dustin. He died of an illness (rhabdomyolysis) that impacts few children. One day he was here, and then four days later he was not. What adds deeper meaning to his passing is that he started complaining about his legs cramping on Good Friday, and then he passed away on Easter Monday afternoon. Every Lent, our family’s faith becomes magnified through the remembrance of his death.

Dustin was a very likable child—always smiling, always laughing, always having a cheery twinkle in his eye. He attended St. Rosalie Catholic School in Harvey, Louisiana, and was a favorite of many of his teachers and the principal, Sister Jeanne. He was elected king of the Mardi Gras at the school and loved every minute of the attention. He was hardly ever down or sad, and even when he was punished for doing something crazy, it was only a matter of minutes before he would bounce back. One day he came home from school and announced that he was going to be a priest! Five years old and a priest?

Although Dustin always had a smile and a kind word, he frequently battled with illnesses, and so during Holy Week it really wasn’t a huge surprise when he complained about cramping in his legs. On Friday, his mother took him to the doctor and then on Saturday he was in the hospital—supposedly just for precaution. By Monday morning, things had turned for the worst as he was

rushed to the operating room with a heart attack, and it was then that we realized he might be in his last hours.

I will never forget the doctor at Ochsner Hospital coming to us and, in tears, saying, “We have done all that we can do. He will not live much longer, so please, go now and say your good-byes.”

It’s funny how moments like that are branded in your mind. I remember walking into the OR and looking at my son as he lay on an operating table. He was in pain, but he still had that smile. As I tried to maintain my composure, he looked up and the last words he said to me were, “Daddy, I’m going to be with Jesus.”

Dustin passed away Easter Monday afternoon at 3:42.

The next year was a blur. I was offered a job teaching English at Mercy Academy in New Orleans during that 1986–1987 school year. Sister Mary Ann Hardcastle, RSM, hired me. I really don’t know how I made it through that year; the pain was great and getting up every morning was a chore. All of us who have lost loved ones know the feelings and the struggles, and yet there is a faint desire to overcome and build something that will take us to the next day. Two thoughts kept running through my mind that year. I had a sociology teacher in college, Dr. Ben Kaplan, who reminded us how much better it was “to light a candle rather than curse the darkness.” I remembered that, and I also remembered my son’s last words. Those were the two threads that I hung on to—one of hope and one of faith.

Time moved on and the healing began. Life may shut a lot of doors, but God always gives us a window somewhere; we just need to find it. Gradually the pain moved into energy, and I developed a strong desire to do something meaningful—something that would make a difference. I moved into administration, then into development at Mercy Academy, and then, in 1989, there was a voice inside of me calling out to begin a new ministry. And so, with a leap of real faith, I left the security of a regular Catholic school paycheck and started the Institute for School and Parish Development. I have never looked back.

The fire that burned so strongly years ago is still alive and still as powerful as ever. So many times, as I leave home and head out on the road for another week in another city, I ask myself, “Why am I doing this?” And the answer comes back immediately: “You do it because of Dustin and because you have gifts to share and a family that believes in and supports you.” There was a reason my son was able to say what he said, and I owe it to the faith community of St. Rosalie Parish and School. They were very instrumental in developing Dustin’s faith—so much so that he even considered being a priest, and so much so that his final words echoed his belief in his maker. He did not get to that point alone; a pastor, a principal, and many others were greatly responsible for bringing him to that point in his life. And I cannot help but believe that Christ was there to hold his hand as he crossed to the other side.

The death of my son was the birth of this ministry. In my anguish, God gave me a lifeline and hope for the future. I have been blessed countless times since 1986—with my wife Suzy and my daughter Megan, and my older daughters, Lisa, Shannon, and Cheri, and nine grandchildren. In fact, my oldest grandson, Jordan, was born the day after Dustin’s birthday: September 26. God works in wonderful ways.

Years ago, we started the Dustin Ewing Donaldson Memorial Scholarship at St. Rosalie, where at graduation a member of our family has the opportunity to award an outstanding graduate who is going to continue his/her education in a Catholic high school with scholarship money for their first year. The faculty and staff vote for the recipient based on the traits we always attributed to Dustin:

- Courage,
- Pleasing, smiling personality,
- Always reaching out to help others,
- Unconditional love,
- Belief in the love of Jesus Christ,
- Polite and well-mannered.

A plaque with Dustin’s picture and the names of the recipients for each year hangs in the lobby of St. Rosalie Catholic School in Harvey, Louisiana.

“Fire in the belly.” It pushes us onward and brings about introspection, motivation, and purpose. My journey is not unique, for there are thousands just like me. However, my quest has always been the same—to work with a diocese or a parish or a Catholic school and, through the gifts God has given me, to really make a difference in helping build a stronger faith community, to help bring that Catholic institution *to total parish development*. And possibly, even in the smallest degree—through this ministry—to help bring others, and myself, closer to Christ, so that we all, in our final hour might be able to say, “Daddy, I’m going to be with Jesus.”

PART I

Introduction

History and Rationale

In 2015, I wrote a book titled *25 Lessons Learned in 25+ Years in Catholic School Development*. It was published by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) in March 2016. Shortly thereafter, I wrote a workbook to accompany the text, published by NCEA in November 2017, and the Institute for School and Parish Development now use both publications to teach Catholic schools about setting up successful development and advancement efforts.

At the time, I did not realize the need for such publications, but this became very noticeable when ISPD—Institute for School and Parish Development, the Catholic consulting company I founded in 1989—formed a partnership with the University of Dayton in 2017, and we, along with Sister Angela Zukowski, MSHS, D.Min., executive director for the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives, began to teach online certificate courses using the textbook and the workbook. The first ten-lesson course was offered in the fall of 2017, and we had 190 students enrolled from across the country. As of the spring semester 2019, we now have taught over 1,000 students (superintendents, principals, pastors, presidents, development and/or advancement officers, board members, faculty/staff, parent volunteers, etc.). People from more than 100 dioceses have participated in *25 Lessons Learned: Part I* and *Part II*.

It is through these relationships, connections, and associations that we realized the unbelievable *thirst* that leaders in Catholic institutions have for learning more about development. Many do

not have the time or the budget to attend faraway conferences and conventions, but they are able to learn with an online course where they can receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and a Certificate of Completion from The University of Dayton.

Therefore, after we completed the textbook and workbook in Catholic school development, many people encouraged us to do the same for Catholic parishes—where the need is just as great, if not greater. We now are excited to offer a combination textbook/workbook in Catholic Parish Development—made possible by having worked as a Catholic parish/school consultant for the past 30+ years throughout the country.

In addition, in the fall of 2018, we added a course to the curriculum we are offering through the University of Dayton—*Catholic Parish Development: Beyond Mediocrity*. This course, which we are now teaching, has 112 students from 52 dioceses. We are following the fifteen lessons of this book, *Total Parish Development*, and the response and the discussions and sharing of homework assignments has been contagious. Many parishes are excited about learning, and a number of parishes, not being content with doing what they have always done, are “putting out their nets into the deep.” They seem to be ready for real cultural change. As one student recently stated in his final exam project, “The real challenge for our parish leaders was actually understanding the real meaning of *Catholic Parish Development*.”

I would like to share these experiences and lessons with you. I only wish I would have had someone or something to guide me along the way and let me know what to do and what not to do when I was starting my development journey. There is a lot that is available in development/advancement for Catholic schools, but there is not a lot that is available in development for Catholic parishes. Sure, there are fund-raising companies and webinars on how to write letters and how to increase your offertory giving. There are companies that can come in and show you how to run a capital campaign. There are database companies, special event companies,

and others. But that is not what this book is about. This publication and this journey are about teaching you how to set up and establish a successful Catholic Parish Development *system* in your parish—one that will invite and involve people, and one that will move your parish to *total* parish development. If ever in the history of the Catholic Church there were a time when we needed to reach out and affirm, welcome, and engage, now is that time.

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PART II

Philosophy and Fundamentals of Catholic Parish Development

“Our Christian identity is belonging to a people:
the Church. Without the Church we are not Christians.”

POPE FRANCIS

Lesson One: Understand Catholic Parish Development and Its Importance

The first two decades of the twenty-first century might long be remembered as challenging years in this country, and, more specifically, in the Catholic Church. The events of September 11th, the constant ups and downs of the economy, the closing of a number of Catholic churches and schools, and daily headlines addressing the sexual misconduct of some clergy—these have all rocked the foundation of many Catholic dioceses, parishes, and schools. Those of us who work in the ministry of developing Catholic institutions continue to be challenged and to be called upon to set forth positive action that will build community, engage people, and build faith in our Catholic parishes and schools. The call for leadership has never been stronger. In fact, just today, I received an e-mail from one of my students in the online class I am teaching in Catholic school development who said, “The Catholic ‘pull’ is

not very popular this year. I am in a highly rated public-school district, so competition is tough. Timing is bad with the child abuse priest scandal that just came out across our state. I don't want to downplay a faith-centered school, but it is not a 'pull' right now. Any suggestions?"

CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENT: A KEY ANSWER

There are several ways to address these challenges, but the one that we see making the most impact is *development*. A key word. A key initiative. Unfortunately, it is a word that has been misunderstood for many years. So many Catholic leaders see development as the main way of getting money for their parish and/or school. Whereas fundraising can be one of the components of development, as we stated in the Introduction, we see development in a broader sense. We define development as *the meaningful involvement of people in your mission and vision for the future*. And the key word is *meaningful*. People do want to get involved; people do want to feel like they belong.

With all that has happened, there continues to be a strong cry throughout this country for Catholic institutions to straighten their ship, create a dynamic vision and plan, chart a course of positive direction, invite hundreds to get involved, and then set sail. In the past at many parishes and schools, this has been done with a selected circle of people; today, we find that more and more folks want to be invited; they want to belong; they want to help create that new vision, that new plan, that new ministry, that new program.

It is all about engaging people. By analogy, here is what we see over and over every day in this ministry of Catholic consulting. In most parishes and schools, if I drop a pebble in a pond, the first ripple is usually about 25–50 people. These are usually the leaders, the ones who are asked to do everything. They are the parish council members, the festival chairs, the ministry leaders, and those on the finance committee. And, if the truth be known, most parishes and schools could not do without them. The problem? Possible burnout, and many times these people are always asked to

do everything; therefore, very few new people become involved. It usually points to a statement that we at ISPD strongly believe: *The greatest challenge we face today in our Catholic parishes and schools is not raising money. The greatest challenge we face is in creating the roadways, avenues, and vehicles to invite, involve, and engage people.*



The second ripple is another 50 or more people who do not get involved, and they do not step forward because of one basic reason: no one invites them—*personally*. We create bulletin and newsletter announcements, put out flyers, post on our website, ask people to sign up for this and that, send out social media messages and e-mails, but very few Catholic leaders actually extend a personal invitation—eyeball to eyeball. There is one thing that years and years of consulting has taught us here at ISPD:

- When a person is invited to become involved by means of “paper” (letter, e-mail, bulletin, flyer, website, social media post, newsletter, etc.), 5%–8% respond positively;
- When a person is invited over the telephone, 15%–18% respond positively;
- When a person is invited to become involved, and the invitation is “eyeball to eyeball” and dialogue is present, then 45%–55% respond positively.

In addition, there are also third and fourth ripples from that pebble, and these are people who are not even known. They are neighbors, uninvolved parishioners, friends of the parish, vendors, community

members, and more. What we have seen is that most Catholic parish leaders know 20%–30% of their parishioner base and no more. These leaders may know names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mails, and have the ability to say “Hi” and “Hello.” But as far as actually knowing the people, their talents, their gifts, and their resources? Most Catholic institutions simply do not have the processes set up and the personnel in place to identify, invite, and involve. Just think of the hundreds and hundreds of “people resources” every parish has right at their fingertips. The key is setting up the development efforts to invite and involve these folks in a meaningful manner. Once people become involved, they then begin to take ownership, and a partnership develops. Once that sense of investment is present, the sky is the limit. Yet it all goes back to people, to personal invitations, to relationships, and to seeing development as the means of achieving that end. And what a wonderful time to invite and involve people in a meaningful manner. Development is the key. But we must be willing to change; we must shift the paradigm. We must formalize Catholic Parish Development.

ENGAGEMENT OF PEOPLE: THE LATEST DATA

If we agree that development is the ministry that helps the People of God find the structures for involvement and engagement, then it is also important that we understand the importance of engaging people. What is engagement? According to the Gallup Organization, think of it as the transmission in your car. When it is engaged, the gears mesh and the car moves. But if it is in neutral, the gears spin, but you do not get anywhere. It is like that in many parishes. Many people are very active, appearing to be doing a lot of important work. But activity can happen without any progress being made. The gears aren’t meshing; they are not engaged. And without engagement, the parish cannot move forward in accomplishing its mission.

Webster’s International Dictionary says this about the word engagement: “Act of being involved, greatly interested. A favorable attachment.”

In interviewing thousands of people over a period of years, the Gallup Organization has made some dynamic discoveries. In debunking some old myths, they have discovered a new set of paradigms that are fast replacing conventional leadership wisdom. Here are three of them:

1. Myth: Believing leads to belonging.

- According to Gallup analysis, this myth has been turned upside down. In reality, belonging is far more likely to lead to believing. The extent to which a member feels engaged in a community has a profound impact on his/her personal spiritual commitment.

2. Myth: An active member is a faithful member.

- Gallup research has discovered that activity that is not the result of engagement leads to burnout. And burned-out members eventually leave. In religious institutions where there is activity without engagement, terms such as “duty” and “responsibility” are repeated in recruiting volunteers for roles. And often the response to such recruiting is, “I’ve done my share. It’s time for the younger members to take their turn.”
- In contrast, engaged members are those who regularly have the opportunity to do what they do best, because the leadership of that parish has invested the time needed to discover each member’s talents and strengths.
- Engaged members do not burn out; they only become stronger, more energized, and more engaged.

3. Myth: Personal faith leads to public action.

- Outcomes such as how much a member gives financially, how many hours she/he volunteers in service to the parish, and how often she/he invites others to become part of that faith community are more dependent on his/her level of engagement than any other factor.

In ISPD's definition of development, the key word we have emphasized is *meaningful*. Development is the *meaningful* involvement of people in your mission and your vision for the future. *Meaningful* distinguishes between the volunteer at the bingo hall selling pull tabs and the technology guru who, as a new parishioner, gives the gift of setting up an interactive website for the parish. *Meaningful* distinguishes between the volunteers who haul a case of two-liter Pepsi to the parish center for the Friday Night Fish Fry and the parishioner who, as a horticulturist, decides to plant and grow a beautiful rose garden along the barren walkway outside of church. *Meaningful* distinguishes between the parishioner who volunteers for four hours at the plant booth at the fair and the parishioner who, as a master carpenter by profession, is in charge of designing and building the forty-two booths at the parish festival. Engagement is indeed a favorable attachment.

All of the above tasks are important in Catholic parishes; however, when a task is matched with a person's interests, gifts, and skills, then we find that the person becomes more engaged and feels a stronger sense of ownership.

To make this all come alive, in 1989, ISPD created our 7-“I” process. Through the years we have taught, written, and implemented these 7 “I” words in everything we do as Catholic development consultants. These 7 “I”s are the “plays” that make the game come alive. They force us to emphasize the people, the process, and the ministry of Catholic development. The 7-“I” process is the major vehicle for engaging people. Let us review.

THE 7 “I”S OF CATHOLIC PARISH DEVELOPMENT

Identify: Continually identify the people who will and can make a difference in your parish.

Inform: Using all of the tools in the communication toolbox, reach out to all members of the parish community, informing them how your parish is developing and advancing.

Invite: Personally invite people to belong—eyeball to eyeball.

Involve: Involve people in development processes in meaningful ways.

Implement: Put into action strategic plans and initiatives that have been created through people involvement.

Invest: Arrange for involved people to invest in the future of their parish and their own personal spiritual growth.

Improve: Implement an evaluative process to ensure longevity of the development process.

We invite you to view the 7 “I”s as one big circle that is constantly spinning, and inside of that circle are 7 smaller circles that are also constantly spinning. This energy—built around engaging people—creates the development efforts that will bring positive results.

MOVING FORWARD

As parishes continue to wrap their heads around this word *development*, most are faced with challenges that need to be successfully solved.

- How can we continue to build trust in our Catholic leaders?
- How can we evangelize more people in the midst of change?
- How can we communicate better?
- How can we engage more people to make a difference?
- How can we reach the young people of our parish?
- How can we address and integrate the growing Hispanic communities in our parish?
- How can we identify and encourage those who could be called to religious vocation and priestly leadership?
- How can we make sure that Jesus is the heart of all that we do?
- How can we make sure that all parishes understand the real meaning of Catholic Parish Development and move forward in implementation?

These are daunting challenges. Yet there are answers contained in the lessons in this book, answers that point the way to a bright future. Not THE answer, but answers; however, we must be willing to change. It all begins with people; it continues with the creation or the re-creation of the mission and the vision. Assessment is the next step, which leads to planning and implementation. Along the journey, more people are engaged; processes are initiated, and the ministry of Catholic Parish Development begins or continues to flourish. It may be a mystery to some, but to those who understand the true meaning of development, the importance of engagement, and the 7 “I”s in motion, there has never been a better time for this ministry to flourish. Development can come more alive than ever in our parishes. Our journey is not undertaken alone:

- The Father encourages us,
- The Son directs us,
- The Spirit anoints us.

Our challenge, today and beyond, is to seize the moment, move to total parish development, and journey with Christ to help build the kingdom.

Questions, Exercises, and Next Best Steps for Lesson One

1. How do your parish leaders define the word “development”?
2. With the definition of “Catholic Parish Development” being used in Lesson One (the meaningful involvement of people), what individuals/groups in your parish understand this definition? Please check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Parish staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parish council | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

3. What processes do you have in place to make sure that you are identifying and personally getting to know all new families who move into the parish?
4. When seeking to invite people to various events, activities, ministries, leadership positions, etc., what percentage of the invitations are done personally, with phone calls and “eyeball to eyeball” invitations? Please explain.
5. For those people who do raise their hands to help, are you set up and organized to personally follow up and engage them in the life of the parish? Please explain.
6. As you look at the families in your parish and their involvement level, what percentages would you apply to the following:
 - _____ Involved/Engaged (involved in ministries, attends Mass on regular/consistent basis, financially participates on weekly basis)
 - _____ Uninvolved (not involved in any ministry, attends Mass once a month, and does not financially participate at all)
 - _____ Actively Disengaged (only see them on Christmas, Easter, and when daughter needs to be married, child needs to be baptized, and/or spouse needs to be buried)
7. Using the 7-“I” approach that is explained in this lesson, please fill in the following information.

IDENTIFY A Please check all of the different individual and groups of parishioners and non-parishioners who are, or could be, important to the mission/vision of your parish—where you have accurate contact information.

- Names of parish council members

- Names of finance council members
- Names of ministry leaders for each ministry
- Names of ministry members in each ministry
- Names of parish staff members
- Names of school administration, faculty/staff, and parents (if applicable)
- Names of parishioners not in the above groups
- Names of vendors
- Names of key civic community leaders
- Names of key diocesan leaders
- Names of key financial leaders (people who give more than \$1,000/year)

IDENTIFY B In addition, with your parishioners, explain how you identify their interests, skills, talents, and gifts.

INFORM Please list all of the ways you communicate with the people you listed above.

INVITE With all of the events, activities, ministries, and happenings in your parish, please list those where people are personally—by phone or in person—invited to attend and/or belong.

INVOLVE Please list all of the events, activities, and ministries in your parish that involve and target the newest parishioners year to year.

IMPLEMENT Please list all of the processes, ministries, and activities where the people you personally involve actually help you implement.

INVEST Please list any activities, events, ministries, and processes where you believe people in your parish really become involved in a meaningful way and actually see themselves as true stewards of the parish—as a result of that involvement.

IMPROVE Because of the theme of continuous improvement, please describe the ways that you and those around you seek to professionally develop and get better from year to year. In addition, please describe what process(es) you use to assess and improve all of the ministries in your parish on an annual basis.

Lesson Two: Clarify the Differences: Development, Stewardship, and Evangelization

“Evangelization does not consist in proselytizing, for proselytizing is a caricature of evangelization, but rather evangelizing entails attracting by our witness those who are far off, it means humbly drawing near to those who feel distant from God in the Church, drawing near to those who feel judged and condemned outright by those who consider themselves to be perfect and pure.” POPE FRANCIS

In our work with Catholic parishes, it is important to understand what we mean by *Catholic Parish Development*. We find that three words need to be understood: *stewardship*, *development*, and *evangelization*. While it is true that these three words may be somewhat similar in meaning and function, for the sake of clarity, let us further distinguish.

Father Jim Manning, pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Springboro, Ohio, and a long-time presenter at ISPD’s workshops and seminars, has offered a wonderful explanation that should help define these words.

Stewardship is the biblical basis of development. It is the philosophy, the theology, and the spirituality behind development. In many of his parables, Jesus used the image of a “steward” to teach and remind his disciples that we are all accountable for the proper use and management of the gifts that have been entrusted to our care. Everything, including life itself, is a gift for which we need to be grateful. When all is said and done, stewardship is about gratitude. It reminds us that we all have the need to return thanks to God for the blessings that he has entrusted to us in life. Stewardship instills within us a “grateful heart.”

Development is the ministry that puts a face on stewardship. The vision of the church articulated in the Second Vatican Council (*Lumen Gentium*) is that of the “people of God.” Development is the ministry that can best incarnate this vision of church. As a ministry in the church, development provides the structures, the processes, and the avenues by which the People of God can do and live the spirituality of stewardship. Development helps the People of God live stewardship in an organized fashion. Development, as a ministry, positions the People of God on the same page and heading in the same direction as they live the gospel call to stewardship. Development helps the People of God live out their baptismal right and responsibility to be involved in the life of the church and thus share in the building of the kingdom of God here on earth. As we have said since the beginning days of our company: *Development is the meaningful involvement of people in your mission and vision for the future.* This enables and empowers the greatest amount of people to be involved in the life of the church (and the school). *Development helps accompany people in the journey of life back to the kingdom; it is the conduit for people engagement and true stewardship.* True Catholic development helps us “draw near” to people in all of the ripples in the pond.

In the process of fulfilling the call to stewardship in the ministry of development, *evangelization* is being done. Evangelization is preaching the Good News of Jesus.

Development brings the Good News of Jesus to the people of God in a structured, organized, and systemic way. As development helps the People of God find the structures for involvement and engagement in the life of the church and the ways and the means to live the gospel mission of stewardship, the Good News of Jesus is being taught, preached, and lived. Development as a ministry is actually developing and building the kingdom of God. When the ministry of development helps the people of God to give more of their time, wisdom, skills, prayers, connections, and resources, it actually is helping them develop a deeper relationship with the Lord. Giving our lives to the Lord as he did for us is the ultimate expression of stewardship and gratitude.

Questions, Exercises, and Next Best Steps for Lesson Two

1. How does your parish define the word “stewardship”?
2. Based on Lessons One and Two how would your parish leaders (clergy, parish council, parish staff, and finance council) differentiate between “development” and “stewardship”?
3. In your parish, do you have a team, committee, and/or ministry that focuses on development? What about stewardship? Please explain.
4. What ways does your parish actively educate all parishioners on the meaning of true stewardship? Please explain.
5. In this age of the New Evangelization, what does your parish have in place to evangelize? Please explain.