Christmas Together Phone Call & Text Message Campaign

(Adapted from the National Eucharistic Revival's Invite One Back initiative)

The purpose is not simply to increase attendance at one Mass. The goal is to remind people that they are remembered, valued, and always welcome in their parish family.

WHO TO CALL

Before beginning outreach, the clergy, staff, and parish leadership should prayerfully discern the following.

Who will receive these invitations?

Create a list of parishioners you haven't seen in some time, those who attend only occasionally, families whose participation has lessened over the years, or former parishioners who may still have a connection to your community.

Begin praying for each person by name. Consider the most meaningful way to reconnect with each individual. Some may appreciate a phone call, while others may respond better to a handwritten note, personal visit, text message, or invitation from someone they already know.

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Who will pray for this effort?

Gather a team of parishioners committed to praying for everyone who will receive an invitation, those extending invitations, and all who may be searching for a deeper relationship with Christ.

Every invitation should begin with prayer.

BEST PRACTICES

Begin with Prayer

Before making each call, ask the Holy Spirit to guide your conversation. Pray that the person experiences Christ's love through your voice and your concern.

Keep Voicemails Brief

If you reach voicemail, leave a short, friendly message. People are more likely to return a call that feels simple and approachable.

Start with the Person

Before mentioning the purpose of your call, ask how they are doing. Listen well.

Questions like:
"How have you been?"
"How is your family?"
help communicate genuine care.

Speak Like Family

Whether you know the person personally or not, remember you are calling on behalf of their parish family. Let warmth, kindness, and encouragement shape your conversation.

Listen More Than You Speak

Some people may simply appreciate being remembered. Others may want to share something happening in their lives.

Don't rush the conversation.

Assume Good Intentions

Avoid making assumptions about why someone has not been attending Mass. Life changes for many reasons—moves, illness, busy schedules, family responsibilities, grief, or simply falling out of the habit.

Your role is not to diagnose the reason.

Your role is to extend Christ's welcome.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

Invite conversation with questions such as:

- "How have things been for you lately?"
- "How can our parish pray for you?"
- "What has been bringing you joy recently?"
- "Is there anything our parish can do to support you?"

Be Flexible

Not every conversation will follow a script. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide the discussion.

Take Notes

Record prayer intentions, family updates, or any commitments made during the conversation so appropriate follow-up can occur.

End with a Next Step

Whenever possible, conclude with a specific invitation.

Examples include:

- joining you for Back Together Sunday
- introducing them to someone after Mass
- connecting them with the pastor
- arranging Communion for the homebound
- following up with another phone call

Specific invitations are easier to accept than vague ones.

Follow Up

After the conversation, send a brief text, email, or handwritten note thanking them for taking your call and reminding them that your parish is praying for them.

Sample Phone Script

Hello, **Mr./Mrs./Ms. [Last Name].** This is **[Your Name]** calling from **[Parish Name].** I'm glad I caught you. How have you been?

(Allow them to respond.)

I wanted to check in because, as we begin the Advent and Christmas season, our parish has been reaching out to people simply to let them know they are remembered and cared for.

The holidays have a way of stirring up memories and changing our routines, and sometimes we lose touch with people we'd really like to see again. We wanted you to know that you are always welcome here.

Is there anything happening in your life that our parish could pray for?

(Listen carefully.)

Thank you for sharing that with me.

I'd also like to personally invite you to Christmas Mass this year.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we're making a special effort to welcome everyone who joins us for Mass. It will be a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with old friends, meet new people, celebrate the Eucharist together, and enjoy some hospitality after Mass.

Our Christmas Mass times are:

[Insert Mass Times]

Do you think one of those might work for you?

(If appropriate, offer to meet them before Mass or introduce them to someone.)

Before I let you go, is there anything else our parish can do for you?

Thank you for taking time to talk with me today. Whether we see you on **[date]** or another Sunday, please know you are always welcome here and remain in our prayers. God bless you this Advent and Christmas.

Sample Phone Script for School Families

Hello, Mr./Mrs./Ms. **[Last Name].** This is **[Your Name]** calling from **[Parish Name].** How are you today?

(Allow them to respond.)

As Advent begins, we've been reaching out to our school families simply to say hello and let you know we're thinking about you.

We know this season can be busy with concerts, celebrations, and holiday plans, but we also know it's a wonderful time to reconnect with the people and places that help us grow in faith.

Is there anything our parish or school community can be praying for as your family prepares for Christmas?

(Listen and respond with care.)

I'd also like to invite you and your family to Christmas Mass this year.

As a parish, we're making a special effort to welcome families as we celebrate the birth of Jesus together. After Mass we'll enjoy some hospitality and time to visit with one another.

Our Christmas Mass schedule is:

[Insert Mass Times]

We would love to see your family if you're able to join us.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to speak with me today. Please know that you and your family are in our prayers, and we look forward to seeing you soon. God bless, and Merry Christmas!

Sample Text Messages

Many people will not respond to a phone call. Here are sample text messages that can be used.

1. **Simple Invitation**
   Hi! Our parish is celebrating Christmas **[insert Mass times]**, and I immediately thought of you. I'd love it if you'd join me for Mass. Want to sit with us?

2. **For a Friend**
   I've really enjoyed getting into the Christmas season, and it's reminded me how much I appreciate our parish family. Would you like to come to **Christmas Mass** with us on **[date/time]**? I'd love to see you there.

3. **For a Neighbor**
   As Christmas gets closer, our parish is making a special effort to welcome everyone for **Christmas Mass** on **[date/time]**. We'd love to have you join us if you're free.

4. **For Someone You Haven't Seen in Church**
   I've missed seeing you at church lately and just wanted you to know I was thinking about you. If you'd ever like to come back, I'd love to sit with you. Our parish is celebrating **Christmas Mass** on **[date/time]**.

5. **For School Families**
   Hope the Christmas season is off to a great start! Our parish is celebrating **Christmas Mass** on **[date/time]**, and we'd love to see your family there.

6. **For Grandparents**
   Just wanted you to know we're thinking of you. If you're able, we'd love to have you join us for **Christmas Mass** on **[date/time]**.

7. **For Adult Children**
   We'd love to have you join us for Christmas Mass on **[date/time]**. No pressure—I just thought it would be nice to worship together again this Christmas.

8. **For Someone Exploring Faith**
   If you've ever wondered what our church is like, **Christmas** would be a great time to visit. I'd be happy to save you a seat on **[date/time]**.

9. **For Someone Going Through a Difficult Time**
   I've been praying for you lately. If you'd like, I'd love for you to join me for Mass on Christmas **[date/time]**. The holidays can be hard, and sometimes it's just good to know you're not alone.

10. **After They Say Yes**
    That's wonderful! We'll save you a seat. I'll meet you at the main entrance about 15 minutes before Mass so we can walk in together.