



Phone Call Campaign

(adapted from the **Invite One Back** initiative of the National Eucharistic Revival)

Who to Call?

Before you begin outreach, the clergy, staff, and leadership team at your parish will need to discern the following:

- **Who will receive these invitations?** Make a list of parishioners you haven't seen in a while or people who used to be members of your parish and start praying for them now. Discern how you can best reach each member of that group and make a plan to contact each one of them in whatever way would be most meaningful.
- **Who will intercede for this initiative?** Put together a team of prayer warriors dedicated to covering every disconnected member of your parish in prayer. This is a great way to involve the whole parish in this meaningful campaign!

BEST PRACTICES

Here are some useful tips for engaging people over the phone:

Prepare with a Prayer

Ask Jesus to give you His heart for this person before you pick up the phone and invite the Holy Spirit into the conversation. God knows exactly what this person needs to hear and will speak through you.

Keep Voicemails Short

Many people subconsciously associate the length of the voicemail with the amount of effort necessary to call back. Keep your first voicemail short and sweet. You can give more detail in the next voicemail if they miss your call a second time.

Don't Monologue

Give the other person a chance to speak within the first 15 seconds. Asking something simple like "How have you been?" before launching into the reason for your call is a great way to get the other person more invested in the

conversation.

Project Familiarity

Even if you don't personally know the recipient of your call, he or she used to be a valued member of your parish family. On behalf of your parish, speak with the warmth that comes with that connection.

Use Your History

If you DID personally interact with the parishioner when he or she was active at the parish, work as many details as you can into the conversation.

Assume the Best

The goal of every call is to make the person on the other end feel seen, heard, valued, and desired as a member of your community. This person should hear genuine concern in your voice, never accusation or judgment.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

If you leave room to answer with a yes or no, chances are he or she will choose to do so. These one-word responses won't allow you to truly connect with the person on the other end of the call, and you won't gain any insight into why that person stopped coming to Mass or where he or she could use support from the parish community. Open-ended questions allow you to encounter more of a person's heart and mind in the answers.

Respond Appropriately

Some folks' responses might pull you "off script" – and that's ok! The most important thing is that you connect with them, wherever they're at.

Take Notes

When making a lot of calls, it can be easy to forget the details of each conversation. Have a pen and paper handy so you can remember what each person shared with you. That way you can reference what you discussed next time you speak (e.g., "How's your nephew feeling after his surgery?").

Don't Hang Up Without a Plan

If the person has questions about Catholicism, have you set up a time for him or her to speak with the pastor? If they're homebound, are you going to send an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to their home with the Body of Christ? Or are they going to say hello to you after Mass this Sunday to continue your conversation? Do your best to get verbal agreement to a specific action and timeline. The more specific the commitment, the more likely a person is to follow through. Reiterate these agreements at the end of the conversation so they're fresh in

both your minds and write them down.

Follow Up

Text or email after your call to thank them for their time and/or openness. Remind them of any commitments each of you made (e.g., "I'll see you at 11am Mass on Sunday!"). This makes it even more likely the person will follow through.

Sample Phone Script

How can we, your parish family, pray for you?

"Hi, <Mr./Mrs./Ms. last name>, I'm so glad I caught you. This is <your name> from your parish, <name of parish>. How have you been?"

[Let them answer.]

"It's been a while since we saw you at Mass, so I'm calling to check in and make sure everything's ok. Did something change in your life, or is there a way I can pray for you today?"

[Give them room to speak. Respond appropriately. If applicable, recommend a local or parish ministry that can help them if they are in need.]

"I understand that life can be a lot sometimes. We all go through seasons where things get tough, and that's why Jesus gave us the Eucharist. To feed us spiritually and provide us with the strength we need to keep going."

I would like to invite you to Mass this weekend. We are coming up on the season of Advent. This is a great time of year join us for Mass. It's such a hectic time of year, and Sunday Mass is a great place to find peace and prayer together with a community of joyful people.

"We have Mass at a few different times this weekend: <list Mass times>. Which time works best for you?"

[Respond intentionally with your pastoral feedback and invitation based on the season they are in and what they are sharing with you.]

"Before I go, is there anything else I or the parish can do to support you right now? Any more intentions we can bring to prayer?"

[Let them give you intentions and respond appropriately.]

"Well, it was a pleasure speaking with you, and I hope to see you at Mass! Have a great rest of your day. God bless."

