

5 Characteristics of a vibrant parish

This resource is a straightforward way to brainstorm and collate existing initiatives, pathways and programs in a parish under the five characteristics of a vibrant parish – evangelisation, worship, formation, fellowship and service.

To discover more about the five characteristics, you may refer to the Vibrant Parishes pages on *Take the Way of the Gospel Parish Resource Guide*.

The resulting table, used in tandem with the results from the *Growing Vibrant Parishes Self-reflection tool*, assists leadership teams to make observations about strengths and gaps, and assists with setting priorities and planning to animate vibrancy.

Who you will need

- A facilitator(s) to lead the activity and gather the data.
- Participants gathered in small groups of 3 people.

You will need

- One copy of this tool for each small group.
- Whiteboard or five sheets of butchers paper. This will be used to collate the list of programs.
- Pens or whiteboard/permanent markers. Place enough markers or pens so that each person has one.
- Dot stickers

Suggested Timetable

WELCOME

This is a time to make people feel welcome and to organise some hospitality. You may wish to serve some refreshments. Please invite people to take a seat before this time begins.

PRAYER

- We suggest you read from Acts 2:42-47
- You may wish to use *Lectio Divina* or hold a spiritual conversation. This time is to allow for deep listening to the Spirit and each other. You may wish to ask participants to reflect on these following questions:
 - What word or phrase draws my attention?
 - Why does this word or phrase resonate for me?
 - What do I feel?

METHOD

Step 1: In your groups, fill in the table with current parish initiatives. If participants think of a past but fruitful activity, they may include it.

Step 2: Collate the information into one table on a whiteboard or across butcher's paper stuck on a wall.

Step 3: Invite participants to reflect on the following question:

- Which one (or two) characteristics should be our immediate priority?

Invite participants to place a sticker on the whiteboard or butcher's paper next to the characteristic(s) they have chosen.

The leadership team (however named) will use this information to craft goals and priorities. They should consider how they best engage the wider parish community in the next stage.

Worship

Evangelisation

Fellowship

Formation

Service