



Charting the Course: Forming the Parish as a Community of Small Communities

How-tos

1. How to begin the planning process for *Charting the Course*

- Evaluate areas of strength in the parish. Evaluate small Christian community involvement in light of the parish mission statement.
- Identify parish resources.
- Hold a parish assembly; set up focus groups; provide a questionnaire on what evangelization and faith formation activities people want to see in the parish.

2. How to discover new leadership that will continue the vision, direction, and planning

- Be open to new people and talent, continually discerning new leadership. This requires understanding the makeup of the parish community and considering important issues, such as:
 1. What are the various characteristics of people within the parish boundaries? What are their concerns?
 2. How will they understand and respond to the vision for the parish?
 3. How do the leaders touch the greatest number of people?
 4. How do the leaders address the needs of youth and young adults?
- Approach people of the parish with the attitude of viewing each person as a resource to be treasured, of including as many interested parishioners as possible in various ministries—matching the right people with the right responsibilities.

3. How to continue fruitful leadership in the Parish Core Community

- “Model” prayer, faith sharing, and community.
- Emphasize the importance of vision and goals: “True leadership always communicates a vision and is able to formulate related goals toward which efforts are directed. Vision also provides inspiration, energy and sustenance for the ‘long haul.’”¹
- Recognize the importance of knowing the parish (see above) and of springing from and feeding back into the larger Church. True Christian leadership is not a “lone ranger” type of leadership. It springs from and returns to the larger Church.
- Understand the importance of keeping a good balance between tasks (responsibilities and activities) and relationships.
- Contact your parish and/or (arch)diocesan office for additional information. Look for opportunities to attend a workshop, bring in a speaker, or offer further study on the topic to parishioners. For example, consider downloading the ParishLife workshop on *Charting the Course: Forming the Parish as a Community of Small Communities* (www.parishlife.com).

- Communicate with RENEW International about conducting a workshop on *Charting the Course*. (Contact Mike Fabian at SCCServices@renewintl.org, or: 908-769-5400)

¹ *RENEW 2000 & Beyond: Leadership Book* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997), p. 17.