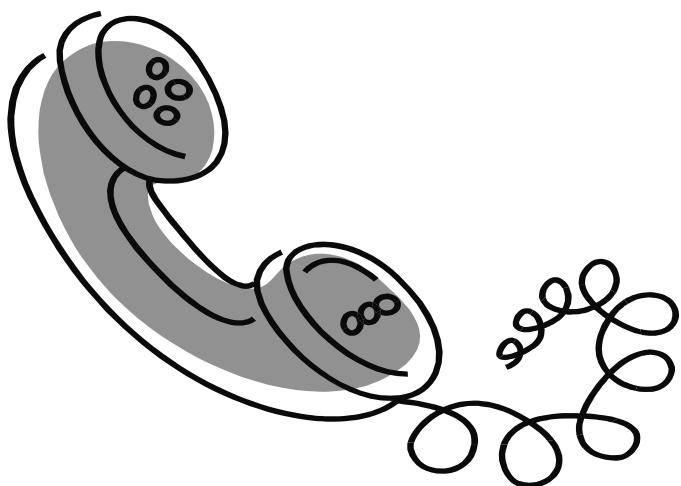


Phone Visitation Outreach



Training for Caller

Make Every Person Count!

Script for Caller



- Have all materials close at hand.
- Pray before making call.
- Smile when talking (the person can “feel” your presence.)

Introductions:

- Hello, my name is . . . from (name of parish.)
- I am calling on behalf of (pastor's name). You should have received a letter from him stating that the parish is contacting parishioners over the (time span, e.g. “next two weeks”) to: (give reason for call: update parish records, receive your input on ways to improve the parish, invite you to..., hear prayer requests, etc.)
- Would you have a few minutes?

If the person does not have time to talk, ask the person when you could call back.

(Do not leave it up to the person to call you back.)

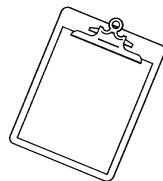
Unwelcome Reception

If the person you phone does not wish to talk with you, simply say “God Bless you” and end call.

Update Parish Record Form:

- If you don't mind I would like to confirm the information we have on our parish record form.

Go over the information on the form. Clarify spelling even if it seems like a simple name. If the person wants to check some of the information with another person who is not home, note it on the card and finish this part of the call at another time.



Pastoral Suggestions: (record comments)

- An important part of this call is to receive your input on ways to make our parish a more vibrant community. I would like to ask you a couple questions:
 1. Do you have any ideas on how we might improve the parish? (e.g. strengthening of a youth group, social events, outreach to singles, babysitting service, justice outreach)

2. Do you have any suggestions on ways that the parish could help people deepen their faith? (e.g. bible study, bereavement committee, welcoming committee, programs to strengthen families)
3. Our parish strives to be a community of prayer. Are there any needs that you would like us to pray for? (record prayer request)

Question on Mass Attendance

If the caller feels comfortable, this question could be asked:

"Do you have the opportunity to attend Mass on a regular basis?" If not, "is there anything we can do to encourage you to come more often?"

Invitation to Parish Activity:

- (you may have some upcoming parish event/program/talk you could invite the person to attend; e.g. Adult Faith Formation speakers, bible study, parish picnic, holiday party, etc. Try to remove obstacles that would prevent the person from coming. (need transportation, child care, fear of not knowing anyone—assure them that you will be there and will look for them.)

Ending Phone Conversation:

- I would like to send you some information and materials in the mail.
Mail parish handouts and any other materials appropriate to that house, e.g. *Annulments*, *Top 10 Reasons to Come Back to Church*, *How to Get More Out of the Mass*.
- Thank you for your time and God bless you.
If you feel comfortable, leave the person with your name and phone number in case they have additional concerns or thoughts.

Praying With the Person

At the end of each call, if they are open to prayer, invite them to join you in a short prayer.

"Lord, we thank you for this time together. We ask your blessing upon (N). We lift her/his intentions up to you. Fill her/him with your Spirit that she/he may know of your unconditional love. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen."



Possible Scenarios

COMMENT

Why are you calling me?

I am no longer a practicing Catholic.

I am angry at the Church because . . .

I am too busy at this time to talk . . .

I am too busy at this time to attend Mass regularly . . .

I am divorced and remarried, I was told that the Church has excommunicated me. If the Church doesn't want me, I don't need the Church.

RESPONSE

Over (name specific time period) our parish is calling every house in this section of the parish to (give reason for visit: update parish records, invite to a parish social, hear ideas to improve parish, etc.)

I am sorry to hear that. For whatever reason you left the Church, I hope you will give us another try. (Give good points of the Parish)

While divine, the Church is a human institution as well. It is unfortunate that we cause pain to one another. In the name of the Church I apologize and hope that you will give us another chance.

I certainly understand, when would it be more convenient to call back?

I can only imagine how hectic your life must be with all that you have on your plate, I don't want to add anything to your plate but to offer some balance in your schedule. (Mention various Mass times, value of Mass, etc.)

I am sorry that you picked up that message from us. While you may not be able to receive the Eucharist you are not excommunicated and the Church does not want you to feel separated. You can and are encouraged to share in the life of the Church. (If appropriate invite them to consider speaking to a priest, seek an annulment, volunteer for a ministry)



The key question is
not "Why did you leave"?
but "What would you need to come back"?