

Home Visitation



Training session

"We must carry Christ in our hearts to wherever Christ wants to go, and there are many places to which Christ may never go unless we take Christ . . ."

-Caryll Houselander

1. Why did I say “yes” to this ministry?
2. How does this ministry bring people closer to Christ?
3. How will I bring someone closer to Christ through this ministry?



“It is not enough to discover Christ . . . You must bring Christ to others!”

Pope John Paul II

Script for Home Visitation

Pray with partner before beginning visitation

Smile when greeting the person 

- Hello, my name is (introduce self and partner)
- We're from the parish of . . . (give name and location)
- I hope we are not catching you at a bad time.
- We won't take much of your time.
- Our parish is visiting every home to connect with parishioners, and meet our neighbors. (Optional: we also would like to invite you to an ice cream social to be held . . .)

State your name and purpose immediately. Show nametag as you introduce yourself. Be cheerful, warm and friendly. Engage in light conversation first: how are you today? Chat about the garden, weather, etc.

Unwelcome Reception

If you visit a home and the person does not wish to talk with you, simple say "God Bless you" and walk away.

If they are REGISTERED in your parish

- Perhaps you received the letter from the Pastor saying that we are visiting the parishioners so that we can talk to you personally and hear any concerns or comments you may have about the parish.

Go over the parishioners questionnaire that was sent to them beforehand.

- Invitation to be involved

If you know the person/family is active in the parish, thank them for all they do. If they are not active, this is a good time to engage them in conversation about the good things happening in the parish. Invite them to be involved. If they express an interest, be sure to record their name and pass it on to the parish person responsible for that ministry. Assure the person you are visiting that someone will be contacting them.

- Invitation to Parish Event (optional)

Give invitation and encourage attendance. Try to remove obstacles that would prevent them from coming. (need ride, children invited, fear of not knowing anyone—assure them that you will be there and will look for them.)

Parish Event

Have some upcoming parish event to invite them to, give an invitation to all registered Catholics, inactive Catholics and other homes that are open to the invitation. E.g. ice cream social, night at the movies, speaker (something that is free).

- As you know our parish strives to be a community of prayer. Are there any needs that you would like us to pray for? (put on prayer sheet)
- Leave materials
Leave prayer card, bulletin, and any other materials appropriate to that house.
- Thank you for your time and God bless you. (Praying with the person-optional)

If they are NOT REGISTERED in your parish

- We are visiting every home in this area to get to know our neighbors better and share a little bit about our faith community. Do you mind if I ask if you or anyone living here are Catholic?

(based on answer go to specific area below.)

A. CATHOLIC

- We want to invite you to our wonderful parish. Our parish has . . .

(warm community, great liturgies, sense of the sacred, good music, beautiful environment,, babysitting during Mass, bible study, handicapped accessible . . . Be ready to give two or three strong points)

- Invitation to Parish Event (optional)

Give invitation and encourage attendance. Try to remove obstacles that would prevent them from coming. (need ride, children invited, fear of not knowing anyone—assure them that you will be there and will look for them.)

- Additional questions

- ◊ Would they like to be registered in the Parish?
leave them a form or phone number and encourage them to become part of the parish.
- ◊ If they have no desire to register, ask: "Would you like to be on a parish mailing which would be sent out periodically from the parish? (Christmas and Lenten Schedule, other parish events. This is NOT envelopes nor is it a registration to the parish, simply a chance to keep connected.)"

- Our parish strives to be a community of prayer. Are there any needs that you would like us to pray for? (put on prayer sheet)

- Leave materials

Leave prayer card, bulletin, and any other materials appropriate to that house.

- Thank you for your time and many blessings upon you. (Praying with the person—optional)

Question on Mass Attendance

If the Home Visitor feels comfortable, this question could be asked at the homes of Catholics (registered and unregistered).

"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?"

Praying With the Person

At the end of each visit, 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.

B. NOT CATHOLIC

- Are you active in another faith community?

If ACTIVE in another faith community

- ◇ Ask them about their Church, mention any good things you may have heard about that parish (youth programs, social events, ecumenical gatherings)
- ◇ Like your parish, our parish strives to be a community of prayer. Are there any needs that you would like us to pray for? (put on prayer sheet)
- ◇ Leave materials
Leave prayer card and any other materials appropriate to that visit.
- ◇ Thank you for your time and many blessings upon you. Let us continue to pray for one another as we strive to grow stronger in the faith. (Praying with the person—optional)

NOT ACTIVE in any faith community

- ◇ Would you like to know about the Catholic Church? Or do you have any questions about the Catholic faith?
Have some simple informational materials to give. If they show an interest, ask if they would be open to a phone call from someone in the parish as a follow-up to this visit. Be sure to get their correct name and phone number and pass it on immediately to the parish person responsible for this ministry.
- ◇ We would like to invite you to our wonderful parish because . . .
(warm community, convenient Mass times, good music, beautiful environment, bible study, babysitting during Mass, handicapped accessible, etc. Give two or three strong points)
- ◇ Invitation to Parish Event (optional)
Give invitation and encourage attendance. Try to remove obstacles that would prevent them from coming. (need ride, children invited, fear of not knowing anyone—assure them that you will be there and will look for them.)
- ◇ Our parish strives to be a community of prayer. Are there any needs that you would like us to pray for? (put on prayer sheet)
- ◇ Leave materials
Leave prayer card, bulletin, and any other materials appropriate to that house.
- ◇ Thank you for your time and many blessings upon you.
(Praying with the person—optional)

Possible Scenarios

SITUATION

POSSIBLE RESPONSE

Why are you visiting me?

Over a two week period our parish is visiting every house in this section of the parish to (give reason for visit: get to meet the neighbors, invite you to a parish social, answer questions you may have about the Catholic Church, etc.)

I am no longer a practicing Catholic.

I am sorry to hear that. For whatever reason you left the Church, I hope you will give us another try. (Name Parish and talk about strong points. Ask if you could put their name on a seasonal mailing list.)

I am angry at the Church because . . .

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 join us again.

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

We certainly understand, could we stop by at another time when it will be more convenient? (if they indicate that they do not want another visit, ask if you can just leave some material).

I am not Catholic but am interested in knowing more about Catholicism . . .

We would like to leave you with some material on the Catholic Church and on our parish. If you like, I could take your name and have someone from the parish contact you.

I am a practicing Catholic but new in the area . . .

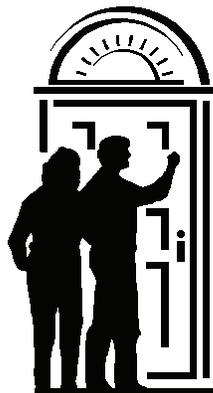
We invite you to our parish, which is a great community because . . . Here is our Church bulletin. If you would like to register (explain process).



Next Steps

- Review lists
- Pray for the homes you will be visiting
- Meet with partner
- Visit the homes
- Return paper work on assigned day

Parish Instructions:





Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office for the Formation of the Laity

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"assisting parishes to spread the
Good News of Jesus Christ"