

Growing Your Ministry: 3.2 Parish Wide Launch

Parish Wide Launch

When your attendance grows to between 15 -20 men, you can begin to split your group into two or three tables of five men each. Remember this a small group model, so as the numbers grow you'll want to maintain the integrity of the small group discussion experience. This is also a good time to start considering a Parish Wide Launch of your ministry.

The Parish Wide Launch involves introducing the newly formed men's ministry to the parish at mass. This can occur before, during or after mass. We recommend before the opening procession or during the mass for the highest impact, not when people are taking their seats or leaving during announcements.

Option one: Easy launch

- Set up a Core Team with your Pastor and Deacons. Discuss the best timing and weekend for the launch according to their schedule and other parish events going on.
- One pastor told us he felt the ministry was so important, he wanted to do this before mass began while he had everyone's attention. He didn't want it to be swallowed up in the other announcements. This made a big impression.
- Your Pastor introduces the men's ministry explaining that you've been meeting each week for the last 4 to 6 months. He gives a brief overview of the purpose of the ministry and his thoughts on the importance having a ministry that addresses the unique challenges men face in building faith based relationships and growing in their spiritual lives.
- As a team, select a few men to speak and have them standing with your Pastor as he gives the overview and introduces them to the parish.
- Choose men who are comfortable speaking and who can be compelling about their experience. Each man should speak *briefly* about one aspect of his experience at the weekly meetings. Talks should be choreographed ahead of time to avoid redundancy.
- For example: one man speaks about how men's ministry has helped his faith journey, another about positive changes in his mass experience, another on new awareness gained in his role as a husband and father.
- After the men speak one of them can invite the men and women of the parish to a pre arranged coffee reception where your team can circulate and meet men and their wives. This should be an opportunity for men to meet one another and casually discuss the ministry without pressure, invitation without expectation.

Option Two: A more involved launch

Follow the guidelines above but instead of a coffee reception, host a talk on a theme that will pique men's interests. Most guys will sign up to attend something that helps them to be a better father and we've successfully used fatherhood as a topic when launching to the parish.

- Have a guest speaker come to your parish (or a compelling lay member) to address the importance of fatherhood as a vital role in a man's faith journey. (see our sample Fatherhood talk by MM leader Ed Tonnessen in our Resources Section)
- We serve a simple buffet style breakfast. Coffee, Eggs, Pancakes and Bacon. (Catered or cooked by the men) We begin with an opening prayer. Have people get their breakfast and take their seats. The talk begins once everyone has been seated and started with breakfast.
- The talk is usually about 30 minutes long. Afterward we hand out discussion questions for each table based on the talk.
- After another 30 to 40 minutes we have a large group sharing to hear comments about the talk and the discussions, usually facilitated by the speaker or your Pastor. Then we close with a prayer.
- This entire process mirrors the men's weekly meeting format pretty closely. In closing we tell the men present, if they enjoyed this discussion ... they have just experienced what we do every Saturday morning on a variety of topics at Men's Ministry. Please come join us any Saturday.