

## How can parishes assess the ministries of the parish?

Regular assessment of how parishes live out their call to Word, Worship, Service, and Community is critical to fulfilling the mission of the Church. It is recommended that a sub-committee of the pastoral council is created to undertake the assessment. Below are some important considerations for assessing these aspects of a vibrant parish:

- The pastor/pastoral administrator should work with the pastoral council to determine who will be on the sub-committee, how long the sub-committee has to gather the information, how the information will be gathered, and how it will be communicated to the pastoral council and community.
- A [community needs assessment](#) can be helpful, prior to the ministry assessment, in identifying gaps in outreach as well as possible collaboration opportunities. If this step is needed the council should allot additional time for its completion and communication.
- Next the sub-committee should determine who will be invited to be a part of the assessment. Will all registered parishioners be invited to give input? Should special groups within the church be targeted for input? Should other people from the wider community be invited to participate?
- A survey should be developed by the sub-committee, with approval from the pastor/pastoral administrator and pastoral council, to give opportunities for input. A sample survey is available at <http://oprp.dor.org>.
- Surveys can be handed out, mailed, offered online, or distributed in a combination of ways depending on the likely response from the target audience. If more than 50 surveys will be distributed, an online service such as SurveyMonkey should be considered in order to more easily collate the responses. If the sample survey questions are acceptable (or with minor adjustments), the Office of Pastoral Resources and Planning can create the online survey and run summary reports for the parish at no charge.
- The availability of the surveys, an explanation of why input is needed, and clear instructions on how to submit responses should be communicated in the bulletin, at the pulpit, on the parish website, and at all parish gatherings or meetings.
- Sufficient time should be given for distribution and return of the surveys.
- When the submissions are complete, the sub-committee should summarize the responses and report back to the pastoral council.
- The responses should be used to inform the pastor/pastoral administrator and pastoral council's work on goals and objectives for the parish. The Office of Pastoral Resources and Planning can provide a sample process for determining parish goals and objectives.