



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NURTURING A HEALTHY PARISH

1. WHAT IS A HEALTHY PARISH?

A healthy parish:

- Encourages spiritual growth and worship
- Builds strong and loving relationships
- Creates welcoming and mission-focused ministries
- Operates with integrity, clarity, and accountability

Key Principle:

Healthy behaviors create a healthy parish, and a healthy parish creates healthy outcomes.

2. CORE ATTRIBUTES OF HEALTHY PARISH

Spiritual Vitality

- Centers parish life around:
 - Divine Liturgy
 - Prayer
 - Sacraments
 - Spiritual formation

Communal Strength

- A healthy parish:
 - Serves others beyond the parish
 - Welcomes visitors with genuine hospitality
 - Embraces diversity and inclusion
 - Cares for parishioners compassionately
 - Encourages unity, forgiveness, and trust

Operational Effectiveness

- Healthy leadership includes:
 - Clear mission and vision
 - Shared leadership and collaboration
 - Leadership development and succession planning
 - Financial responsibility and transparency
 - Trustworthy communication and operations

3. KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

PARISH STRENGTHS

Most parishes scored strongest in:

- Being loving communities
- Worship and spiritual growth
- Welcoming visitors and guests

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Areas needing continued focus:

- Clear mission and vision
- Empowering parishioners in decision-making
- Developing future leaders

4. PRACTICAL STEPS FOR PARISH LEADERS

Assessment

- Reflect honestly on parish health
- Evaluate strengths and areas for growth
- Use the 12 attributes as a discussion framework

Action

- Start conversations among clergy and lay leaders
- Develop a parish improvement or revitalization plan
- Focus on one or two key growth areas first
- Engage parishioners throughout the process

Leadership Best Practices

- Collaborate across ministries
- Communicate openly and consistently
- Pray for discernment and guidance
- Start small but remain consistent

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5. REVITALIZATION APPROACH

A revitalization plan:

- Targets specific parish challenges
- Typically spans 12–18 months
- Includes:
 - Parish health assessment
 - Leadership team formation
 - Communication strategy
 - Ongoing progress reporting

Key Insight

Healthy parishes intentionally move from:

Assessment → Reflection → Action → Renewal

6. LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAYS

Healthy parishes thrive when they:

- Keep Christ at the center
- Build cultures of love and trust
- Empower parishioners to participate
- Invest in leadership development
- Align ministries with mission and vision

BOTTOM LINE

A flourishing parish becomes a living manifestation of Christ—rooted in worship, strengthened through community, and committed to serving others with love.



The 12 Core Attributes of a Healthy Parish

Spiritual Vitality

1. Centers itself around a cycle of worship and spiritual growth.

Communal Strength

2. Implements programs that serve others outside the parish.
3. Embraces diversity – building bridges with people of different backgrounds.
4. Is welcoming and friendly to visitors.
5. Recognizes the essential task of caring for one another.
6. Sees the good in people and assumes the best in others.

Operational Effectiveness

7. Is trustworthy.
8. Has a clear vision and mission.
9. Empowers parishioners to effect change as decision-making and power is shared.
10. Continually develops great leaders.
11. Is financially responsible.

Foundational

12. Is loving.



HAVE A QUESTION?

CONTACT STEVE PAPPAS, STEVENPAPPAS2@GMAIL.COM

STEVE TIBBS, STIBBS@BLUEVASE.COM

2x2
LEADERSHIP
Development