

# OUTREACH *to the* UNAFFILIATED: A Field Guide for Leaders

COMMITTEE ON EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS

## Introduction

If the Church is going to fulfill her universal mission, “to enlighten all people with the brightness of Christ, which gleams over the face of the Church, by preaching the Gospel to every creature” (LG 1), then she must engage one of the most remarkable trend lines of the 21<sup>st</sup> century—the rapidly increasing number of people who identify as “unaffiliated” from major religious traditions. The USCCB’s Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis sparked a conversation on this important and timely issue with its 2019 video on [Outreach to the Unaffiliated](#). This Field Guide for Leaders is designed as an accompaniment to that video project and a practical resource to build on that momentum. While the video outlines five broad paths for engaging the unaffiliated, this resource provides examples of how parish and diocesan leaders might unpack these five paths in their specific missional context.

As the Church continues to search for creative means to reach out to the unaffiliated, this Field Guide is designed to be a practical tool to inform ongoing discernment, as well as a resource for the use of effective principles for formation of missionary disciples. This Field Guide identifies organizations and apostolates which might serve as effective models for Catholic leaders across the country. The list of organizations is not intended to be exhaustive, nor is it meant to be an approbation of all their work; rather, organizations were chosen that exemplify certain dimensions of effective outreach to spur the imagination of those in the field. Included in each section are a sampling of insights and relevant anecdotes from leaders of different apostolates. The sections in italics, introduced by

the phrase “...shared the following about their work,” provide commentary from the organizations themselves, in their own words, in order to capture their own spirit. In response to the call of Pope Francis for a “pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are” (EG 25), this resource focuses both on *what* these ministries do and, even more importantly, *how* they do it.

Such examples of reading the “signs of the times” and responding to the movements of contemporary culture correspond to a recurring theme from the new *Directory for Catechesis*: It is essential that “the Church grasp the possibilities for encounter and for proclamation of the newness of the faith. This is the linchpin of her *missionary transformation*, which drives *pastoral conversion*” (DC 5). The future of the Church is inextricably linked to the future of her engagement with the unaffiliated, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to lead and guide all who approach this opportunity with bold confidence.



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### A Prayer for the Unaffiliated

*Lord Jesus Christ, through your life, death, and resurrection we see the depth of your love revealing to us how far you will go in seeking to save the lost sheep. We know the burning desire of your heart that every person come to know your personal love for them and the true freedom of being Sons and Daughters of your Heavenly Father.*

*We pray for the many people, especially the young, who have been drawn away from your Catholic Church because of scandal, apathy, secular values, sinful deceptions, or confusion about the truth. We know the pain of your heart and the longing you have for their return. We repent for the ways that as a Church we have failed to present the Gospel to them authentically.*

*In your compassion we beg you for an outpouring of your Holy Spirit to bring them to encounter your Church anew. We pray that you will raise up authentic missionary disciples who will seek out these lost sheep and empower them to witness to your love and truth so that those who have wandered might come to discover anew the abundant life you will for them in relationship with you through your Church. We ask this in your name, Jesus, and in the confidence of your Holy Spirit.*



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### I. The Path of Justice

The path of justice allows the human person to participate in the manifestation of God's love for humanity through the works of mercy. "Jesus' many healings clearly show his great compassion in the face of human distress, but they also signify that in the kingdom there will no longer be sickness or suffering, and that his mission, from the very beginning, is meant to free people from these evils. In Jesus' eyes, healings are also a sign of spiritual salvation, namely liberation from sin" (RM 11). Through social justice efforts of serving those in need, Christ invites people to faith and opens the door to salvation. The path of justice has a unique role in outreach to the unaffiliated as it is an expression of unity. Both the faithful and those who claim no faith can fully participate and engage together, forming a relationship built on shared goodness. The work of justice establishes mutual trust and respect, and it gives credibility to the Church as she demonstrates her faith and manifests her mission.

### Engaging in direct service and practicing the works of mercy

The Church's mission to the poor is an important part of the Church's outreach to the unaffiliated. Many young people today want to make an impact with their lives and to make a difference in the world. Working shoulder-to-shoulder with young people in the mission to love and serve the poor brings the Church into relationship with people whom she may never otherwise have encountered. This provides an opportunity to encounter, accompany, and enter into relationship with these young people. Further, through participating in the mission of the Church to spread the justice of the kingdom throughout the world, those who are unaffiliated might not only contribute to that justice but

might also and a greater openness in their own heart to the God who desires that justice.

### Catholic Heart Work Camp

[\(\[heartworkcamp.com\]\(http://heartworkcamp.com\)\):](http://heartworkcamp.com)

In these week-long mission opportunities for youth groups from across the U.S., service to those in need is coupled with a spiritual retreat to reach the hearts of teens and to introduce them to Catholic Social Teaching.

### St. Vincent de Paul ([svdpusa.org](http://svdpusa.org)):

A Catholic lay organization which leads women and men to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are in need and suffering. Chapters can be started in local communities.

### Dismas Ministry—A National Catholic Prison Outreach

[\(\[dismasministry.org\]\(http://dismasministry.org\)\):](http://dismasministry.org)

With the "good thief" who died beside the Lord Jesus as their patron, the Dismas Ministry provides scriptural, catechetical and spiritual resources to prisoners and to those who minister to them.

### Christ in the City ([christinthecity.org](http://christinthecity.org)) shared the following about their work:

*Our first principle is getting in touch with one's own poverty. The reality of our existence as created beings is one of complete dependency on God. We can do nothing good, fulfilling, and true outside of his Providence. This fundamental state of poverty is the space in which God enters our life and sustains us. From here, any real spiritual life and sense of prayer is born. As we go out to encounter the poor we are reminded of our own dependency. We become in touch*

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

*with our need for God, or at least in something beyond ourselves. This experience for the religiously unaffiliated can be as powerful as it is for the Christian. We strive to accompany our friends on the street and our volunteers in this process of encountering the poor and realizing their own needs.*

*Our second primary focus is friendship with the poor. Christ came among us as one who serves. He gravitated toward the poor (the poor in spirit, the economically burdened, the sinner, etc.). The identity of the Christian has been revealed in Church history through the lives of the saints and the radical witness of those who shared their lives with the poor. If you want to give witness to the Gospel and bring others into the life of Christ, the fastest way might be to simply start living into the identity of Christianity. “Whatever you did for the least of these, you did it for me.” The works of mercy themselves act as an evangelizing force in those who live them as well as in those who observe from a distance.*

*Third, we emphasize that the experience of loving another is a case for God. Similar to the eschatological witness that celibacy is to the world, radical love in the service of the poor acts as a case for the Divine and for the deeper meaning of human life. Getting outside oneself in love for another assumes that a greater good exists than worldly success and individual human fulfillment. The perfection of love in the human person is to participate in the very life of God. Radical love bears witness to the joy of Christian life in Christ and it is very attractive to religious and the religiously unaffiliated alike. When the religiously unaffiliated are invited into service of the poor, they experience firsthand the deeper calling intrinsic to their humanity (the perfection of love). A ministry of presence and encounter is something that Christ in the City considers to be a radical witness of Christ’s love.*

*A recent example of how these principles have come together was at one of our weekly events called Lunch in the Park where we invite all our homeless friends to share a meal together at the downtown park. Volunteers and missionaries help prepare the meal and set up the tents and tables. A bystander named Evan*

*was walking by and watched our missionaries having conversations with the homeless and handing out food. He had been religiously unaffiliated for most of his life. After introducing himself and offering to help, he shared his story and many of his struggles with a missionary and then left determined to become engaged with some form of religion again. Without hearing an argument for God’s existence or the legitimacy of the Church, this man reached out to a Catholic counseling service, began attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and is actively seeking a men’s group at a church nearby. He plans on helping at our next Lunch in the Park.*

## Promoting healing ministries to address personal and societal wounds

There is much suffering in the world. Individuals and societies are wounded in various ways. Part of the sending of the Church is to specifically address those wounds by sharing in Jesus’ own healing ministry. “The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily health, has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members” (CCC 1421). The healing of such wounds, personally and societally, reveals the power of the Gospel to save.

### St. John Paul II Healing Center ([jpiihealingcenter.org](http://jpiihealingcenter.org)):

This healing center provides experiences for individuals to encounter the power of Jesus’ healing ministry through conferences and events; it then equips and trains Catholics to participate in the healing ministry.

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### Knights of Peter Claver ([kofpc.org/sj](http://kofpc.org/sj)):

The Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary offer fellowship and resources for Black Catholics with a strong focus on social justice and racial equity.

### Unbound ([heartofthefather.com](http://heartofthefather.com); [heartofthefather.com/about/espanol](http://heartofthefather.com/about/espanol)):

Unbound Ministry is an approach to deliverance and healing prayer that helps individuals respond to the Gospel in five focused areas: repentance, forgiveness, renunciation, authority, and the Father's blessing. Unbound is a safe, loving, effective prayer model that helps people to respond to the good news of the Gospel and find spiritual freedom.

### New Ulm Diocesan Healing Ministry ([dnu.org/healing-ministry](http://dnu.org/healing-ministry)) shared the following about their work:

*The Diocese of New Ulm has a prayer team specifically trained to help individuals find healing in those areas of their life where they have been wounded and lead them to experience spiritual healing, peace and freedom. They schedule appointments with individuals in a compassionate, confidential, non-judgmental environment and utilize a healing and deliverance prayer model which has enabled many people to experience spiritual freedom and the abundant life promised by Jesus. In a prayer ministry session, individuals meet with a trained prayer team of two or three people who lead them through key areas of conversion and growth to a greater depth of freedom in Christ. This experience offers an opportunity to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, in a gentle and non-confrontational way, to heal past hurts and traumas, and to lead one deeper into the freedom given to us by Christ at our Baptism.*

## Fostering friendship and small Christian community through the power of personal witness and accompaniment

Today, one of the great cultural challenges is an epidemic of loneliness, felt by those in and outside of the Church. Many of the structures that once provided a sense of common identity and belonging in our culture are no longer present or have been diminished, especially for many young people. This is a troubling development, since humanity is inherently relational. We need love, hope, and faith to survive. Whether they could articulate it or not, one core “goodness” that so many find lacking in their life today is a deep sense of community, of being seen, known, and loved. In her outreach to the unaffiliated, the Church can embody this path of justice in authentic Christian community and real friendships that restore, nurture, and provide hope.

## Movements and New Communities:

A flowering of the charisms of the baptized following the Second Vatican Council has led to the development of movements and communities wherein Catholics commit to a common way of life and prayer.

- *Arise International* ([ariseintl.org](http://ariseintl.org)): An international movement of young adults dedicated to raising up a generation of leaders through communion, charitable action, and formation.
- *Charismatic Renewal* ([nsc-chariscenter.org](http://nsc-chariscenter.org))/ *Renovacion Carismatica de las Estados Unidos y Canada* ([rcchispana.org](http://rcchispana.org)): A name given to a

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

broad set of Catholic communities and groups worldwide in 230 countries with 160 million members who believe that God is bringing about an evident renewal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, similar to the experience of the early Church.

- *Communion and Liberation* ([english.clonline.org](http://english.clonline.org); [espanol.clonline.org](http://espanol.clonline.org)): An ecclesial community/movement that provides a Catholic response to the postmodern crisis through encountering the event of Jesus Christ and reality as it is; chapters exist in many cities across the country.
- *Couples for Christ* ([couplesforchristusa.org](http://couplesforchristusa.org); [cfcppc.org/nosotros](http://cfcppc.org/nosotros)): An association of the lay faithful aimed at the renewal of family life where couples commit to supporting one another in community by gathering together in groups in each other's homes; couples are brought to a living relationship with Jesus Christ through these gatherings.
- *Focolare* ([www.focolare.org/en](http://www.focolare.org/en); [www.focolare.org/es](http://www.focolare.org/es)): An ecclesial movement that promotes unity across the world; at the heart of the movement are small Christian communities whose members take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.
- *Schoenstatt Movement* ([schoenstatt.org](http://schoenstatt.org); [schoenstatt.org/es](http://schoenstatt.org/es)): An international lay ecclesial movement where members live in established communities and commit to an apostolate.
- *Worldwide Marriage Encounter* ([wwme.org](http://wwme.org); [wwme.org/?lang=es](http://wwme.org/?lang=es)): Founded in 1952 and considered by some to be the first of its kind, Worldwide Marriage Encounter provides marriage enrichment experiences for couples.

### FOCUS ([focus.org](http://focus.org)):

The Fellowship of Catholic University Students is a Catholic collegiate outreach whose mission is to share the hope and joy of the Gospel with college and university students, inspiring and equipping them for a lifetime of Christ-centered evangelization, discipleship and friendships in which they lead others to do the same. FOCUS places resident missionaries on college campuses and utilizes "the method modeled by the master," person-to-person discipleship and teaching those whom they disciple to do the same. This eventually leads to a process known as "spiritual multiplication." FOCUS also organizes mission service trips to developing countries during school breaks. College students can participate in these mission trips even if they are not enrolled in the particular universities where FOCUS teams are located.

### St. Paul's Outreach ([spo.org](http://spo.org)):

SPO, as it is often called, is an evangelistic outreach to college students on forty-six college campuses across the country, forming missionary disciples through deep relationship with God and in communities, called "households."

### i.d.9:16 ([id916.com](http://id916.com)) shared the following about their work:

*The mission of i.d.9:16 is to form young adults (20/30s, married, single, with or without kids) into intentional disciples of Jesus Christ, and this includes those who would consider themselves religiously unaffiliated. When specifically dealing with this group of people, we encourage our members to keep in mind a few key principles that have proven to be critical for fruitful mission.*

*We must remember that every person, religious or not, is loved by God with their own story of joy and sorrow. While programmatic strategies can be effective, the individual person cannot be lost amid some sort of*

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

*broad evangelization strategy. Certainly, Jesus preached to the crowds, but he tended to call individuals, and we believe that everyone is called to follow him. By remembering the individual and listening to their unique experience, the Holy Spirit can inspire us to do and say what is most likely to lead them one step closer to Christ.*

*While the Church's teaching, history, and tradition remain deeply compelling and important, our own experience with Jesus tends to be more effective as the initial doorway with the unaffiliated. Dogma can be debated, but my own story is difficult to deny. As St. John reminds his readers, it's what we ourselves have seen, heard, and touched concerning the Word of Life—that's what we offer to those around us (1 Jn 1:1). Everyone likes a good story, and the story of Gospel integrated into the heart of a believer is tough to ignore.*

*Finally, the Gospel is countercultural, and we can't sugarcoat, ignore, or blush at the hard sayings of Jesus. If we neuter the message, we run the risk of presenting a lukewarm or milquetoast message that can't compete with the narrative of our culture. Jesus Christ is Lord even for the unaffiliated, and we can't be afraid—at the right time and place—to proclaim this truth and invite a response.*



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### II. The Path of Beauty

The path of beauty has the effect of capturing a person's focus and attention. Beauty can suddenly and deeply arrest a person and move him or her into a contemplation of the reality beyond the immediate self. Whether it be sacred art, the mystery of the liturgy, or the wonders of the created world, beauty has the potential to open a person's heart, which can lead to that fundamental moment of encountering Christ. Utilizing "the way of beauty" (*via pulchritudinis*) is essential to the mission of evangelization (EG 167).

#### Providing opportunities for encounter: Retreats and conferences

"Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty ideal but the fruit of an encounter with a person" (DCE 1). If the Church is going to consciously utilize this path, then her leaders need to be intentional about cultivating moments where individuals can have the space to encounter the beauty of God and be "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37). Retreats and more intensive experiences are special opportunities for this encounter.

**Cursillo** ([natl-cursillo.org](http://natl-cursillo.org); [natl-cursillo.org/espanol/inicio](http://natl-cursillo.org/espanol/inicio)):

A retreat experience and movement whose method attempts, from within the Church, to give life to the essential Christian truths in the singularity, originality, and creativity of the person.

**ACTS Retreats** ([www.actsmissions.org](http://www.actsmissions.org); <https://www.actsmissions.org/?lang=es>):

An ACTS Retreat is a parish-based event which offers parishioners an opportunity to experience the love of Jesus Christ. This, in turn, fosters a desire for intentional discipleship. ACTS Retreats are given by parishioners for parishioners, and in this way, serve to build Christian community at the parish.

**Light of the World** ([lotwem.org](http://lotwem.org); [lotwem.org/luz-del-mundo](http://lotwem.org/luz-del-mundo)):

The Light of the World team brings a proven retreat experience to parish communities and then trains parishioners to run it. Through the process, parishes also develop and implement a comprehensive evangelization strategy, fed by the fruits of the retreat.

**NET Ministries** ([netusa.org](http://netusa.org)):

NET Ministries challenges young Catholics to love Christ and embrace the life of the Church. Every August, 175 young Catholics aged 18 to 28 leave behind their jobs, school, family, and friends to devote nine months to serving with the National Evangelization Teams, offering retreats in parishes across the country.

**Life in the Spirit Seminar** ([lifeinthepirit-seminar.com](http://lifeinthepirit-seminar.com)):

These seminar sessions are designed to help individuals be introduced to and embrace the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

**Damascus** ([damascus.net](http://damascus.net)):

The mission of this innovative Missionary Formation Center is "to awaken, empower, and equip a generation to live the adventure of the Catholic faith through world-class programs and an environment of encounter." Damascus offers retreats throughout the year with a resident



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

mission staff and week-long camp experiences in the summer.

### **Camp Wojtyla** ([www.camp-w.com](http://www.camp-w.com)):

This Catholic outdoor adventure program for middle and high school students is nestled in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. Each summer, Camp Wojtyla leads and challenges young people through adventures in the wilderness into a joyful and transformative relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

### **Steubenville Youth Conferences** ([steubenvilleconferences.com/youth/](http://steubenvilleconferences.com/youth/)):

These dynamic weekend experiences are often attended by youth groups. Veteran attendees may attend Franciscan LEAD, a five-day immersion in Catholic teachings on leadership, evangelization, and discipleship immediately preceding the weekend conference.

### **Vision for High School Students** ([mcgrath.nd.edu/conferences/summer-institute/vision-youth-conference/](http://mcgrath.nd.edu/conferences/summer-institute/vision-youth-conference/); [mcgrath.nd.edu/conferences/summer-institute/vision-youth-conference/informacion-para-los-padres/](http://mcgrath.nd.edu/conferences/summer-institute/vision-youth-conference/informacion-para-los-padres/)):

This summer program offered by the University of Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life combines the theologically rich experience of nationally known keynote speakers with the mentorship of college students. Young people are invited to ask big questions about how God is calling them to use their talents in service to the Church and the world.

### **Life Teen Leadership Conference** ([lifeteen.com/events/life-teen-leadership-conference/](http://lifeteen.com/events/life-teen-leadership-conference/)):

A dynamic, prayerful, and impactful week of talks and activities, the Life Teen Leadership Conference helps teens become the leaders and disciples that God is calling them to be.

## **Facilitating the experience of beautiful worship**

As the “source and summit of the Christian life” (CCC 1324, LG 11), the celebration of the liturgy must pursue excellence and avoid banality in order to elevate the minds and hearts of worshippers to the transcendent. For those coming to Christ for the first time or encountering Christ anew, powerful experiences of prayer outside of the Mass can be a good first step back into relationship with the Church and the community. Examples could include Adoration, worship music, Taizé chant, and more. Below are two examples of organizations which facilitate such encounters, as well as two which prepare attendees to participate in the Mass more deeply:

### **Emmanuel Community events – Twin Cities** ([emmanuelcommunity.com](http://emmanuelcommunity.com)):

This Catholic Lay International Community brings together faithful who share a common desire to strive for holiness. Eucharistic adoration serves as the key experience which opens members of the Community to be compassionate signs of God's love for the poorest of the poor—both materially and spiritually.

### **“Night Fever” events – Chicago** ([nightfeverchicago.org](http://nightfeverchicago.org)):

One night a month, as walkers pass by the downtown Cathedral on their way to bars, shows, or parties, young Catholics stand on the street

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

and invite them to light a candle or pray for peace. If the passerby agrees, a volunteer personally ushers them inside the cathedral where they find hundreds of others praying, singing, celebrating Eucharistic adoration, or meeting with a priest for Confession.

### The Liturgical Institute

[liturgicalinstitute.org](http://liturgicalinstitute.org):

Located at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, IL, the Liturgical Institute serves and forms laity, clergy, and religious through graduate programs, online courses, and conferences on the topic of renewal in the liturgy.

### Source & Summit

[sourceandsummit.com](http://sourceandsummit.com) shared the following about their work:

*When faced with the Church's great need in our times to evangelize the unaffiliated, the first realization that we make at Source & Summit is that the liturgy is not the Church's primary venue for evangelization. In fact, it's not the primary place for catechesis either, or for devotion and discipleship, or for the expression of culture. The liturgy has its own particular purpose and position within the Church's life. That purpose is the worship and glorification of God and the sanctification and invigoration of the faithful precisely so that new evangelists can be sent out into the world to share the Light of Christ with everyone they encounter and in everything they do.*

*So often, and usually with only the best of intentions, we can attempt to turn the liturgy into a platform for evangelization, or for some other purpose.*

*Unfortunately, these efforts ultimately can limit the liturgy's power to form missionary disciples as effective bearers of the Light of Christ to the world, and even serve as an obstacle to this aim.*

*The liturgy exists to unite missionary disciples to Jesus Christ, who are given the opportunity to participate in his perfect act of worship offered to the Father and then*

*to be poured out into the world to give credible witness to those who do not affiliate themselves with Christianity. No logical argument or act of persuasion can compare with, as St. Irenaeus said, the "glory of God" that is radiant in "man fully alive." We often overlook the second part of this excellent quote, which goes on further to say that "the life of man is the vision of God." We can only give what we first receive, and the liturgy is for us the primary locus to behold the vision of the transfigured Christ on the heights of Mount Tabor who fills us with his life that we might radiate it to everyone we meet.*

*As an apostolate, Source & Summit is inspired by the Church's vision that all things should flow from the liturgy, situated at the mountaintop or summit of the Church's life and mission, and that all things that we do should lead back toward it. Everything that we do—including especially our efforts to evangelize the religiously unaffiliated—should work together harmoniously in this constant journey from source to summit. Our mission is to help parishes elevate the liturgy—to help them set it apart and upon the heights—and to help missionary disciples participate in it as fully and fruitfully as possible. In this way, it truly can serve as the invigorating font and the final goal of everything we do.*

### Using the Arts

A beauty that arrests, that turns a person's gaze upward, that makes the heart question whether this is all there really is, has always been a unique part of the Church's heritage. Moreover, "In demonstrating the primacy of grace, manifest in a special way in the Blessed Virgin Mary; in making known the lives of the saints as true witnesses to the beauty of the faith; in giving prominence to the beauty and mysteriousness of creation; in discovering and cherishing the incredible and immense liturgical and artistic heritage of the Church; in valuing the highest forms of contemporary art, catechesis shows concretely the infinite beauty of God, which is also expressed in the works of human beings (cf. SC 122), and leads those who are catechized toward the

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

*beautiful gift that the Father has made in his Son”* (DC 109). For millennia, the artistic expression which has sprung from the life and theology of the Church and from the minds and hearts of creative Catholics has caused others to stop and wonder whether the Church which produces such culture could, in fact, be true. The artistic patrimony of the Church is a gift to the world and a pathway to encounter Christ.

### Act One ([actoneprogram.com](http://actoneprogram.com)):

Focused on forming storytellers who can create works of beauty, goodness and truth, Act One is a nationally renowned community of Christian professionals in the entertainment industry.

### Catholic Creatives

([catholiccreatives.com](http://catholiccreatives.com)) shared the following about their work:

*A collective of the creatively minded, the entrepreneurial, and the artistic committed to leading with the arts and spurred on by the rallying cry for a New Renaissance, we refer to ourselves simply as the Catholic Creatives. We summarize this mission for the Church to go out via the path of beauty well on our website. Our vision is stated simply, “We believe that every one of us is called to create. It is who we are because it is who God is. We believe that God is calling his Church to a culture of rebirth and creative energy, a New Renaissance in Catholic culture to renew the world through the Catholic imagination.” Many great initiatives can be found through this community.*

*The via pulchritudinis, the way of beauty, is the core of our mission. For us, that means an emphasis in quality in all that we do. The church has within her the fullness of the truth. The church leads us to the ultimate good in Christ. Such a powerful message deserves the highest quality in any medium. Just as the Church has produced indescribable beauty in its churches, paintings, and statues, it also deserves that same attention to detail in this new collaborative visual*

*medium. Video provides such a wide range of opportunity for beauty - from the music to the story, the pacing of the edits, and of course, the visuals. Modern Western culture is defined by the visual arts, and in a unique way, video. Hours are spent in front of televisions, computers, and phones watching seemingly endless content. The Church needs to be present there. And the people of Christ must strive to present the depths of goodness and truth with the highest level of quality, or it may simply be ignored.*



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### III. The Path of New Media

The path of new media should be considered as a component of all the other paths, as it is a vehicle or tool for sharing the transcendentals.

Incorporating new media can be considered an aspect of inculturation, as a language which can communicate truth, beauty, and goodness to others. Whether it be online formation opportunities, livestreaming Masses, or sharing creative images on social media, the path of new media utilizes the language of the modern world and is an invaluable tool in the Church's evangelization efforts.

#### Using social media well

##### MyParishApp ([myparishapp.com](http://myparishapp.com)):

This Catholic parish app helps improve parish communication and outreach.

##### eCatholic ([ecatholic.com](http://ecatholic.com)):

eCatholic assists dioceses and parishes as they build mobile-responsive websites, accept online donations and payments, and livestream liturgies and events.

##### Flocknote ([flocknote.com](http://flocknote.com)) shared the following about their work:

*Flocknote connects avenues of parish communication into one tool for streamlined, easy, and effective parish messaging. We help the Church with some unique, but essential, dimensions of her outreach to the unaffiliated. And our approach is one of primarily focusing on the communication and leadership capabilities within parishes themselves.*

*It frustrates the evangelical purpose if we reach out to the unaffiliated only to bring them to parish communities which are disorganized, uninspiring and hemorrhaging their own members! We must first help*

*parishes and dioceses renew their ability to engage their flocks and lead them on a meaningful mission. That requires good communication and leadership. Flocknote not only provides the tools to do that, but also teaches parish and diocesan leaders how to use those tools well.*

*We focus on using channels that are the most practical, direct, and effective at inspiring and mobilizing an established flock. The best ways, in general, to do that today are email and text messaging. While not always considered "social media" in the usual sense, nor as novel as other emerging media, they are still 4-10 times as effective as any other channel when it comes to parish communication. These channels will regularly reach far more of the flock, and with better open and response rates. That is why we've continued to help thousands of parishes and dioceses double down on these efforts to improve their communication in remarkable and tangible ways.*

*We regularly see attendance doubled at events, or capital campaigns saved, due to the ability to get a clear message directly into parishioners' inboxes at the right time.*

#### Using the Internet to multiply impact

##### Grotto Network ([grottonetwork.com](http://grottonetwork.com)):

This online media platform from the University of Notre Dame seeks to re-engage millennials through digital storytelling, content, and more.

##### Ascension Presents

([media.ascensionpress.com](http://media.ascensionpress.com);  
[ascensionpress.com/pages/espanol](http://ascensionpress.com/pages/espanol)):

Ascension Presents serves as an evangelistic platform bringing faith-filled, entertaining, and dynamic presenters straight to viewers' newsfeeds; it provides engaging content that reflects the good, the true, and the beautiful in the hopes of bringing the hearts of viewers closer to Christ.

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis

Blessed is She ([blessedishe.net](http://blessedishe.net)) shared the following about their work:

*This online “sisterhood” seeks and fosters two things: prayer and community. We use three guiding principles or approaches to evangelize the religiously unaffiliated: truth, beauty, and invitation. We find that sharing the treasures of our faith in an authentic way is the greatest gift we have to share: that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came down from Heaven, died on the Cross, and rose from the dead to open the gates of Heaven and that the Catholic Church is his bride, the Mystical Body of Christ. And beauty is a cornerstone to our evangelization, not only because it reflects on our Creator, but because its appeal is universal. Lastly, we consider our work to be inviting our writers and creative team to share their faith journeys in order to openly invite others to join in, find their footing on the path, and know they’re not alone.*

*We offer a diverse array of options for women to encounter God and the Scriptures through our work: free daily devotion emails, beautiful social media content, in-person retreats, small group and individual studies, online workshops, and discipleship formation.*

*One brief story that comes to mind about the efficacy of our guiding principles is the woman who read our daily devotion emails and participated in our online community via Facebook groups, a woman who had never felt like she fit in anywhere in the Church because of being a revert to Catholicism, a single mother, and living with a challenging mental health issue. Not only has her faith life flourished as she’s been part of our community, but she has felt comfortable enough on her journey to reach out and partake in Catholic small groups, support her child being an altar server, and learned to pray the Rosary and develop a relationship with the Blessed Mother. There are the women who are going back to the Sacraments for the first time in decades, the women who are reading Scripture for the first time in their lives, and so many more. It’s a joy and a gift to witness countless women*

*deepen and broaden their personal prayer lives and community of sisterhood through our offerings.*

Word on Fire ([wordonfire.org](http://wordonfire.org); [wordonfire.org/espanol](http://wordonfire.org/espanol)) and the Word on Fire Institute ([wordonfire.institute](http://wordonfire.institute)) shared the following about their work:

*Word on Fire is a global media ministry utilizing new media in a variety of creative and engaging ways to evangelize the culture. The Word on Fire Institute is an easy-to-use digital platform offering members specialized training, community discussions, live presentations, and more.*

*In our engagement with the new media, there are five major “do’s and don’ts” which help us navigate potential minefields:*

- *Develop an interior life - If you’re not praying offline, you have no business evangelizing online.*
- *Learn the languages - Each platform has a unique vibe and dialect, a unique world unto itself, and you must immerse yourself in that world to understand it.*
- *Get out of the Catholic “bubble” - If we never venture beyond our Catholic outposts, the Gospel will not echo on the peripheries.*
- *Find your niche - Digital evangelists must each find their role, their unique evangelizing niche online. Ask yourself, how am I unique? What’s special about my experiences? My struggles? My testimony? My voice? My style? My interests?*
- *Aim for small wins - When you begin evangelizing online, don’t pin your hopes on extravagant numbers or results. Don’t expect to grow a massive platform and reach millions of people. The Lord may indeed do that one day, but for now, start small.*

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

*We once received an email at Word on Fire from a woman who said: “You won’t believe how I found your videos. It started when I was poking around online, looking for news about Charlie Sheen [note: this was during Sheen’s very public meltdown]. On Sheen’s Wikipedia page, I learned his father was the famous actor Martin Sheen, who played the President on The West Wing. I started reading about Martin Sheen, and learned, from his Wikipedia page, that ‘Martin Sheen’ wasn’t his birth name. It was actually a stage name borrowed from Fulton Sheen, the Catholic televangelist from the 1950s. Curious to learn more, I Googled him, too, and one of the results pointed me to an article where someone described you, Bishop Barron, as ‘today’s successor to Fulton Sheen.’ So, with more curiosity, I clicked on your name, read about you, watched some of your videos, and from there I was hooked. I’m writing now to tell you not only have I binge-watched much of your content, but I was just recently Confirmed in the Catholic Church, thanks to your arguments and videos.”*



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### IV. The Path of Truth

The path of truth stabilizes and propels the Church's missionary efforts. It is the content of the Church's message for the unaffiliated and has the power to capture the mind and heart simultaneously. Everything the Church does, everything she is, must manifest the Person of Jesus who is "the way and the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6). The truths of the faith sustain the Church, and they are treasures which are meant to be lived and shared. The path of truth is also vital for those who struggle to reconcile perceived conflict between scientific claims and faith in God. There is a great need to emphasize that "if methodical investigation within every branch of learning is carried out in a genuinely scientific manner and in accord with moral norms, it never truly conflicts with faith, for earthly matters and the concerns of faith derive from the same God" (GS 36). However, this claim must be demonstrated by evangelizers, and the ability to do so is dependent on appropriate and consistent formation and study.

### Leading with a kerygmatic catechesis

An affirmative apologetics leads with a "kerygmatic catechesis," bringing everything back to the understanding that God desires a relationship with each human person and answers the deepest questions and yearnings of our hearts. In the words of Pope Francis: "we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or kerygma, which needs to be the center of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal...It is the message capable of responding to the desire for the infinite which abides in every human heart" (EG, 164-165: DC Preface). The Church should never tire of coming back to the first core proclamation, since it is the "why" behind the "how" and the "what" of her mission: "On the

lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: 'Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you'" (EG 164). Proclaiming the kerygma is not a one-time event but must be sustained at the heart of all of our efforts and incorporated intentionally into our ministries.

### That Man is You ([paradisusdei.org](http://paradisusdei.org)):

This parish-based program seeks to help men hear and respond to the kerygma and then encounter God within the context of their marriage and family life.

ChristLife ([christlife.org](http://christlife.org)); [christlife.org/christlife-series/espanol](http://christlife.org/christlife-series/espanol) shared the following about their work:

*The ChristLife evangelization process consists of three courses: Discovering Christ, Following Christ, and Sharing Christ. The Discovering Christ course follows two main guiding principles in leading with kerygmatic catechesis: 1) laying the foundation of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and 2) creating an opportunity for a personal response.*

*In order to lay the foundation of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the Discovering Christ course presents a clear proclamation of the person of Jesus Christ, and, by extension, the revelation of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We have found it is most effective to lay the foundation of a personal relationship with Jesus before moving on to catechesis. As Scripture teaches, "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). The Catholic Church affirms this in the General Directory of Catechesis, "Only by starting with conversion ... can catechesis, strictly speaking, fulfill its proper task of education in the faith" (62). The Following and Sharing Christ courses build upon the foundation of Discovering*

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

*Christ and help participants embrace a life of Catholic missionary discipleship.*

*Our second principle, creating an opportunity for a personal response, comes to the fore through the recognition that the presentation of the Gospel message would be incomplete without inviting people to personally accept the message. During the Discovering Christ retreat, participants are invited to surrender their lives to the “saving sovereignty of Christ” by offering a prayer of commitment (RM 46). For those who are baptized, this is understood as a renewal of the commitment made to Jesus in Baptism. For the unbaptized this is an initial commitment that will culminate in Baptism. The retreat also provides an opportunity for Catholic participants to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

**St. Paul Street Evangelization**  
[streetevangelization.com](http://streetevangelization.com) shared the following about their work:

*St. Paul Street Evangelization is a grassroots, non-profit organization dedicated to responding to the mandate of Jesus to preach the Gospel to all nations by taking the Catholic Faith to the streets. As an on-the-street Catholic evangelization organization, St. Paul Street Evangelization provides an avenue for people to share the Person of Jesus Christ and the truth and beauty of the Catholic faith with a hungry culture.*

*The first of our guiding principles is to listen to each person’s unique story in order to understand their cultural presuppositions and speak the kerygma into the restlessness and anxieties of our modern lives. Next, we seek to answer questions and doubts about the faith often centered on the existence of God, Church scandals, the necessity of the Sacraments, how sin wounds us, the possibility of hell, and how Jesus wants to heal us. Finally, our evangelists make a personal invitation to each person to respond in faith to the Gospel, usually through prayer and asking Jesus for forgiveness and healing.*

*One of our staff members recently shared this experience: “After evangelizing on a local college campus I began speaking to a student who was having a difficult time trying to ‘figure out’ the purpose of his life. The weight of the future was upon him. I asked if he had any religious affiliation, and he said that he thought he was baptized Catholic but never really went to Church. I shared with him the Good News—that he didn’t have to ‘figure out’ his life. God had a plan for him. God loved him, and in fact he was made to be in relationship with God. That is how he will find peace. It also didn’t end there. I led a Bible study for him and other students I spoke with, further revealing the reality of who God is and what that meant for their lives. They eventually even came to Mass and lunch with me on Sunday. Listening, making myself available, sharing the kerygma and inviting them to Mass allowed these men to encounter Christ and his Church.” In this story, as in so many others that we receive, these three principles—listening to personal stories, answering questions, and making invitations—are critical parts.*

## Learning affirmative apologetics

St. John Paul II noted, “No darkness of error or of sin can totally take away from man the light of God the Creator. In the depths of his heart there always remains a yearning for absolute truth and a thirst to attain full knowledge of it. This is eloquently proved by man’s tireless search for knowledge in all fields. It is proved even more by his search for the meaning of life...No one can escape from the fundamental questions: What must I do? How do I distinguish good from evil?” (VS 1-2).

The entire Church must be ready to meet this deep questioning, even when characterized by skepticism and apathy, with a presentation of the truth that satisfies these intellectual concerns and shows that Catholicism is rational and appreciates critical thinking. An affirmative apologetics respects human freedom and joyfully proposes answers to the questions that are



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

already in each human heart. Indeed, apologetics “shows that faith is not opposed to reason and highlights the truths of a correct anthropology, illuminated by natural reason...in order to [develop] new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a creative apologetics which would encourage greater openness to the Gospel on the part of all” (DC 145).

### Relevant Radio ([relevantradio.com](http://relevantradio.com); [relevantradioenespanol.com](http://relevantradioenespanol.com)):

Relevant Radio has been helping people bridge the gap between faith and everyday life through informative, entertaining, and interactive programming twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. The Relevant Radio network is currently serving the Church by broadcasting coast-to-coast on 168 owned and operated and affiliate stations, reaching 220 million souls. Programming can be heard worldwide via streaming audio on the website and on the mobile app.

### Augustine Institute ([augustineinstitute.org](http://augustineinstitute.org)) *varios recursos en español* and FORMED ([formed.org](http://formed.org)):

The Augustine Institute is a graduate school which offers degrees in theology with a focus on the New Evangelization, while FORMED is an innovative platform featuring materials that help all Catholics deepen their relationship with God and his Church to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### Dynamic Catholic ([dynamiccatholic.com](http://dynamiccatholic.com)):

Dynamic Catholic is dedicated to creating “the best programming the Catholic Church has ever seen”—and making it available to every Catholic and parish for free.

### Catholic Answers ([catholic.com](http://catholic.com)) shared the following about their work:

*Several guiding principles inform Catholic Answers’ affirmative apologetics. The first is treating people with respect and not belittling their lack of belief. Instead, we ask thoughtful questions to discover the root causes of their non-belief. The second is challenging those who are unaffiliated to explain why arguments for God or Christianity are not sound, and then working from those reasons to show how a theistic worldview or Christian best addresses the concerns behind them. Our third guiding principle is asking questions to understand a person’s perspective, where he or she is on his spiritual and intellectual journey, before giving answers. Next, we commit ourselves to keeping the accent on the positive value of the evidence for God, Christianity, and the Catholic faith; not simply criticizing alternative views.*

*Finally, we remind ourselves not to be too quick to jump into an area that may be contentious. Instead, wait, and choose an area of disagreement that offers the best prospect for guiding the conversation toward the truth of the matter. God in his providence brings us into situations like this so that we can “plant seeds” as St. Paul describes it: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. Therefore, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth” (1 Cor 3:6-7).*

### Addressing the relationship between faith and science

Today, science is often seen as the primary arbiter and source of truth. If this is the case, then the Church must take seriously the relationship of faith and science; failing to do so risks seeming intellectually unserious and unconcerned with real knowledge. The Church must help young people see that religion and science, though distinct, are non-competitive; they are interrelated and mutually benefit one another.

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

The Magis Center ([magiscenter.com](http://magiscenter.com); [catholicocreible.com](http://catholicocreible.com)):

The Magis Center provides comprehensive and systematic responses to restore, reconstruct, and revitalize belief in God; the transcendent dignity of every person; the significance of virtue; the higher levels of happiness, love, and freedom; and the real presence of Jesus Christ.

Religion and Science Initiative at the McGrath Institute for Church Life ([mcgrath.nd.edu](http://mcgrath.nd.edu)):

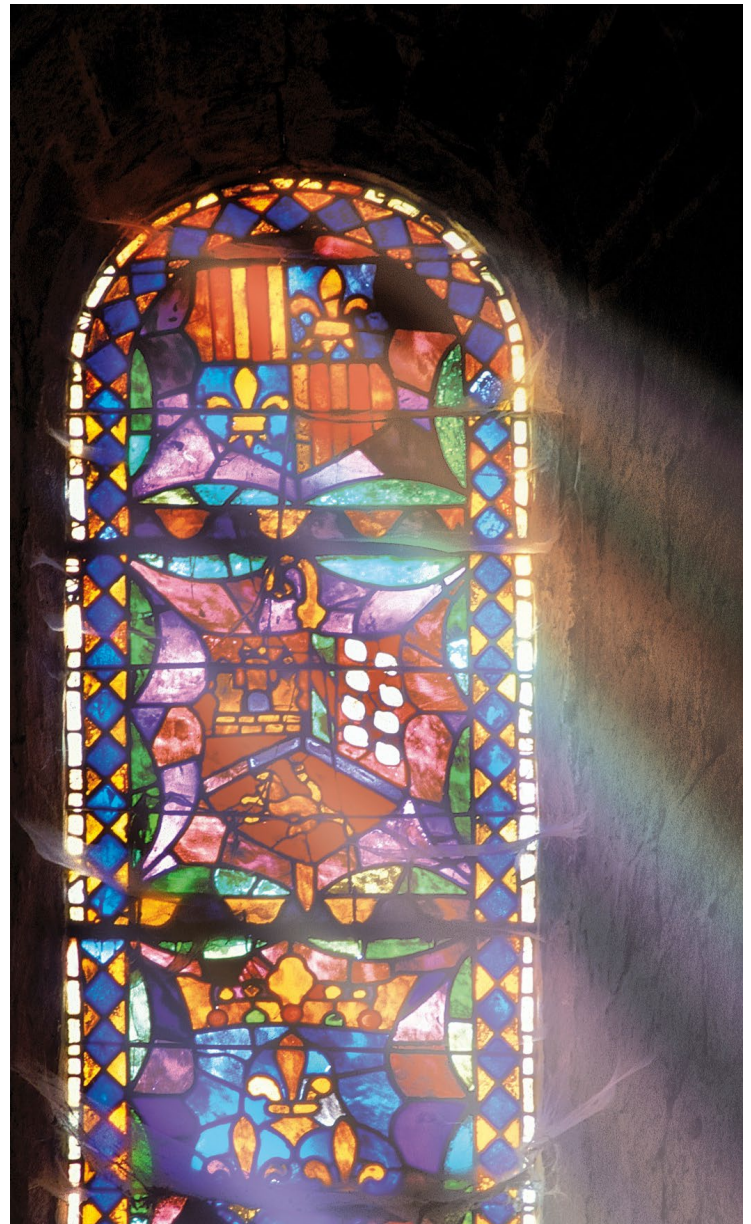
The Religion and Science Initiative equips educators to be competent and effective communicators of the complementarity of faith and reason.

Strange Notions ([strangenotions.com](http://strangenotions.com)):

This online repository of articles and dialogue creates a “Digital Areopagus” where the conversation about the intersection of faith and reason can take place.

Society of Catholic Scientists ([catholicscientists.org](http://catholicscientists.org)):

This international organization focuses on the complementarity of faith and reason; active scientists give witness to the ways that science and religion can and should be integrated.



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### V. The Path of Parish Transformation

The path of parish transformation expresses the identity of each parish as a mission society. The goal of outreach efforts to the unaffiliated is to bring Christ to those who do not know him, and to incorporate—from the Latin meaning to “unite into one body”—them into the Church. As each person enters the Church, he or she brings something unique that was not present before, transforming and building up the Body of Christ in a new way. Parish transformation, while its own path, is also a forum for the other four pathways to be played out in local communities. Parishes can creatively employ each of these pathways to become mission centers of the New Evangelization.

#### Fostering a Missionary Mindset

While the pastoral care of committed Catholics must never be abrogated or ignored, a transformation of culture is required in many parishes to recast them as mission societies capable of carrying out the work of the New Evangelization in their given territory. A parish’s mission extends to every individual who lives within the parish boundaries and beyond into the local community, so the temptation to become insular must be avoided. The faithful and clergy who comprise the stable community of the parish are called themselves as missionary disciples to a preferential option for mission that seeks to reach out to those who do not yet know the joy of a relationship with Jesus Christ. In the words of Pope Francis, “Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel” (EG 20). This transformation makes parishes ever more Christlike, since it

represents a real recommitment to align the Church’s structures and institutions to be imitators of Jesus Christ himself, who came to “seek and save what was lost” (Lk 19:10, see Mt 18:12-14).

#### Amazing Parish ([amazingparish.org](http://amazingparish.org)):

Amazing Parish includes a model, program, and conference designed to improve the organizational health of parishes; it gives busy pastors and their teams the tools they need to transform their parishes into mission communities that are truly alive.

#### Evangelical Catholic ([evangelicalcatholic.org](http://evangelicalcatholic.org)):

Evangelical Catholic specializes in ministry consulting and evangelization training with an emphasis on person-to-person discipleship movements in parishes.

#### Divine Renovation ([divinerenovation.org](http://divinerenovation.org); [divinerenovation.org/guiaespanol](http://divinerenovation.org/guiaespanol)):

Divine Renovation inspires and equips parishes to be missionary and to bring people to Jesus. Offerings include coaching, consulting, and free resources, as well as virtual Church webinars, to enable parishes to pursue mission through innovative thinking and decisive action.

#### Forming Leaders for Mission

The Church must commit to building a culture in parishes where leaders are formed, equipped, supported, and sent on mission. Many Catholics are still not comfortable with the idea of being sent on mission, or they may not understand fully what that means. Building a culture in parishes where both discipleship and mission are fully integrated into the fabric of what it means to be

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

Catholic is essential for transforming parishes into mission societies. No priest, no professional parish staff, alone can reach all the unaffiliated in their area. Each Catholic fully living out the call of their Baptism is required to help fulfill this mission. As St. Paul writes in his Second Letter to Timothy, “And what you heard from me through many witnesses, entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to teach others as well” (2 Tim 2:2).

### Catholic Apostolate Center

[catholicapostolatecenter.org](http://catholicapostolatecenter.org);  
[centrodelapostoladocatolico.org](http://centrodelapostoladocatolico.org);

Catholic Apostolate Center provides digital resources and programs in English and Spanish for active Catholics to help them in living missionary discipleship more fully and to assist them in forming leaders for mission. The Center fulfills this mission by collaborating with the USCCB, dioceses, religious communities, and national organizations to create videos, podcasts, webinars, blogs, presentations, and formation programs.

### Catholic Leadership Institute

[catholicleaders.org](http://catholicleaders.org);

The CLI provides bishops, priests, religious, deacons, and lay persons in the Catholic Church with pastoral leadership formation and consulting services designed to strengthen confidence and competence in ministry, to articulate a vision for their local Church, to call forth the gifts of those they lead, and to create vibrant faith communities rooted in Jesus Christ.

### Catholic Missionary Disciples

[catholicmissionarydisciples.com](http://catholicmissionarydisciples.com) shared the following about their work:

*When going on a journey, you must know where you are currently, where you are going, and the path you*

*need to take. In helping Catholic leaders understand how to reach the unaffiliated, the same principles apply. We need to help leaders understand how to assess where someone is spiritually, what the next steps (and ultimate destination) are in walking with them, and the proper strategy we ought to use in order to move them forward. Our methodology in training leaders uses the framework of Question -> Listen -> Assess -> Respond in training leaders for accompaniment.*

*Catholic leaders are generally more comfortable teaching and running programs/events than they are in personal investment in individuals through authentic accompaniment. If we are to reach those that won't darken our church doors, then we need to go to them. Since our lay parishioners are the ones who will reach the world, we need to help them understand their mission to evangelize others. But we cannot assume that Catholic leaders are ready to equip and train others for mission. Thus, Catholic Missionary Disciples will train Catholic leaders to seek to understand the process of pre-evangelization, evangelization, discipleship, and mission.*

## Developing outreach which prioritizes the lost

Parishes must develop a “preferential option for the lost” where key decisions are made and resources (time, money, and personnel) allocated through the lens of reaching those who do not know Christ. This is the model toward which Jesus points us: “What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost ones until he finds it? And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy” (Lk 15:4-5). Even if it were just for the sake of the one, Christ calls us to a preferential option for the unaffiliated and even those who are in the pews every week who do not yet know the Lord. Special initiatives must be developed that have outreach to the lost as their primary aim.

# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### Catherine of Siena Institute

[siena.org](http://siena.org));

An organization that makes apostolic formation and support readily available to all lay Catholics, with a special emphasis on each person's unique gifts and charisms.

Alpha ([alphausa.org](http://alphausa.org); [alphausa.org/espanol](http://alphausa.org/espanol)) shared the following about their work:

*Deep dependence on the Holy Spirit through prayer is the first key principle of Alpha. It is important that this be much more than lip-service. Our most effective parishes build dedicated prayer teams of people who come together to intercede each week (perhaps before the Eucharist) for the success of Alpha. The whole team of Alpha volunteers also gather at least a half hour before guests arrive to pray together for their guests and the unique opportunities God will create that week. In addition, there is even a person in each Alpha small group whose primary role is to constantly intercede. Dependence on the Holy Spirit is so important to Alpha's success because Alpha is not primarily meant to be a program. It is primarily meant to be a platform where we invite our friends who don't know Jesus. We also invite God through our prayers, in order that the two might meet.*

*A second key is hospitality. Everything about the Alpha experience should pull the guest in, make them feel welcome, and let them know that their presence is appreciated. We need to consider elements like signage. Is it easy for a guest to arrive in the church parking lot and find where they are going without feeling confused? We need to consider room temperature, lighting, background music, and food. Everything about the experience should make a guest who does not know Jesus feel appreciated and welcome. It can be tricky at first to adjust our environment from being primarily about the parishioners' comfort to the outsiders' comfort, but this is a skill well worth developing.*

*In addition to the factors of environment, we need to think about how hospitality expects us to act towards our guests. We should never be stoic or standoffish to them. Alpha is not a class. It's more of a dinner party. We need to focus on conducting ourselves with warmth, generosity, and attentiveness to our guests. The gold standard for Alpha hospitality is to have a guest show up who really does not want to be there. I am talking about a guest who only comes because a friend or relative dragged them there. We know we are succeeding if that guest leaves the first night saying, "Woah! This is not what I expected. I will be back next week. Also, could I invite a few more of my friends to come?"*

*Listening is the third key. When guests come, they enjoy the social time. Then, they hear a compelling if winsome presentation on an extremely basic concept of the Gospel. Lastly, they enter into a very unique style of small group conversation. The goal of this small group is not to convince them of anything or to make certain they understood the content. That approach might work with disciples, but not with the unchurched. At Alpha, the goal of the small group is to give our guests a chance to process through what they heard and express what they really think or feel about it.*

*In this approach, we trust that our listening will help to start deep and genuine friendships with our guests. We also trust that the truth and beauty of the Gospel message will ultimately be more compelling over time than false narrative ever could. This also proves to be place where guests get to voice the emotional or spiritual wounds that may be blocking them from having a deep and meaningful encounter with Christ and His Church.*



# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### Conclusion

In continuity with previous pontificates, Pope Francis offers an inspiring reminder about the primary source of all evangelizing energy: “It is impossible to persevere in a fervent evangelization unless we are convinced from personal experience that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it, and not the same thing to contemplate him, to worship him, to find our peace in him, as not to” (EG 266). The paths, principles, and resources recommended in this Field Guide will prove effective only if this essential truth remains central.

The conviction that a living relationship with Christ and his Church makes all the difference in one’s life must inspire ongoing exploration of these five paths, so that the Church might present an effective witness to the unaffiliated. May the resources and principles here highlighted inform a renewal of this evangelizing activity. In the words of Pope Francis, may the entire Church remember that: “‘Mere administration’ can no longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be ‘permanently in a state of mission’” (EG 25)!

The resources listed above have been recommended by bishops and diocesan leaders across the country; the inclusion of these organizations is not meant as an unqualified endorsement but as an encouragement to explore the effective elements of their approaches to outreach. Additional resources on evangelization are available at the USCCB website, including:

[Creating a Culture of Encounter](#)

[V Encuentro Guide - Missionary Disciples:  
Witnesses of God’s Love](#)

[Living as Missionary Disciples](#)

[Resources for Living as Missionary Disciples](#)

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# Outreach to the Unaffiliated: A Field Guide for Leaders

## *Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis*

### Closing Prayer

*Heavenly Father, bless all those who seek to be true missionary disciples for those who are not affiliated with the Body of Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, give them a burning desire to share your love with the lost sheep whom your Son came to seek and save. Give them the divine wisdom and insight to know how to reach those who have not yet encountered or who have wandered far from your Church. Give them unfailing patience and charity to be witnesses of your love for them. Through the power of your Holy Spirit, raise up a new generation of Missionary Disciples who will help proclaim the truth of your Son and his Church, so that many who have wandered away may return to you. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns forever and ever.*

