**COMMUNICATIONS NARRATIVE**

**2) Consider your audience** – Too many parishes get caught only listening to the vocal minority or the already engaged. So they should not be surprised when they don’t reach anyone else. If you want to engage the unengaged, you should consider that particular audience. Say things that are interesting to them and in a way that they will understand and be intrigued.

**3) Remember communication goes both ways** – Communication is as much (or more) about listening as it is about talking. What are you doing to listen first to your audience? Find out where they are and what they are thinking. Then you’ll know where to meet them with the message you would like to ultimately communicate.

**4) LESS IS MORE.**  If you are trying to say everything, you will end up communicating nothing. Consider the typical church bulletin. Over time they’ve accumulated so much information in them each week that people don’t bother to even try to sort through it all. The same goes for emails or letters you send out. If they contain so much information nobody bothers to read them, they aren’t doing any good. Say less and you’ll communicate more. [Refer to Flyer as a good example]

**5) Use a proper emailing service** – The #1 (and easiest) way to keep your members up to date these days is through email. It’s cheap, fast and easy. A good idea is to use a proper emailing service if you’re sending large amounts of email. It will improve deliverability (i.e. avoid spam filters), and make sure you’re legally compliant (like giving people easy ways to subscribe and unsubscribe). This is one of the easiest and essential ways you can expand and support your [social network](http://www.flocknote.com/blog/2011/how-and-how-not-build-your-parish-social-network). It’s more than worth the costs, too.

**6) ST. IGNATIUS’ PUBLISHES AN ONLINE ELECTRONIC MAGAZINE, PARISH, ‘the thought’** – we call it the “e-zine” for short and it is published weekly under the direction of our Communications Director and our Pastor, and in coordination with the parish staff, parish council and ministry leaders; and is distributed to a listserv of parishioners, community partners and friends of the parish. The e-zine supports our JESUIT and parish branding through articles; features our mission work, projects, and collaboration opportunities. It does not replace the need for a website; instead it works in combination with the website. [Let’s take a look]

**7) MILLENIALS** – 56% of Millennials (Ages 18-30) check out a parish’s website before visiting the church. Visit the Barna Group website for more information on Gen X (Ages 13-18).

**8) Up-to-date Internet Content** – Your parish needs an attractive and easy-to-navigate website if it hopes to communicate to both current and potential parishioners. When people visit your website, it is either out of curiosity, they are looking for information or, hopefully, they want to build a relationship with the parish. If they get to your website and can’t find up-to-date information, it’s a missed opportunity. And if they find outdated information, it communicates to them that there must not be anything going on here. **And they move on**. Keeping your website up to date is one of the most important things you can do. And, the top three things to focus on when updating your website are: 1) Updating Your Website Security; 2) Keeping Your Content Fresh; 3) Updating Your Website Design (**Now we are going to browse the Justice & Peace Immigration Subcommittee Webpage and Dr. Vonetta Edwards, the Chair of the Committee will navigate us!)**

**9) SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS** – (**Slide “Up-to-date Online Presence)**Today, around 7 in 10 Americans use social media to connect with one another with news content, share content and entertain themselves. According to a new Pew Research Center survey

[Facebook and the video sharing site, YouTube, dominate this landscape. At the same time, younger Americans (especially those ages 18 to 24) are embracing a variety of platforms and using them frequently. Some 78% of 18- to 24-year-olds use Snapchat and a sizeable majority of these users (71%) visit the platform multiple times per day. Similarly, 71% of Americans in this age group now use Instagram and close to half (45%) are Twitter users.]

Let’s explore some of the patterns and trends shaping the social landscape. (**Refer to Slide of Twitter Post: On twitter you can post commentaries of your own, promote events, and re-tweet posts made by others. A great way to gain attention for an event is Live Tweeting, here you can develop a hashtag for the event, invite others to join in; and follow and comment on the event in real time – you can also insert videos) - Mention Snapchat Takeover**

**10) FACEBOOK** – It remains the primary social media platform for most Americans. 68% of U.S. adults report that they are Facebook users, and roughly three-quarters of those users access Facebook on a daily basis. With the exception of those 65 and older, a majority of Americans across a wide range of demographic groups now use Facebook. (**An excellent way to promote your event is via a Facebook Event)**

**11) Event Promotion** – Keep in mind to include your event in all parish communications – online and print; and in church announcements and to distribute the event plan to all parish stakeholders. Also, on the flyer, poster, and/or postcard, and electronic images make sure the event day, date, location, and times are listed along with the church and committee branding and logos.

**12) Event Follow-up** – It is important to follow-up in writing to parishioners and all stakeholders on the outcomes of the event as soon as possible with photos and post these online on all platforms.

**13) Engaging New Prospects** – When someone visits your website (or your church for that matter), what are you doing to continue the relationship? Don’t let them leave without connecting. Get them on your emailing list. Give them an action item. Something to do. An event to attend. A way to take a next step in their faith walks and immediately plug in to your active ministries. **Don’t waste an opportunity to connect**. [Here is a letter written by Vonetta to guests who attended a film night about DACA students asking these prospects to attend a meeting and to get involved with the Immigration subcommittee projects.

**14) Utilizing Space** – Whether they are listening to announcements on Sunday, reading your bulletin boards or enjoying cake, coffee and conversation after Mass, make sure your spaces throughout church reflect and reinforce your values. [Here, our Racial Justice Subcommittee Chair took advantage of the Gallery space to create an exhibit celebrating well-known Marylanders and parishioners of color during Black History Month.]

CLOSING: Adding a communications director to your staff is becoming necessary and plays a large role for effective parish communications–even if it is part-time. Having a communications plan in place is important too. Keeping your parishioners informed is a weekly priority. It requires time and dedication to a regular schedule. Make it easier for yourself by identifying your parishioners and their communication needs. Set deadlines for your communications and be consistent in the platforms you communicate on. Your parishioners will start looking for the announcements in the weekly bulletin, emails, text, social media posts and website. THANK YOU!