

THE HOME VISITATION MINISTRY

The Pilgrim Center of Hope

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I. WHAT IS HOME VISITATION?

“Visitation” - Giving God an opportunity to reach His people! To be in touch with every Catholic household in the parish.

The primary purpose of this ministry is two fold:

- 1) To communicate a genuine interest on behalf of the pastor and staff for the parishioners.
- 2) To invite the inactive or unchurched to the parish for their spiritual good and for the good of the parish, the body of Christ.

II. WHY DOOR-TO-DOOR HOME VISITATION?

- A) The **ONLY** way to reach out into the neighborhoods and personally meet people. Catholics then realize the Church cares.
- B) The **ONLY** way to find *INACTIVE CATHOLICS* and their needs such as having their marriage blessed in the Church. To invite persons on a one-to-one basis to Church.
- C) Past statistics have proven that a personal invitation is what it took for many to return to Church.
- D) People are open to a visit from the Church.
- E) **ONLY** reason other churches like (J.W.’s and Mormons) are successful is because they go door-to-door, they are *present* to people in their homes.

III. BASICS OF DOOR-TO-DOOR HOME VISITATION

- A) **PRAYER**, before you start and at each door.
- B) Two by two; (1 Speaks, the other Prays)
- C) Introduction
- D) **TWO** Approaches (IF you have a list of registered parishioners with you.)
 - 1) Parishioner: --
 - 2) Non-parishioner. **ASK:** Do you have a church?
- E) Keep it **SIMPLE, SHORT, FOCUSED!**
- F) Dress modestly, remember you represent your parish church. (Dress)

IV. INACTIVE CATHOLICS

- A) Place them on a mailing list from the Church to receive a Christmas/Easter card, to receive a “gift” from parish (ie - Advent, Lent, etc.)

SOME FACTS from the National Catholic Evangelization Association

In the U.S.

Active Catholics	55 Million
Inactive Catholics:	17 Million
Protestant:	85 Million
Unchurched:	70 Million
Non-Christian:	15 Million

- 40 percent of Catholics drop-out for two years or more. 70 percent return.
- There are an average of 800 inactive Catholics in every parish.

(We found an average of 600 in St. Matthew's parish that we personally met.)

Statistics show that there are approximately 45 million active Catholics in the United States today and another 17 million who are not practicing their Catholic faith. For a variety of reasons many have fallen away from the Church. Some have left because of loss of faith, moral decline in society, church laws, laziness, indifference, neglect by priests and nuns, or changes in within the Church. This group of inactive Catholics represents over one third of the population.

Reasons for Inactive:

1. Mixed Marriage & Divorce
2. 1 out of 4 are outside of the Church due to marriage relationships.
3. For every 1 marriage leaving the church; 3 come in.
4. Poor parish life.
5. Lack of warmth and peace, social action, vitality - they leave out of sadness.
6. Mobility
7. "Too much change" (Vatican II misunderstandings)
8. Disagreement/quarrels with priests or religious
9. Size of parish. (Average Catholic parish has 2,850 families). Sometimes this is considered 'faceless, big'. The average Protestant church has 200.
11. Angry with God (illness, Death, problems)

- Reasons for drop-out: We Catholics don't do anything about the situation.
- We need to apologize for the sensitivity of others to those who hurt and then invite them to come home again.
- Over 80 percent begin a journey to church through an invitation!

MOST EFFECTIVE: One-to-one/personal dialogue or witness.