

Worship Meeting Agenda

(Editor's note: With the disruption that the pandemic has brought to parish life, many worship committees are just beginning to meet again. Select the items in this column that are most relevant to your parish community.)

BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

- For the observance of the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul (June 29), refresh the committee on the lives of those saints by reading the paragraph in “Today’s Saints” in *Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons, and Weekdays 2021* (Liturgy Training Publications [LTP], 2020, 262). Invite a member to proclaim the Gospel reading from Matthew 16:13–19 and then observe two minutes of silence. Ask each person to share a reflection on “Who are we, as parish members? Who do we say that we are?”
- Dedicate the opening prayer for the ministries that will be returning (for example, choirs, religious education, children’s Liturgy of the Word). Pray the Litany of the Saints for the saintly pursuits of parish life this summer.
- Read aloud the section “Liturgical Roles of Baptismal Priests” from the article “The Baptismal Priesthood: Sanctifying the Ordinary,” by Kyle Lechtenberg, in this issue. After the reading, ask all to stand for a for a priest, deacon, or lay person to bless them, adapting “Order of Blessing Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service” (chapter 60 in the *Book of Blessings*).

ANTICIPATE AND PREPARE

- Seek the committee’s wisdom around what is needed to gather the parish in vibrant worship, noting all comments and suggestions. Begin the discussion with emphasis on the celebration of the Eucharist.
- Discuss ways to provide positive images of parish life (website, bulletin, local news coverage, phone calls), encouraging the people of God to join together again. Brainstorm ways to grow relationships in the parish.
- Evaluate the current parish devotional life, and ask what is needed to support popular piety of different ethnic groups and diverse cultures. View this discussion as important to supporting parish relationships outside of celebrating Mass.
- Discuss ways to nurture faith through blessing gardens, outdoor Bible study, and praying the stations of the cross and other outdoor devotions.

CONSIDER AND CREATE

- Renew the vision of the worship committee regarding service to the parish: ask two volunteers to be an ad hoc book club and read *Shape a Circle Ever Wider*, by Mark Francis (LTP, 2000). Plan a meeting of renewal for the fall: invite the ad hoc members to guide the discussion around chapter 1, 4, or 5.

- Revisit the mission statement of the parish. Decide whether the worship committee should initiate a redrafting of the statement as well as rediscovering what the parish does and stands for. The underlying question is whether the pandemic changed the parish and what needs to be done to become Christ for one another. Make notes as you guide a half-hour discussion.

- Create a ministry group to implement a catechesis corner in the parish bulletin. Use this space to update and educate parishioners about information important to liturgical life. Be careful to make these items accessible and short.

- Looking toward the future when all are invited to sing at Mass again, consult the music ministry about selecting a prelude song or hymn to sing as an assembly two minutes before Mass begins. This sets the tone for worship and invites all to find their voices. Use the same piece consistently for six weeks and then evaluate. As example, plan two verses of Bernadette Farrell’s “Christ, Be Our Light!” (© 1993, 2000, published by Oregon Catholic Press), available in both Spanish and English.

SENDING FORTH

- To mark the Feast of the Transfiguration (August 6), guide the committee to listen to the way that the author of the second reading suggests that there is a debate between the presence of the living God vs. the non-existence of God. Proclaim 2 Peter 1:16–19 and allow for a few moments of silent reflection. Invite the committee to ponder the ways that they have come to know the living God. Conclude with the sign of the cross.

- In observance of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, recite the Magnificat together (Luke 1:46–55), and follow with a decade of the Rosary. Encourage the members to finish the Rosary for the intentions of children and youth who are refugees at our border, waiting to be reunited with their families and loved ones.

- Reprint and pray together the acts of Faith, Hope, and Love, from the US Bishops’ site <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/acts-of-faith-hope-and-love>. Conclude by offering a sign of peace to each member.

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