

5.2 Organising A Mission / Vocation / Bible Camp

Aim

To equip the practical trainee with information on how to build a Task Group for a parish mission or youth retreat or vocation / bible camp.

Materials Required

Picture puzzle pieces for every member. Limit the members to 10 or 12.

Procedure:

- Start by distributing a piece of the picture puzzle to all. Let them solve the puzzle. When the picture is complete let them spontaneously share their reaction of the entire process. The facilitator then highlights the advantages of working together.

Input:

- Mission preparation could be great fun!
- Planning and preparing the Parish Mission, Vocation/Bible camp should fill the group with a sense of fun rather than a sense of fear. This is an opportunity to experiment with different ideas and approaches to the group task.
- The preparation is an integral part of the process and, if it is undertaken with the right attitude and spirit, it becomes an enriching and enjoyable experience for all who participate.
- If you are not enjoying the task, you're probably not doing it right!
- Be creative and committed when dealing with the task set before the group. Be caring and courteous when dealing with other members of the group.
- A successful Mission or Vocation/Bible Camp preparation leads not to an Event but to a Celebration.
- What is a Mission Team?
- What does a Mission Team do?
- Who is the Mission Team for?
- The Mission Team is a group of people who accept responsibility for organizing the preparation of the Parish Mission.
- Various talks have to be undertaken if the Mission is to become a significant event in parish life.
- Each member of the Mission Team accepts responsibility for a particular task. The member invites other people to share in the task. As a result of this involvement a Task Group evolves.
- The Mission Team: Meets once a month. The team members are expected firstly to continue their growth as friends in the community and, secondly, to coordinate the efforts of the various task groups.
- The Task Group: Meet once a month. The group is expected firstly to develop in friendship and, secondly, to do the assigned work.
- Each member of the Mission Team will meet once a month with his/her Task Group and once a month with his/her Mission Team.
- Mission preparation is an opportunity for each individual.

Personal Renewal

- Each Christian is called to enjoy a personal relationship with God. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we enjoy fellowship with Jesus Christ as children of our Father.
- This belief is often not a reality in our lives. The mission calls the individual to commitment and conversion.
- Being a Christian is a process of continual conversion as we move more deeply into the person of Christ and the work of His Kingdom.
- "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give will never thirst. The water that I shall give him will become, inside him, a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (Jn. 4:14)
- Being engaged in the activity of Mission is a part of this continual conversion. Mission is not something I undertake when I am fully Christian; It is an involvement through which I achieve growth into the person of Christ. It is not a consequence of a converted life; it is an integral and essential part of the process of conversion. The Mission is a call to each person to become a member of an



outward looking and outward reaching community. It is a reminder that each individual has a part to play in the growth of God's kingdom. It is an opportunity for the Mission Team to recognize the gifts and talents of the individuals in the parish, and to call people to offer these gifts for the service of the Church and the local community.

- 'Faith' is being a friend of God. (Pope St. Gregory the Great)

Community Development

- There are many ways in which we can bear witness to Jesus Christ. One special way is through the development and growth of community. The manner in which we relate to, and communicate with one another, is a powerful witness to the presence of God in our midst.
- Preparing a Mission is about involvement! Involvement in life and friendship with others, and involvement in carrying out the various tasks! Share the tasks with as many people as possible.
- Do not let one do alone what two, three or more can do together!
- It is important to remember that each Task Group working for the Mission is not a means to an end.
- The group has a value in its own right. The growth of trust and understanding, the development of friendship and respect between the group members, is a worthwhile objective in itself.
- When he had washed their feet, Jesus said to them: Do you know what I have done for you? If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (Jn 13:12-14)
- A Task Group succeeds when its members grow in relationship and work together for a common purpose.
- Too many cooks don't always spoil the broth.
- It is better to get the group to dance around the task before tackling it!
- Mission preparation is an opportunity to Evangelise.
- The ultimate purpose of the Mission is to reach out in Faith Friendship to others. Communicating Jesus Christ and the values of His Kingdom is the primary objective of the Mission. The Christian commandments are summarized in the love of God and the love of neighbour.
- The person (or the community) evangelized goes on to evangelise others. Herein lies the test of truth, the touchstone of evangelization. (Pope Paul, VI, Evangelisation Today 24)
- My neighbour is not just my fellow Catholic, but is also a lapsed parishioner, Christians from other churches, people of different faiths and all those who have no faith. The Parish Mission will try to have a real effect on the lives and faith of all those who live in the area. All are going to be invited to the Mission and as many as possible asked to be involved in the preparation.
- My neighbour is my neighbourhood.
- "Father as you have sent me into the world so I am sending them into the world. I do not pray for these alone but for all those who through their word, will come to believe in me". (Jn. 17:18-20)

Review

1. The aims of the Mission preparation Team and the purpose of the Task Group are threefold:
 - a. To help the individual to grow.
 - b. To help the community to grow.
 - c. To enable the community to reach out to others.
2. Remember, the purpose of the Mission Group and the Task Group is to develop a sense of community among themselves as well as achieving the objectives set by the task.
3. Good working relationships come to an end. Friendships last forever.
4. Each Christian is called to enjoy a personal relationship with God. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we enjoy fellowship with Jesus Christ as children of Our Father.
5. This belief is often not a reality in our lives. The Mission calls the individual to commitment and conversion.

Reflection

'Being a Christian is a process of continual conversion as we move more deeply into the person of Christ and the work of His Kingdom.' Reflect on this statement. How can we as individuals continue the work of God's Kingdom? In what special ways are we called to evangelise? Pray for the courage and dedication to bring God's Kingdom to those around you.

Relevant Skills

Embark on organizing a mission or Bible camp in your parish. Do your best to make it fun, memorable and as involving of all participants as it can be.

Resources

BOSCOM-INDIA. 'SHEPHERDS' FOR AN INFORMATION AGE. Matunga: Tej Prasarini, 2000.