



July 2005

## ***Development Directions***

A free resource for pastors, principals, development directors, volunteers and anyone engaged in the ministry of Catholic development.

### **ROLE OF THE PASTOR AND PRINCIPAL IN DEVELOPMENT: SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESS: PART I**

#### **Background and Rationale**

In regard to Catholic development, there are a number of built in truisms about pastors and principals that exist in our Catholic culture today. Working with hundreds of parishes and schools every year, we see these truisms come alive, day in and day out. Some Catholic leaders understand the dynamics of their position. Here are 5 basic truths that we see every day in our ministry:

- People look to the pastor/principal for leadership, direction and guidance.
- People look to the pastor/principal to establish the processes that will create a dynamic vision and plan for the future.
- People respond more positively when they are personally asked by the pastor/principal to become involved.
- People respond more positively when the pastor/principal asks for a financial contribution.
- The physical presence of the pastor/principal is what makes the most difference.

The suggestions we are making in this article have grown out of 16 years of working with hundreds and hundreds of pastors and principals and seeing which ones were successful and which ones struggled over and over - regardless of their assignment or hiring. ISPD's position is intended to offer suggestions and that is all. Some may be applicable and easy to adapt and others may be a struggle. We are approaching this from the standpoint of answering a question that is often put to us throughout the country - "If you had to give our pastor/principal advice on what his/her role should be in our development efforts, what would be your best advice?" Here goes . . .

**Suggestion # 1: Understand that development is not just about fund-raising.**

- "Development is the meaningful involvement of people in your mission and vision for the future." In order to "develop" a Catholic parish and/or school, people should be personally invited, involved and engaged in order to create and build a dynamic plan and vision for the future. People are the key to it all.

**Suggestion # 2: The pastor and principal should be seen as the leader of the development efforts.**

- If development is to be taken seriously, the pastor/principal should be the "out front" person in development, especially if it is a new initiative in the parish and/or school. In both the spoken word and the written word, the pastor/principal should be seen as very supportive. People will take their lead from the pastor/principal.

**Suggestion # 3: The pastor and principal should collaborate and look at development as a parish and school venture.**

- ISPD strongly supports a collaborative parish and school development effort. To try and launch separate development efforts would be counter-productive and could confuse parishioners, parents, and staff. Throughout the country, the parish and school development office has worked best.

**Suggestion # 4: The pastor and principal should be visionary.**

- "Without vision, we perish." A great deal of effort should be spent on creating a dynamic vision - one that is created through the invitation and involvement of people. When this can be a process that can really engage people, then the vision and the future plan become the guiding light of the parish and/or school.
- The pastor and principal should be able to verbally articulate this vision on a day to day basis - in conversations, in homilies, at staff meetings, in letters, in newsletters, in memos, in e-mails, in presentations, in whatever forum is available.

**Suggestion # 5: The pastor and principal should be open to input.**

- If pastors and principals buy into the definition of development, then it means that they will invite and involve people in a meaningful way. When that happens, it then becomes important for pastors and principals to realize that these people that they are inviting to become involved will have opinions and ideas. Their voice needs to be heard if we want them to take the development effort seriously.
- "Don't ask me for my opinion if you don't want it," is a cry we often hear when the pastor/principal becomes offended with something that somebody said. One of the great things about development is that it is an inclusive process, not exclusive.

**Suggestion # 6: The pastor and principal should see development as a long-term investment.**

- Development is not a quick fix. It usually takes 3-5 years for development to work well. Relationships need to be established; teams need to be formed; processes need to be put in place; and everyone must get on the same page.

**Suggestion # 7: The pastor/principal should schedule regular meetings with the development director or the person(s) in charge of the development efforts.**

- The pastor/principal should be like the "One Minute Manager" and schedule regular meetings with those folks working with the development efforts. These folks need guidance, and the pastor/principal should provide it and show strong support for the efforts. There are also key areas of development that the pastor/principal can be extremely effective:
  - Personally inviting people to join a team
  - Inviting a financial gift
  - Writing a letter or an article
  - Speaking to a group of people
  - Doing the welcome at a key event
- All of these efforts need to be coordinated with the development office. The fatal statement that some pastors/principals make is, "Now we've got a development director. I can step back and let him/her take over." Step back? Yes, and be able to move to another position in development that is more effective.

**Suggestion # 8: The pastor/principal should make sure the development director is accepted as a member of the parish/school leadership team.**

- When a development effort first begins, or when it comes time to revamp the present one, certain steps are essential:
  - The pastor/principal should verbally state his/her support.
  - The location of the development office should be in a prominent place in the parish/school.
  - The pastor/principal should serve on the development team.
  - The development director should be invited to serve as a member of the leadership team, i.e. parish council, school board, etc.

**Suggestion # 9: The pastor/principal should make sure that the development office does not become a "catch all" for incidental projects or tasks that no one else wants to do.**

- The development effort of a parish/school should be focused with a clear plan of action, clear goals and specific outcomes. The development officers should be motivated to accomplish the goals and see to it that nothing deters their progress.
- The development officer should not be the moderator for the junior-senior prom or the chairperson of the parish fair or the coordinator for regional accreditation. Development offices are famous for getting bogged down with supplementary junk to take care of.

**Suggestion # 10: The pastor/principal should continue to learn about Catholic development through on-going in-service and education.**

- Development keeps changing year to year. The word itself - development - means change. It is important for the pastor/principal to educate himself/herself by attending workshops, seminars, conventions, as well as reading about Catholic development and the impact it can have on their parish/school.
- NCEA (National Catholic Educators Association) Convention, NCDC (National Catholic Development Conference), National Stewardship Conference, plus ISPD workshops and conferences are just some ways that pastors and principals can learn more about this wonderful ministry.

**Suggestion # 11: The pastor/principal should encourage his/her staff to continue educating themselves about Catholic development.**

- When all the members of a team hear the same message, that can have a powerful impact. It is one thing to have 1-2 people attend a workshop or conference. It is another to have 5-10 from the same institution come together. They can network, attend different talks, compare notes, have lively discussions, and build a vocabulary of development language. Sending seven people to the National Stewardship Conference can be very stimulating!

**Suggestion # 12: The pastor/principal should have an annual evaluation process in place to "score" the progress of the development office.**

- At the beginning of the year (fiscal and/or calendar), the pastor/principal should create an evaluation process with specific goals and outcomes. These would be reviewed, discussed and "scored" at the end of the year, or perhaps at the six month mark. The outcomes should be measurable.
- For example:
  - In the Fall, the development director will conduct 7-10 input sessions with parents and over 75 families will be represented.
  - The development director will give a 20 minute presentation every 3 months to the following groups:
    - Student Council
    - Finance Council
    - Faculty/Staff
    - Parish Staff
    - Men's Club
    - Parent Boosters Organization
  - The development office will assure that the alumni division of the Annual Fund increases its number of donors by 12-15% each year and its dollar amount by 8-10% each year.

**Suggestion # 13: The pastor/principal should benchmark with leaders of other Catholic institutions.**

- Peer networking can be very valuable. Even though there are those Catholic leaders who elect to stay inside of their own walls, there is another world out there of information, resources, and talent. All we've got to do is ask.
- A list of parishes/schools who are doing development well needs to be assembled. Sometimes these places are close by and other times they require a plane trip or a long road trip. Learn to learn from each other. Invite another pastor/principal over to speak to a group of parish/school leaders about their development efforts.

**NOTE:** Part II (Suggestions 14-25) will continue next month in the August issue of *"Development Directions."*

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# ISPD SUCCESS STORY: POPE JOHN PAUL II HIGH SCHOOL - Slidell, LA

In our travels around the country, and in assessing development efforts with our clients, it is often that we hear the following types of statements:

- *"We have a core group of people who do everything at our school."*
- *"We need some 'new blood' around here!"*
- *"I've chaired the auction for the last 3 years - let someone else step up to the plate."*

In our sixteen year history as a company, ISPD has always maintained that there are people in our Catholic school communities who want to play a part in building their school's mission and vision for the future - but they don't do it for one main reason: They have never been invited - personally - to do so.

Such was the case at Pope John Paul II Catholic High School in Slidell, Louisiana. Facing declining enrollment, an aging physical plant, a need to enhance their public image and improve alumni outreach, PJPII leaders decided that the time had come to create a Strategic Plan for the school's development efforts. A dedicated Core Team was put into place and worked for months conducting surveys, forming an Alumni Association and enhancing the school's recruitment effort. Their final step was to form a Development Advisory Board (DAB).

The purpose of the DAB was to help create PJPII's Long-Range Strategic Plan for Development. The Core Team brainstormed a list of people whom they felt would make excellent candidates for the DAB with their personal and professional experiences. The list included school alumni, former parents, feeder school parents and faculty, community professionals, PJPII parents, and friends. Core Team members contacted all of the candidates personally to invite their participation. Although excited about the possibilities, the Core Team remained skeptical that these people, invited to serve on the Development Advisory Board, would actually agree to participate. After all, why would they want to give of their time and energy for the betterment of the school if they didn't currently have children enrolled in PJPII?

On the night of the first DAB meeting, the Core Team was pleasantly surprised to see over 50 people turn out to serve. We began the meeting with introductions, asking for a name, affiliation with the school and the reason they chose to accept the invitation to serve. One third of the DAB members commented that they had always wanted to be involved with the school, but that they were never asked.

With the help of the Core Team, PJPII's Development Advisory Board went on to create a dynamic plan with strategic initiatives that address student recruitment, the school's public image, communication efforts, alumni outreach and other key areas. At the completion of the process, almost one-half of the DAB members indicated that they wanted to become further involved with PJPII's development efforts.

Today, Pope John Paul II Catholic High School is well-positioned for its current and future development efforts. By personally inviting people to become meaningfully involved, the school has reached out to establish new relationships and renew existing ones for the advancement of PJPII's mission and vision for the future.

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# UPCOMING 2005 WORKSHOPS

Dynamic presenters share proven strategies and discuss development issues during one and two day seminars for Catholic parishes and schools. These workshops are conveniently held across the country at an affordable price of \$49-\$99 We hope you'll join us soon!

**Topics Include:** \*\* Attracting New Students \*\* Total Stewardship \*\* Long-Range Planning \*\* Annual Funds & Capital Campaigns \*\* Charge Up Your Development Battery! \*\* Building A Stronger Image for Your Catholic School \*\* Involving More People in Your Catholic Institution \*\*

**Scheduled Locations:** \*\* Brooklyn, NY \*\* Cleveland, OH \*\* Denver, CO \*\*  
\*\* Dubuque, IA \*\* Harrisburg, PA \*\* Hartford, CT \*\* Lacrosse, WI \*\* Miami, FL \*\*  
\*\* Newark, NJ \*\* Omaha, NE \*\* Pittsburgh, PA \*\* San Francisco, CA \*\*

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