

## ***Is Your Parish Ready for Greater Volunteer Engagement? A Readiness Checklist***

There are three factors that need to be carefully considered before you can effectively create a volunteer ministry in your parish. Each item requires careful consideration, frank discussion and possibly, some thoughtful action to ensure success. While it may seem daunting, honesty will pay off, if you can face and resolve any barriers to your program before you begin.

Three readiness factors:   The clergy point of view  
                                  The views of existing leadership  
                                  The climate within the church

### **A Readiness Checklist:**

*Rank with Yes, No, or Needs Work*

#### ***The Clergy Point of View***

1. Does the incumbent really want meaningful lay involvement?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How comfortable is he or she with participative decision making?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How important is it to the clergy to be seen to be in charge?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Are people currently given freedom to take on a project their way within safe boundaries?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Does the priest feel comfortable in sharing ministry and supervising others?

### ***The Views of Existing Leadership ( Staff and Volunteer)***

1. Do existing staff and lay leaders feel uncomfortable sharing leadership with others?
2. Does the leadership believe that to get a job done right you must do it yourself?
4. Are offers of help readily received by people new to the parish?
5. Do senior staff and lay leaders lose anything by engaging others in the work of the parish?
6. Are there mentors or supporters who will work with those new to leadership?
7. Are there leaders who are already demonstrating success in working with volunteers?
8. Can we give visibility to those already working well with volunteers before we begin?
9. Can we study how and why these folks are successful?

### ***Climate Within the Church***

1. How welcoming is your parish to new people and new ideas?

2. How comfortable is the parish to diverse opinions?
3. Must people earn their right to become involved?
4. Does the church climate encourage people to take risks or offer help?
5. If people make a mistake or fail, do they still feel valued by the congregation?
6. Is there a lot of parking lot discussion about people?
7. Are lay people ready for the clergy to give up control?
8. Does the parish feel like a safe place to be open about your feelings or experience?