

How Do We Implement Ecumenism at the Parish Level?

Source of the Directives - Catechism of the Catholic Church Sec. 821

Directive:

- **A permanent renewal of the Church in greater fidelity to her vocation; such renewal is the driving-force of the movement toward unity**

Suggestions:

- Parish bulletin notices and after-Mass "pulpit announcements" to increase ecumenical awareness of the parishioners and establish ecumenism as a priority of the parish administration.
- Active promotion of ecumenical events and topics in the parish, such as WPCU, diocesan ecumenical events, community ecumenical events, etc.

Directive:

- **Conversion of heart, as the faithful try to live holier lives according to the Gospel, for it is unfaithfulness of the members to Christ's gift which causes divisions**

Suggestions:

- Understand other faith traditions' basic views toward ecumenical dialogue with other faiths (some faiths discourage ecumenical dialogue or are suspicious of, or angry towards, the Catholic Church)

Directive:

- **"prayer in common, because change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical"**

Suggestions:

- Joint prayer services, activities during WPCU, Thanksgiving, Palm Sunday, Reformation Sunday, others as local circumstances suggest.

Directive:

- **"fraternal knowledge of each other"**

Suggestions:

- Understand the basic tenets of the faith of the neighboring churches.
- Add reference books to the church library.
- Include links to neighboring churches on your church website.

Directive:

- **"ecumenical formation, of the faithful and especially of priests"**

Suggestions:

- For larger parishes, form an ecumenical and interreligious commission.
- For smaller parishes, appoint an appropriate person as the ecumenical & interfaith liaison.
- Obtain, disseminate and know the four main Vatican documents on ecumenism/interreligious relations.
- Communicate progress in ecumenical work to archdiocese commission.

Directive:

- **"dialogue... and meetings among Christians of the different churches and communities"**

Suggestions:

- Invite speakers from other faiths to come for small group lectures.
- Hold panel discussions on interesting/current topics and invite authoritative speakers from different faiths to offer their faith's views.

Directive:

- **"collaboration among Christians in various areas of service to mankind - 'human service' is the idiomatic phrase"**

Suggestions:

- Consider joining resources for common activities such as VBS, community social work, Congregations for the Homeless, Interreligious Baccalaureates, Covenants, and ministries such as bereavement, divorce, family relations, etc.