



Organizing a Parish Ministry Fair

The purpose of a ministry fair is to invite all parishioners to actively participate in the life of the parish community, to bring awareness to the many ministries and outreach efforts of the parish, to celebrate the work of the Church, and to thank those who carry out the mission of the Church.

All parish ministries, programs and services should be showcased at the ministry fair with each having its own table, booth or space. A ministry fair can be incorporated into any parish event.

Sample Checklist for Planning a Ministry Fair

1) Select the Date, Times and Location

- Consider the best time of year to plan a ministry fair and how you might include the ministry fair with your annual parish stewardship renewal weekend.
- Double check your parish calendar, as well as local community and diocesan calendars, to ensure your ministry fair does not conflict with events that may already be scheduled.

2) Establish a Budget

- Consider the types of activities you'll offer, the supplies you will need to purchase vs. what the parish already has on hand, if you need special equipment, decorations, etc.

3) Select a Theme and Creative Ways to Build Engagement

- Make the environment fun and inviting for all ages.
- Remember that the ministry fair is a time to celebrate the good things happening in your parish!
- Host a contest between participating ministries for the most creative booth or table.
- Offer a prize drawing which may be entered by attendees once they collect signatures from a certain number of tables.
- Ensure there is a booth for welcoming new parish members with new member packets available.

4) Invite Ministry Leaders, Parish Program Directors, Parish Council, etc.

- The support of the pastor, parish staff and parish leadership is critical to the success of a ministry fair event.
- Ask them to promote the fair at their gatherings, meetings, etc.
- Share ministry fair details and ask for their help in planning.

- Form a team with as many volunteers as possible.
- Ensure every table/booth has someone present during the hours of the fair to answer questions.

5) Plan the Layout of the Fair

- Decide the set-up of tables/booths/areas for each committee/ministry.
- Plan the layout to allow for movement and easy accessibility.
- If event is to be held outside, plan for rain/inclement weather.
- Share the layout in advance with each ministry leader.

6) Communicate: include parish announcements in the weeks leading up to the ministry fair:

- Parish Bulletins
- Pulpit Announcements
- Mailed Invitation
- Parish Website
- Parish App
- Social Media

7) Set Up/Decorations

- Print signs for all ministry tables.
- Provide tables, tablecloths or table décor that fits the ministry fair theme.
- Name Tags

8) The Day of the Ministry Fair

- Pastors should make a ministry fair announcement at all Masses.
- Have a team to help with the clean-up of the hall/site.

9) Say Thank You

- Send handwritten thank you notes to all ministry leaders for participating in the fair.
- Include a thank you message in the parish bulletin with information on how to sign up for a parish ministry if someone missed the event.

10) Evaluate the Event and Begin Planning for Next Year

- What worked well?
- What could be improved upon?
- How can you increase attendance next year?
- Seek feedback from those who visited the fair, including ministry leaders.
- Report the results to the parish through the bulletin, newsletters, pulpit, etc.