

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
Departments of Lay Ministry and Stewardship
Program on Leadership and Parish Development

The Departments of Lay Ministry and Stewardship are offering a new program to pastors and their parishes. We engage in structured conversations and consensus decision-making processes within a workshop format that will enable you and your leadership to build up the Body of Christ as stewards and leaders of your Orthodox Christian parish and extended community.

These structured conversations are intended to build trust and consensus among you and your parishioners. We provide a systematic framework within which you and your leadership will develop a deeper understanding of each other and your parish. This enhanced understanding helps you and the parish leaders move forward in His service as together you manifest Christ's love in the world.

During these conversations we reflect with you on who you are as a parish, what you do as a parish, and for whom you do it. Through these facilitated conversations, you and your leadership will develop a program for the parish that has five key elements – a model of Orthodox Christian leadership, a parish mission statement, a parish vision statement, an explicit set of core values that underpin your actions and behaviors, and SMART goals for realizing your mission and vision.

For example, we begin usually on a Friday evening with an in-depth look at Orthodox Christian leadership using an Antiochian perspective. On Saturday morning we guide the group through a conversation that results in a clear and concise mission statement. This statement informs your communities about who you are as an Orthodox Christian parish, what it is you do, and for whom it is you do this - both internally and externally within the greater community. On Saturday afternoon, you and the leadership group will develop a vision statement that states in what directions the parish will grow over the next three to five years; this statement serves as the parish's road map into the future.

On our next visit and also on a Friday evening, we guide you to develop a set of parish core values. These are an explicit set of principles that represent your deepest held convictions and that inform your actions and behaviors as individuals and as a parish as well as your relationships to each other and to your community.

On Saturday, we work in small groups on a specific element of the vision statement. We find it very helpful to invite additional parishioners who are specifically interested in a specific element of the vision statement to join a respective working group for this activity. These smaller groups are charged with developing an explicit set of SMART goals that will guide the parish in accomplishing the vision statement.

Each of the workshops ends with a completed statement (mission, vision, values and goals) developed by the participants. Each workshop fosters fellowship, leadership, mutuality, respect, commitment, accountability, consensus, and clarity of action.

Through this spiritually intentional process, you and the parish leadership will be able to set priorities for your ministries, allocate your time, talent and financial resources, ensure that everyone knows the goals that must be achieved collaboratively, and assess the progress and growth of the parish. As you can see, this is a deliberate and explicit process. It requires the full commitment and attendance of the parish leadership – the pastor(s), the deacon(s), the parish council, parish organization leaders, and others that you may invite.

All we ask from a parish, other than when possible our travel and lodging expenses, is its firm commitment to this entire processes. As necessary, we take responsibility for covering our travel and housing costs. The following is an example of the schedule associated with each visit.

Summary of Schedule

Part 1: Parish Leadership, Mission and Vision

Friday evening 2.5 hours	A model of Orthodox Christian leadership that focuses on the leaders' responsibilities and roles (an Antiochian perspective)
Saturday AM 2.5 – 3.0 hours	Development of the parish mission statement – Why does the parish exist? What does it do? For whom does it do these acts?
Saturday PM 3.0 hours	Development of the parish vision statement – Where does the parish want to be in the next three to five years?

Part 2: Parish Core Values and SMART Goals

Friday evening 2.5 hours	Development of the parish's core values – What are the deeply held convictions that inform our actions and behaviors?
Saturday 4.0 hours	Development of the parish's SMART goals based on each element of the parish vision statement.

The entire process requires approximately 16 hours to complete. We hope that this provides the information necessary to clarify our intent, purpose and offering. Programs previously developed by the Departments continue to be offered to parishes. Please let us know your questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

For the Departments of Lay Ministry and the Department of Stewardship
 John Dalack - SMAOC@earthlink.net
 Anthony Bashir - anthony_bashir@emerson.edu
 Richard Robbat - robbatr@gmail.com