

## 10 Simple Ideas for Evangelization

1. Connect to international and national events and news in the Church.
2. Link to church leaders' speeches, blogs, teachings, etc.
3. Follow the Pope, cardinals, bishops and priests as they meet and work in ministry.
4. Write our own blogs that address questions from teens and other parishioners.
5. Make videos that highlight the good work happening in our parishes.
6. Create spiritual resources for people to use in their homes.
7. Upload photos/homilies/reflections from local leaders and staff.
8. Promote and advertise parish events and activities.
9. Give parents ideas for building faith at home and post activity plans that you use in parish programs for them to do at home with their families.
10. Pose discussion questions and prayers inviting people to engage the two-way dialogue/multi-logue.

This is a short list of ideas that you can use to evangelize on social media. What else would you add?

## The Cyber-Body-of-Christ

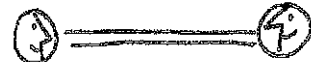
### What does the Body of Christ look like?

Whenever I ask this question, I get two responses: a small round piece of bread with or without a monstrance; and the People of God. More often than not, the People of God is imaged as a large group of faces sitting inside a church building.

I would suggest that these are inner circle images of the Body of Christ. It's the image of the host that you receive at Communion at your parish... or it's the group of faces that you see at Sunday Mass every week.

If we stretch our imaginations, we might begin to include groups of faces in all kinds of places... from all kinds of cultures... speaking all kinds of languages... maybe even other denominations... if we really stretch ourselves.

For many people, the information superhighway is difficult to imagine because it doesn't have a singular tangible image. It is a vast network of wired and wireless computers and

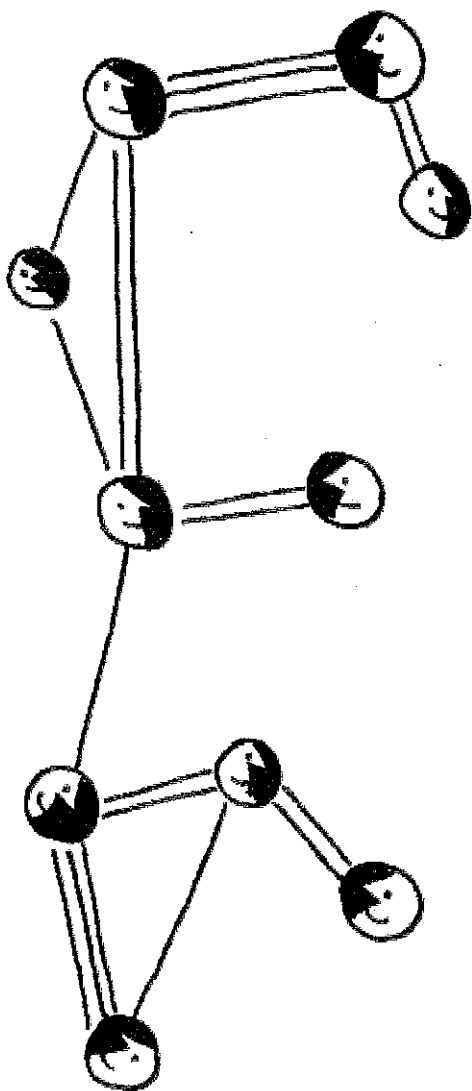


devices that mysteriously talk to each other and exchange information at super-fast speeds.

The Cyber-Body-of-Christ is equally as difficult to imagine.

## The Body of Christ is a vast network.

Try to envision the Body of Christ in the cybersphere, living and breathing. Not some holographic/science-fiction/futuristic image... but a larger version of the mental picture you have of the people in your Sunday congregation.



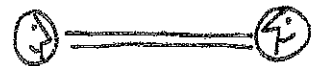
The cyber-church is every bit as real as the people who gather in person in our parishes. The Cyber-Body-of-Christ is made of human flesh-and-blood people who simply congregate in cyberspace. Our job is to foster deeper connections between all of them—across the spectrum from physical church buildings to the cybersphere.

The greater implication is that the Body of Christ exists in a wider plane. We know for certain that there are plenty of good Catholic believers that are never seen in a church building and yet, they too belong to the Body of Christ. They are easy to forget because they are seldom seen in person. There may be people that we only see at Christmas and Easter... or the children we lose track of between First Communion and Confirmation... or the families who get over-extended with weekend activities. These are our "parishioners" as well. Our ministry is incomplete if we only serve the right-in-front-of-our-noses Body of Christ.

We need to begin to integrate the Cyber-Body-of-Christ into our ministry thinking and expand our circle of thought beyond the immediate image of who the Body of Christ includes. This is the deeper task of the New Evangelization. Why? Because the New

Evangelization is about calling back those who left... the ones we used to see but don't anymore... the ones we used to have regular contact with but don't anymore.

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If we can begin to envision a modern Cyber-Body-of-Christ then the New Evangelization has a brand new, fresh access point into people's hearts and lives. The key is that we have to be relevant without being preachy. Otherwise, we'll be ignored just like before.

Can we help people experience conversion moments through online ministry?

Sure. It's happening now. God works in mysterious ways... in all times and places and spaces. Some will come to us in our church buildings seeking change. But we also need to go out to them.

## If We Don't or Won't Reimagine

### Technical vs. Adaptive Change

Are you satisfied with how your ministry is going now?

If so, then keep doing what you're doing. More power to you!

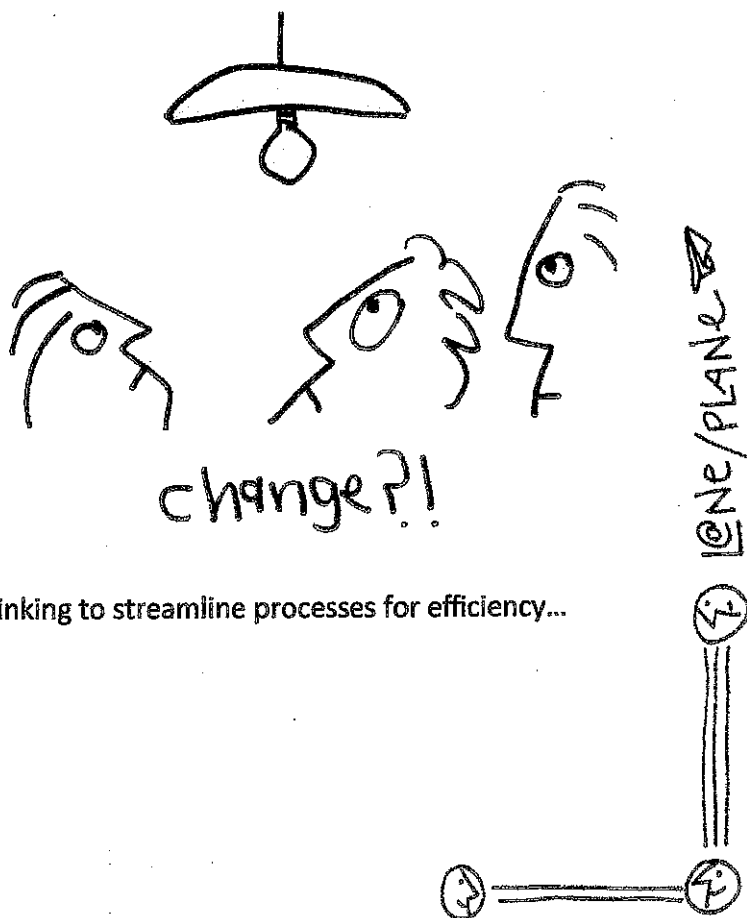
If you're not satisfied, then gear up... because you're going to have to make a change. *What are you willing to do differently to achieve the results you want to see?*

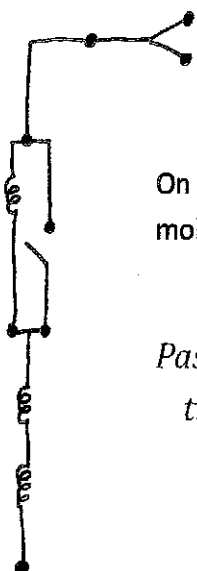
It's the difference between technical and adaptive change.

Technical change means refining or making practical changes that will improve a program or process. It sounds like this:

*If we move the youth ministry meetings from Friday nights to Wednesday nights then I think more teens will come because it won't conflict with the high school football games.*

Technical change usually involves strategic thinking to streamline processes for efficiency... more like tweaking the fine points.





On the other hand, adaptive work requires a change in values, beliefs, or behaviors... mobilizing people to learn new ways. Adaptive change might sound like this:

*Pastor to the people: These social media gadgets are great! I think we can use them to help us connect better with our parishioners. Let's have a meeting next week to start working on a social media strategy for the parish.*

Adaptive change requires some major shifts in thinking and acting on the parts of everyone involved. You might think of it as an investment in personal currency. Adaptive change is big and usually requires creative thinking to find new solutions to problems.

The theory of the long tail in business marketing teaches that small incremental change does not lead to greater success. If you want to catch people's attention, it won't be because you changed one button on a product or altered a single ingredient in the recipe. People respond more fervently to a totally new product.

The same will be true in ministry. Our greatest success will come when we visibly show that we are adapting to the changing reality of our world that has been initiated by technology and social media. When people see that we are using social media to reach out to them, it will catch their attention. When they see we are using it to talk about relevant questions and matters of faith, they will be more inclined to enter the conversation.

## The Real Urgency

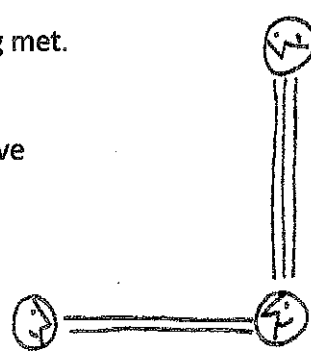
The real urgency for us in ministry today is simply that people aren't coming around anymore. They're not connected to church like they used to be. One-third of Catholics have left the church, most between the ages of 18 and 23. Of those who leave, 50% go to other religions. Even more alarming: 50% become unaffiliated with any religion. Why?

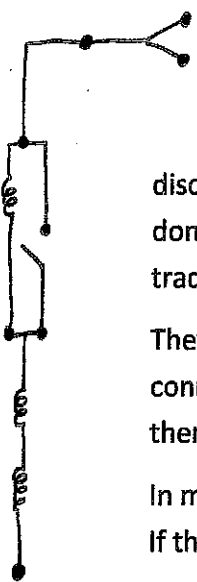
Researchers gleaned an insightful conclusion from the data. Most of the people who left did not have any deep conflict with Church teachings. For the most part, their sense of Catholic Tradition and tradition remained solid... they continued to believe in Catholic teaching.

So what's the problem? Why do they leave? Their spiritual needs are not being met. Basically... they're bored.

Many still feel deeply Catholic at the core... but for a variety of reasons, they have

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disconnected from the physical community. If they are physically disconnected—i.e., they don't have a face-to-face presence in the parish—and we are only connecting with people in traditional media formats, then we lose the opportunity to reach this group.

They still believe. They still have deep faith. We have lost the personal and physical connection... but it's not so broken that we can't fix it if we try. We have to stop waiting for them to come back to us and instead, go out to them.

In ministry terms, getting connected with people is not simply about creating a new program. If that's all it took, we would have solved the problem a long time ago.

This is a systemic issue that will require deeper change.

There's definitely a choice involved. We can choose to use or not use technology and social media for ministry. We can choose to reimagine or not reimagine the Body of Christ. But we'll need to consider the consequences of that choice.

Most importantly, what outcome do you desire? More people showing up at the parish? More engagement from the ones who do?

These are signs that adaptive change is needed. A good first step is to address the fear. Here are some common ones that many in ministry share.

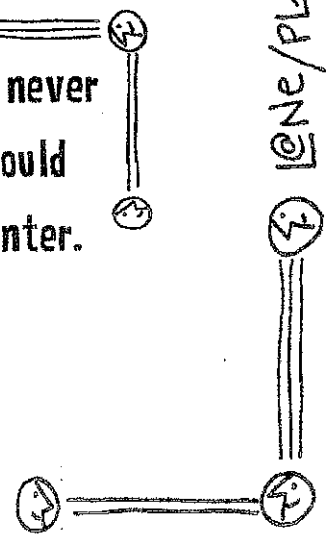
### Big Q's and Fears

*I don't want to lose face-to-face connections.*

We will still have face-to-face connections with the ones who show up. That will not stop until we stop being in the same place at the same time. No one will ever say "Stay home so we can meet on Skype instead." Unless, of course, there's a blizzard going on or some equally good reasonable excuse why we should meet online. No.

The real goal here is to connect with people that we never see in person so we can build a relationship that could potentially result in the regular face-to-face encounter.

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*How does anyone have enough time to spend on social media?*

Technology has been a gift. Agreed? In a lot of ways, it has made our lives easier. Just imagine your life without refrigerators, microwaves, televisions, cars, washers and dryers, VCRs and now DVRs, desktops and laptops, iPads, smartphones... any phone!

Chances are good that you would be lost without several items from this very short list. Each of these modern advancements replaced some previous piece of equipment because they made our daily life easier to live and probably more fun.

Social media in ministry is the same thing. We just have to learn it and figure out how it can streamline our ministry. We bit the bullet and learned how to program our DVRs and fancy televisions with satellite dishes. We figure out how to sync up our cell phones to work with Bluetooth and Spotify. And we're even beginning to understand smartphone apps. Like all these, social media in ministry has a do-able learning curve.

*I am afraid of negative backlash.*

The perception is that if we use a blog or other social media then people have more opportunity to say bad things about us. So why risk it?

People have been saying bad things for years. We just never heard it. Water cooler talk has been around longer than the actual water coolers. The difference today is that the water cooler is online and there are a million people standing around it talking and comparing notes.

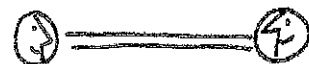
People are going to complain about things. It's part of the human condition. The paradox is: *There is no better place for them to complain than on your website and social media. Why?* Because you have the chance to respond to them immediately there.

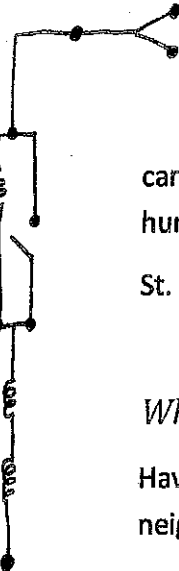
If the water cooler talk stays at the office, then you can't help people solve their problems or change their perceptions. If you engage them in conversation—even online—then you can resolve their issues and in the process show onlookers that you care enough to make things right. In the business world that's called customer service. In Catholic-world, that's called *relational ministry*.

*What if I make a mistake?*

We never learn anything without making mistakes. It doesn't matter what media platform we are talking about... television/radio/print media or online media. We have to use great

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care and caution when we communicate. We've always made mistakes—and we're human—so we will always make new ones. Fix them. Learn from them. Move on.

St. Peter made some huge mistakes and yet...

*What if I go somewhere bad on the internet?*

Have you ever gotten lost while driving and ended up in an unfamiliar or even scary neighborhood? Gather your wits. Back-track and get out of there.

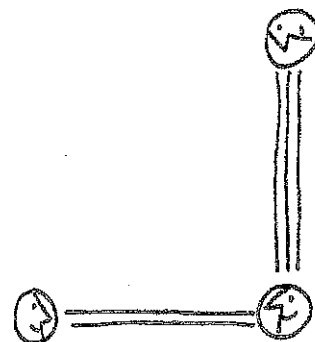
*This is just a fad.*

At one point in history, people probably thought the same thing about printed books and horseless carriages... about televisions and microwave ovens and computers, etc. While specific programs will certainly disappear, social media and how it connects us is not going away. Social media is not a fad. Accept that it is changing our world in a profound way.

*Change?!?!*

The real crux of the issue is that we resist change. In some cases, we're downright afraid of it. It's definitely your prerogative to keep your push-button-long-curly-corded phone if you want to. But if you are the gatekeeper in your area of ministry... or even the whole parish... don't let your own resistance to change handcuff what others could be doing with technology and social media. Give them the freedom and support to use these powerful tools for the work of ministry and evangelization.

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## 4 Things to Understand about Social Media

The corporate business world is finally learning some valuable lessons about how their customers are using social media. As ministry professionals, we would be wise to stand up and take notice.

1. Social media is the wave of the future. It's not going away.
2. The companies (churches) that will succeed over the next 10 years are the ones that embrace social media.
3. The companies (churches) that will fail over the next 10 years probably won't embrace social media—most likely because of fear.
4. Social media marketing is real. It can be actionable. And it can be measured... which will give you clues about when to adjust the course.

[Read more about this in *No Bullshit Social Media* by Jason Falls and Erik Deckers. The website: <http://nobullshitsocialmedia.com/buythisbook.>]

## Keys to Success

*Be intentional. Know why you're doing it.*

Before you start, have a conversation with staff and volunteers to figure out: *What do you want to say? And who do you want to say it to?*

These are extremely valuable questions to talk about at the very beginning of your brainstorming process. The clearer you are about what you want to do, the better your connection strategy will be.

*Don't go half-way. But divide and conquer.*

If you are going to learn how to swim you can't just stick your big toe in to feel the water temp. You've got to jump in all the way and splash around a while to let your body warm up. Social media is the same way. You must make a long-term commitment in order to see how social media works for your ministry context.

Use ministry staff and other people you trust to create a social media team and divide the responsibilities. Don't expect that three or even six months will give you an accurate

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reflection of the effect of social media on your ministry. Plan to give social media strategies a minimum of one year of strong, dedicated effort to assess their impact on creating wider connections with people.

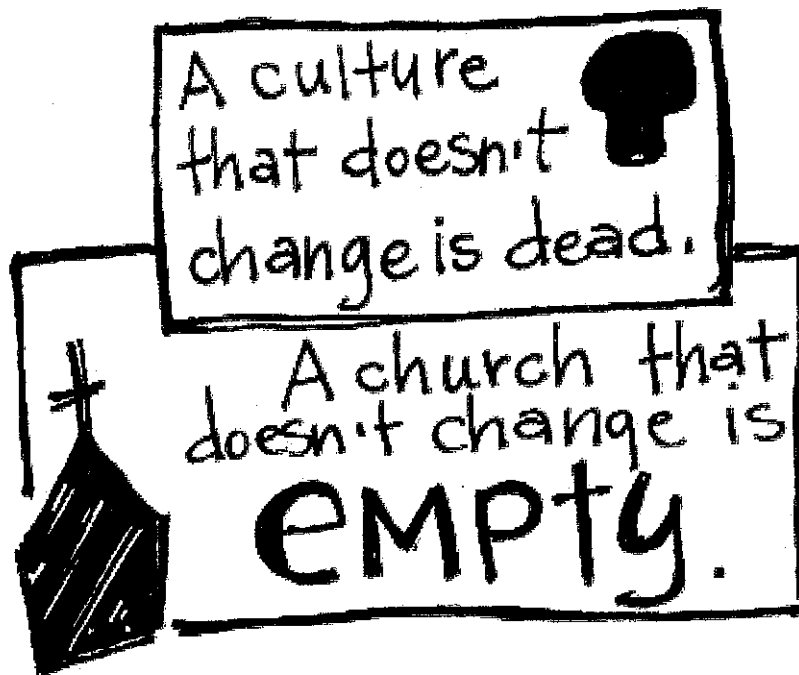
*Have a plan. Stick to it. Adapt when necessary.*

Create a strategy. Devise a list of topics and themes for 3 or 4 or 6 months. Then make it happen. When you get near the end of your plan, evaluate and if necessary, change it. Set some measurable goals and then revise upward when you reach them.

*Be consistent.*

Consistency and quality are the keys to keeping your audience active and engaged with you on social media. Like anything else in life, routines create habits. When the Cyber-Body-of-Christ knows your regular routine of posting updates and content, they will be more likely to stay connected. How often you decide to post blogs/status updates/tweets/videos, etc., should be built into your social media strategy. Start small and then grow as you and the team get more comfortable and gain experience.

*What happens if we don't or won't reimagine...*



This is real. Take it or leave it.

# The WHY

Some in Catholic ministry have embraced social media and are using it effectively to spread information and connect with people. Others are still thinking about it, while even more are digging in their heels and resisting. But largely these platforms have been about creating a traditionally Catholic presence and preaching. We use these tools to show people that the church is alive in the cybersphere. Here... let's be 'friends'. And we use these tools to proclaim the Good News—to spread the Gospel. But these actions are really the HOW and the WHAT. Neither are the WHY.

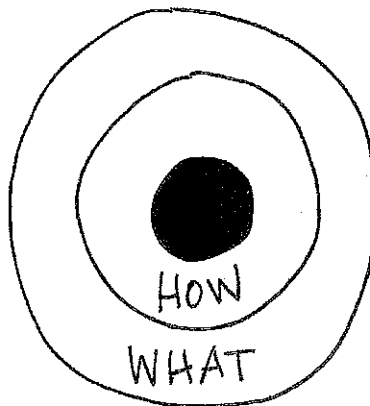
What do I mean?

Let's look at the WHY / HOW / WHAT... in that order.

## The Golden Circle

Business leader Simon Sinek uses a model called the Golden Circle: Why / How / What.

- WHY do you do what you do? What's your purpose? Describe the unifying, driving, inspiring force behind individuals and organizations.
- HOW do you do what you do? Give details about the guiding principles or actions that bring the WHY to life. The verbs. The strategies.
- WHAT do you do? Define the actions that bring the WHY to life.

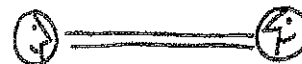


Our first thought is that the priority is to proclaim the Good News... that the primary outbound message should be the Gospel. That's a great objective. But it's actually the WHAT. We really need to focus first on the WHY... this message:

*We care about each and every one of you. Deeply.  
You are important because you are the Body of Christ.*

The theology of social media is Body of Christ theology... Trinitarian... communal. We are wired to be together in everyday life, prayer, worship and service.

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The social media cybersphere is where we have the best opportunity to meet people. That's where they live anymore.

Sinek is a business marketer. The reason why his Golden Circle model is gaining traction in the corporate world is because it flips our whole set of assumptions upside down about how to reach people. Traditionally, the marketing philosophy has been:

1. *Here's a great product.*
2. *It can make your life better in this way. You need it.*
3. *We sell it. Come buy one.*

In Catholic-world it would sound like this:

1. *Register for RE classes and sacraments so we can teach you the Catholic faith.*
2. *We need you to use your gifts to support our parish.*
3. *If you believe in Jesus and follow his teachings, then you will live a better life.*

It's exactly opposite of how we need to be reaching out to people today because the world has changed. It used to be that believing led to belonging... if you believe what I believe then you belong with us. But today, it's been flipped upside down... belonging leads to believing... if I belong to your group then I'll start to believe what you believe.

What could happen if we put the relationship first? What if it sounded like this?

1. *You are an important and valuable member in the Body of Christ. We care about you... deeply. Let's build a relationship.*
2. *Let me introduce you to my friend Jesus. He is our Lord and Savior.*
3. *Come be part of our church community. We'll teach you more about Jesus and Catholic faith.*

That's putting the WHY first. It is probably the harder path because it calls us to greater vulnerability in initiating the relationship without a guaranteed return for our time and energy.



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We have traditionally started with the teaching piece. It is easier because we can use more of our head knowledge and less of our heart investment. But our example and model should be Jesus. Jesus always began with the relationship. That is our call too.

The WHY comes first because it is about building the relationships. Without an established relationship, everything we say falls on deaf ears. Even our best Catholic doctrine is lost if it's not first rooted in relationship and community.

## Find the tribe and help them connect to you.

Seth Godin—another business marketing guru—talks about people as tribes. That all people gather around common interests and that humans are inherently tribal are both true statements. We meet in religious tribes (Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, non-denominational, Mormons, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Christians), sports tribes (soccer moms, football dads, fantasy league general managers, Little League parents, boosters), hobby tribes (crafters, quilters, bakers, brewers, card players, billiards and bowlers, gamers and programmers), and social tribes around causes (preschool moms, home-school co-ops, Respect Life advocates, social justice promoters, soup kitchen ladlers, rosary makers and pray-ers, Bible study-ers and catechists).

We all belong to a multitude of tribes. And it's our common interests and our connection to a particular tribe that keep us coming back. We find a sense of identity by maintaining our connection to a tribe.

Technology and social media help us to find the tribe and connect them to us. We would like to find the Catholic tribe. But where are they?

In the cybersphere.



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## Help the tribe connect to each other.

Helping people to connect is pretty easy on social media. In fact, it is the reason social media exists. People are already massively Friend-ed/Follow-ed/Linked-in. Our job is to help the tribe discover common ground between them and get them talking to each other.

People today—especially young people—have a great desire to engage big and deep questions. There are so few safe spaces anymore to talk about the meaning and purpose of life in spiritual and religious contexts. If we could instigate that kind of talk in the tribe and then facilitate and fuel the conversation that would be a most worthy ministry adventure.

## The HOW

Now you have a clearer understanding of WHY you want to use social media for ministry:

*To build relationships that connect people in the Body of Christ.*

The next step is to create an effective and efficient path to follow that works for your context. Be intentional and thorough in setting up these four HOWs and you will pave a smoother road for greater success.

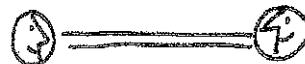
### HOW to find the tribe and connect

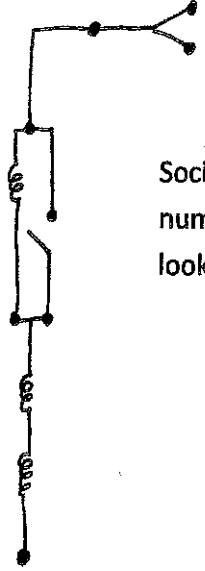
*Identify your goals and outcomes.*

Build your strategies around goals and outcomes. Real goals that can be evaluated and measured. Initially that will be numbers—quantifiable as related to program participation such as hits on blogs and Facebook 'Likes'. These will quickly translate into measuring the quality of content and conversation as well as what people are learning and taking away to integrate into their personal and spiritual lives.

So the first question to ask is: *What are you trying to achieve? What initial connection strategy makes sense for your context?* It doesn't make sense to stop printing paper bulletins and switch to posting them online if half of your regular church attendees have no idea what the internet is.

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Social media strategy goals will be different than traditional ministry goals like increasing the number of RE students or how many teens receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Instead, look at goals such as answers to these questions:

1. *What is the 'reach' of our Facebook page?*
2. *What age group of people are we most effectively engaging? How does this match with the demographics of our registered parishioners?*
3. *What kinds of issues and questions of faith seem most important to our people?*

Get feedback from multiple parish groups and voices about important goals you want to work toward.

### *Set a realistic first goal.*

No one is motivated to work toward a huge out-of-reach goal. The first goal needs to be realistic and reasonably easy to accomplish. If you can get some quick success under your belt, then a leadership team will be more excited to set a new goal and work toward that one. Success begets more success.

What is your first measurable milestone? Number of Facebook Likes or Twitter followers? Number of blog hits or comments? Number of verbal comments from weekend Mass-goer's? Choose a measurable goal and focus all your team's efforts on achieving that single result.

### *Create Quality Content*

Set up a blog. Create an organization Facebook page. Register a Twitter feed. Make a LinkedIn profile. Post links to resources and other organizations that offer good content. Free can be great! Put up you own lesson plans and activities that you do in religious education classes and youth ministry gatherings. Invite parents to do them at home and/or talk with their children about what happened in classes or activities. Put flyers and messages online about activities and events going on in the parish. Post the pastor's weekly homilies. Make podcasts and videos about life in the parish and in the larger community.

Don't forget to monitor the dialogue and reply to people's comments. Make it personal and people will respond.

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*Create a weekly checklist of tasks that anyone can do*

It's not necessary that everyone creates the content. In fact, in order to maintain a high level of quality, you want to be selective in who actually creates it. But you can find dependable people to do the posting and following the dialogue with comments and questions.

Give them a list. Make a document that contains status updates, discussion questions, blog posts, etc., and details about where and when to upload these online.

Consider opening the invitation to anyone in the parish to contribute content and links to resources. Then create a small committee to review and post what is appropriate.

Once you've set up these initial HOW's, start telling the world. Talk about your social media platforms every chance you get. On the bulletin cover... on your website... in homilies... on registration flyers... on business cards... on voice mail greetings... at the bottom of email signatures... on the community bulletin board at the grocery store... in local coffee-shop hangouts... in the front offices of parishioner-owned small businesses... you get the idea.

As you gain experience and learn from mistakes, adapt / revise / reinvent your strategies as needed. Use free media tools so that changing something doesn't require an expensive outpouring of money.

If you've gotten this far in real action steps for your social media strategy... keep going! Don't be afraid to try something new and different!

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# The WHAT

As people in ministry, we really want the WHAT—spreading the Good News of the Gospel—to be the first priority. And it is. It's just not the first task... at least not in the sense of preaching with words. We need to remind ourselves of St. Francis' great wisdom:

*Preach the Gospel always [all-ways]... if necessary, use words.*

Okay... I added 'all-ways'. According to St. Francis, preaching in words doesn't come first. In fact, it might even come last.

## Preaching on social media = Boring!

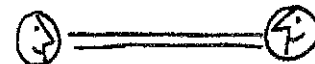
And the kindest result will be that we are ignored... not by all, but by many.

Preach too much and we'll likely be Block-ed / Unfriend-ed / Un-Followed / Unlink-ed / Uninvite-ed. And we certainly don't want to break the connections we have worked so hard to build.



It's really not any different than meeting a new person and building a face-to-face relationship. When we truly want to know someone, we focus on common ground likes and dislikes/what kind of work we do/what our family is like/where we come from and how we have experienced life along the way. If we make the introduction process all about preaching, we don't tend to get very far.

*The WHY of social media—connecting the Body of Christ in relationship—is the first task. Building those relationships online is nearly the same as building them in person.*





## More about the WHAT

As Catholic Church, WHAT are we all about? Easy... spreading the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. Phrased another way: What is the mission of the Church? Easy again... the Church exists to evangelize. [Read this in Evangelii Nuntiandi #14.]

*Our century is characterized by the mass media or means of social communication, and the first proclamation, catechesis or the further deepening of faith cannot do without these means, as we have already emphasized.*

*When they are put at the service of the Gospel, they are capable of increasing almost indefinitely the area in which the Word of God is heard; they enable the Good News to reach millions of people. (EN 45)*

*Evangelii Nuntiandi*

*Apostolic Exhortation of His Holiness Pope Paul VI issued on 8 December 1975*

[Another prophetic thought from 1975!]

It is a subtle difference nuanced only by the use of specific words. One is an individual approach and the other a collective task. We operate and work as single disciples and also as the larger Body of Christ to evangelize.

## Why is the distinction important?

In the context of social media, we are reminded of the power that each member of the Body of Christ holds in hand... that is the power to evangelize by making the simple connections... Friends / Followers / Peeps / Links and the like.

But it's a deeper, more relevant connection than merely using social media to preach. It is about knowing people as they truly are... the in's and out's of everyday life.

Each of us individually holds a singular unique power through our own personal connections. We have always had this power when we act as disciples whose lives are witness to living a Gospel-life. Social media expands our reach to the larger world.

Collectively as the Body of Christ, we have the power to change the world on a global scale. Our regular participation in Sunday liturgy and other parish activities gives witness in our local communities. Social media give us an opportunity to do that same kind of witness to the world community.

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When we 'Like' or 'Subscribe' to our church on Facebook/when we 'Follow' our church leaders on blogs and Twitter/when we 'Link' to our church organizations on LinkedIn/when we enter into the collective conversations of these larger groups, we give our personal connections access to the same dialogue. We evangelize as the larger Body of Christ church.

Technology and social media provide unprecedented access and entry points to the inner circle discussions of prominent authorities and leaders.

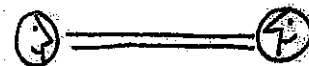
We can follow along as Bishops / Archbishops / Cardinals and the Pope dialogue during a synod on the New Evangelization.

We can see firsthand pictures of Cardinal Dolan praying with hurricane victims who have lost homes and loved ones.

We can exchange Tweets with ministry leaders in real time during conferences and workshop presentations thousands of miles away.

We have tremendous opportunity to evangelize the Body of Christ... if we do it wisely.

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# The Simple Connections

## A Quick Recap

### *Two Gaping Questions*

The two gaping questions that face all of us in ministry are:

1. *How do we connect with people and get them excited about faith?*
2. *Why should we use social media to do this?*

Because our primary goal is to connect people in the Body of Christ and the cybersphere is where they gather these days. Social media gives us an entry point.

*What can The Parable of the Tech-Geek teach us today?*

That we need to shift our old ways of doing ministry to reach a new generation.

*We are wired to connect. It's in our Catholic DNA.*

The theology of social media is the heart of Catholic faith: *We are all members of the Body of Christ and we need to be connected.*

*Connection is vital.*

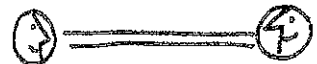
Communication conveys information but connection initiates a relationship and engages the conversation. Connection is vital to evangelization today.

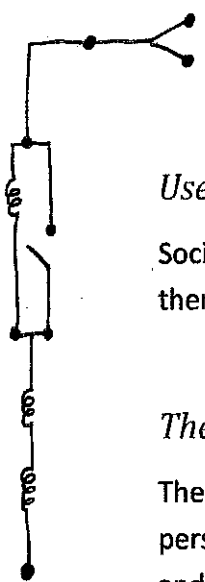
*We must re-message the message.*

... to propose our extraordinary product anew.

*Churches are conversations.*

If we want to build relationships, we must enter the online conversation.





*Use it wisely.*

Social media gives us an unprecedented entry point into people's lives. We must learn to use them effectively and wisely to gain people's attention and interest.

### *The Cyber-Body-of-Christ*

The cyber-church is composed of real flesh-and-blood people. Sometimes we meet them in person in our churches; sometimes we don't. But they do often gather in the cybersphere and we *can* meet them there.

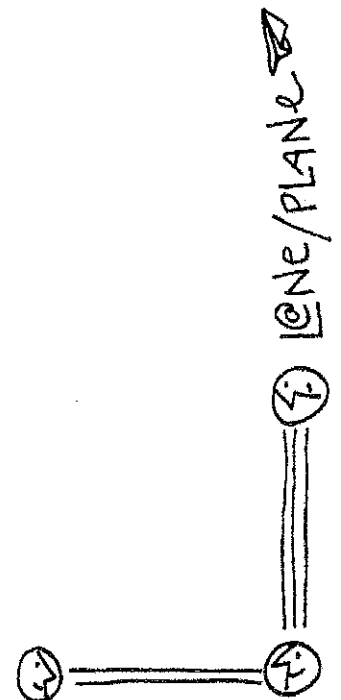
*If we don't or won't reimagine...*

Unless we intentionally try to meet people in the cybersphere, we will continue to see declining participation in our parishes. *A culture that doesn't change is dead. A church that doesn't change is empty.*

*The WHY of social media is the first task.*

1. The WHY: *We are the Body of Christ. We want to connect and build a relationship with you.*
2. The HOW: *Whenever possible, we will meet you face-to-face. When that's not possible, we will meet you online through our social media.*
3. The WHAT: *We want to share Jesus and the Good News with you.*

*Preach the Gospel always [all-ways]... if necessary, use words.*



# Back to the Parable of the Tech-Geek

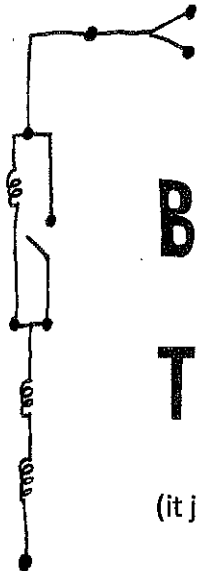
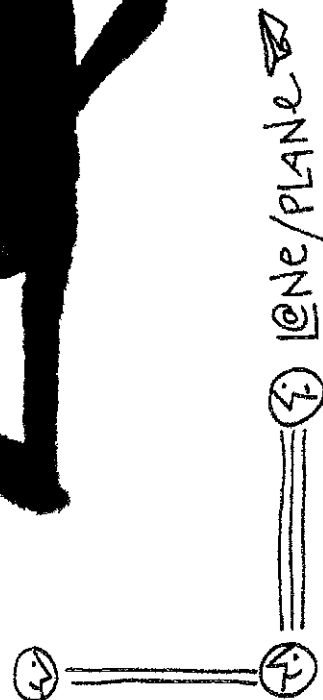
(it just gets better with every reading...)

That same day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down at the neighborhood Starbucks. Such great crowds of coffee-enthusiasts gathered around him that he climbed up on the barista's counter and began teaching them as they sunk into the comfy couches around the cozy room. And he told them many parables.

*Listen! A techie logged onto Facebook.*

*And as he Facebooked, some status updates uploaded onto Twitter where trolls retweeted them using inappropriate hashtags and ate them whole. Other status updates were Instagramed and linked to mobile upload photo albums which had no depth and so they were quickly ignored. Other posts were shocking with foul language and innuendo so they were reported and blocked by FB friends. But some updates were meaningful and uplifting and encouraged many 'Likes', comments and RT's—30, 60 and 100 times over—and went viral!*

*Let anyone with fingers type and click away!*



# Ideas to Chew On

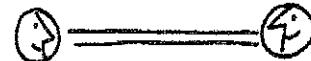
## Faith-sharing for parish teams

The Parable of the Tech-Geek is a great story to jump-start your parish staff in social media strategizing. Use these questions for beginning your conversation about how you want to connect and re-connect with the people in your parish.

- *Who are you in the story?*
- *Are you sitting on one of the comfy couches at Starbucks? What do you hear?*
- *Are you the techie logging onto Facebook? What do you post?*
- *Maybe you know trolls who have no good thing to say online... or even in person for that matter. How do you handle them?*
- *Perhaps you're tired of hearing about your friends' breakfast-eating-habits or other inane activities. How can you create meaningful and relevant content?*
- *There are probably people that you choose not to hang out with on a regular basis—either in person or online—because their values just don't mesh with yours. How can you help others find people with similar beliefs and values?*
- *And then there is your circle of true family and friends that give happiness, joy, laughter, hope and meaning to your life. You like to be with these people because they add value to your existence. How can your staff add value to the lives of people in your parish?*
- *Where does the Cyber-Body-of-Christ fit in here?*

Let anyone with a heart for disciple-making type and click away!

# LISTEN!



# Where do I start?

There was a lot of info in here.

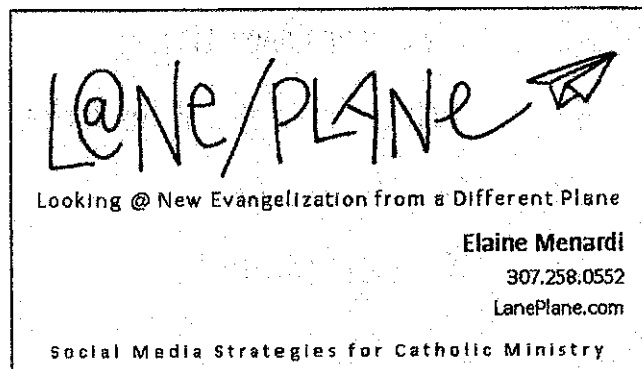
Not sure where to start or what to do? Think about what answers you are seeking:


- *What are the practical steps for online evangelization?*
- *Can we really use social media for catechesis?*
- *Want to begin the social media conversation with your pastor / pastoral ministry staff / leadership teams but aren't sure how to start or what to say?*
- *Need help identifying your goals and defining some measurable outcomes for evaluation?*
- *Ready to set up a blog / website / social media tools but have no idea what to do?*
- *Creating and implementing a social media strategy sounds way too far above your pay-grade?*
- *Just want to chat more about any of this?*


Go ahead and call or email. I'll help you. I work with parishes to solve problems and make ideas happen. Let's create a Catholic-social-media-techie-dream-team!

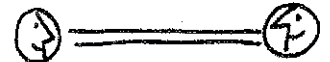
Looking forward to hearing from you.

Peace.



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# Theology of Social Media

- 4 Two Gaping Questions
- 5 The 1st WHY
- 8 Parable of the Tech-Geek
- 9 Connection = Pre-Evangelization, aka, Fostering Interest in the Gospel
- 11 We're NOT Using Social Media to 'Do' Theology
- 14 We Are Wired to Connect
- 16 Communication vs. Connection
- 19 Marketing Is a Dirty Word
- 21 Churches Are Conversations
- 24 If These Tools Could Talk
- 27 The Cyber-Body-of-Christ
- 29 If We Don't or Won't Reimagine
- 36 The WHY
- 39 The HOW
- 42 The WHAT
- 45 The Simple Connections
- 47 Back to the Parable of the Tech-Geek
- 48 Ideas to Chew On
- 49 Where Do I Start?

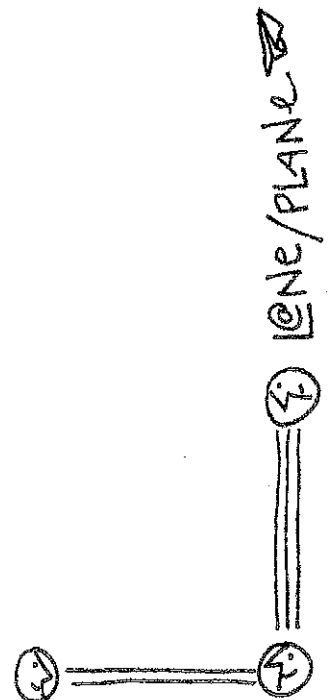
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# Reading list

- Bible: Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9) and 1 Corinthians 12
- *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect* by John Maxwell
- *The Cluetrain Manifesto* by Doc Searles and friends
- *Start with WHY* by Simon Sinek
- *Tribes* by Seth Godin
- *General Directory for Catechesis*
- *No Bullshit Social Media* by Jason Falls and Erik Deckers
- *Evangelii Nuntiandi*
- *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality* by Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM
- *Leadership Without Easy Answers* by Ron Heifetz
- [LanePlane.com](http://LanePlane.com)



- Notes -

