



January 2008

Development Directions

A free resource for pastors, principals, development directors, volunteers and anyone engaged in the ministry of Catholic development.

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CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENT RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

By Frank Donaldson, President

Happy New Year! Hopefully, the 2007 Holidays were a wonderful and blessed time for you and your family to grow closer, share stories, worship together, and get that well deserved "down time" that all of us need in order to charge the battery. Here's wishing that 2008 may be a healthy, prosperous and joy-filled year for you, both personally and professionally.

In thinking about the January 2008 newsletter over the holidays, plus what topics and themes to touch upon throughout the year, we thought it would be beneficial if we used this month as a way to take a look at what resolutions are worthwhile considering in order to grow and enhance our Catholic Development efforts. Over the past few weeks, we've put together ten resolutions that we would like for you to consider. Hopefully, they may serve as motivators, memory-joggers, and benchmarks as we begin this new year with hope and promise.

- **Resolution #1: Anchor Ourselves in Mission and Ministry.**
 - In our workshops, we often ask these questions of Catholic leaders: "What gets you out of the bed in the morning and gets you going? What drives you to achieve and believe in what you do? Where do you go and what do you do to get that 'fire in the belly' attitude that is often needed to accomplish the many tasks with which you are faced?"
 - The many that are successful seem to always trace that success back to mission and ministry. Their personal mission in life is clear and the mission of their parish, their school, their diocese and/or Catholic organization is also clear. The mission serves as the common denominator, the topic sentence to the paragraph and the thesis

statement to the essay.

- Believing that our work is a ministry and that Catholic Development is such a wonderful way to bring people to Christ and Christ to people goes to the heart of what we all are about.
- May we all resolve that our mission be clear and that our ministry - regardless of our position - is about building up the Body of Christ in everything we do.

- **Resolution #2: Continue to Build Our Development Efforts around Engaging People.**

- So many of our newsletters have "pounded" on this theme. We continue to repeat three statements over and over in our consulting, in our workshops and in our newsletters:
 1. Development is the meaningful involvement of people in your mission and vision for the future.
 2. Belonging leads to believing.
 3. The greatest challenge we face today in Catholic Development is not raising money but in creating the avenues, roadways and vehicles to invite, involve and engage people.
- We invite you to view many of our newsletters that speak to this theme. Simply visit our website at www.ispd.com and click on "Resource Center" and that will take you to our library of back issues where we articulate the hundreds of ways of engaging people.
- In addition, we continue to stress - whether speaking to pastors, principals, presidents, development officers, parish councils, school boards, staff members or volunteers - the goal of every Catholic parish and schools needs to be to invite, involve and engage 100 new people into the life of your Catholic institution every year.
- May we all resolve to accomplish that goal in 2008.

- **Resolution #3: Gradually, Move Our Communication Efforts from Mostly Paper and E-mails, to More People Engagement.**

- It is so easy to fire off an e-mail or send an "e-mail blast" to a group of people. It is also easy to send out the Annual Fund letter and brochure and pledge card through the mail and not ever sit down, face to face, and discuss the importance of that Annual Fund. Many times, because of time constraints, we pass up the opportunities to engage people and simply do everything from our desk. This is not to say that direct mail and e-mails are not excellent tools of communication; however, we recommend using them to announce, to position, to inform, and very seldom to ever "build relationships".
- May we all resolve in 2008 to complement our paper and e-mail communication with "eyeball to eyeball" opportunities.

- **Resolution #4: Educate! Educate! Educate!**

- So many people in parish and school life are not aware what we mean by Catholic Development and Total Stewardship. Parish staff, school faculty and staff, parish council members, board members, ministry leaders, new people that are hired - all are examples of groups of people who need to be educated on what this ministry is all about.
- Many times we hear of development officers bemoaning the fact that various groups within the parish and/or school simply do not understand what the development office is doing. Education is the key. This should not be a workshop once a year. This education should be on-going,

month to month, week to week, where there is an equal exchange of what that science teacher or CCD teacher is doing, and what you are doing with the development efforts.

- ISPD does have available a free CD entitled "Ripples in the Pond". This 8-9 minute video explains Catholic Development and is an excellent tool to start the discussion with the faculty and/or the parish staff and/or the council or board.
- May we all resolve to continually educate all on the true meaning of Catholic Development and Total Stewardship in 2008.
- **Resolution #5: Have a Cup of Coffee with Your Top 20.**
 - Put bluntly, get out of the office! Every month, resolve to have a cup of coffee or breakfast or luncheon meeting with 5 people (parishioners, alumni, parents, neighbors, past parents, business owner, etc.) who are key or could be key to the success of your Catholic school and/or parish.
 - Tongue in cheek, when we call a development officer during the day and he or she answers the phone, we often will say, "What are you doing in your office?" Please, take the time to build relationships. 5 people a month is 60 people a year. Development works when people become engaged, and it is left up to all of us to reach out. Simply put: many people do not get involved unless they are personally invited.
 - May we resolve to set up a schedule each month to personally meet - one-on-one - with 5 people.
- **Resolution #6: Don't Forget to Continue Your Professional Development.**
 - Recharge the battery. Many times, all of us get so involved in our day to day activities that we forget about taking care of ourselves professionally.
 - If for no other reason than to get a few new pointers or network with a new group of people or just get away from your day to day environment, sign up for a workshop, plan to attend the NCEA Convention in Indianapolis this year the week after Easter, or sign up and attend the national Stewardship conference.
 - There are many opportunities. You need to take that first step.
 - May we all resolve to professionally grow in this ministry during 2008.
- **Resolution #7: Invite Gifts of Prayer, Involvement and Financial Participation.**
 - As we seek the dollars, let us also invite the many other gifts that our parishioners, parents, alumni, grandparents, past parents, students, faculty and staff members have to share.
 - We invite you to take a look at most any pledge card for an Annual Fund or any pledge card or Letter of Intent for a Capital Campaign Gift or any form given out on "Stewardship Sunday." Nine chances out of ten, these "invitation forms" are seeking one thing - money. Why must that always be that way? All of us have many, many gifts to share. If I am an alum of your school, why not invite me to share my gifts of talent, expertise and/or wisdom? If I am a parishioner in your parish, why not - in that capital campaign - invite me to consider Gifts of Prayer, and then list the many ways I can do that?
 - Please invite the People Gifts! We all have them, and they have been given to us. Many people are simply looking for ways to return them - in a meaningful way. Yet, we, as Catholic leaders, must light the spark and show the way for that to happen. The invitation is one of the most

important gifts we bring.

- Let us all resolve to invite gifts this year - Prayer, Involvement, Wisdom, Expertise, Time, and Financial Participation.

- **Resolution #8: Focus on the Annual Fund.**

- In accord with Resolution #7, whether we are a high school, a parish with an elementary school, a parish without an elementary school, a consolidated school, a regional school, or whatever our configuration, let us focus on the Annual Fund and invite gifts of Prayer, Involvement and Finance.
- The Annual Fund is the single most important Catholic Development Invitation we can extend. We are inviting people to invest and learn more about us; we are not selling Christmas wrapping paper. We are seeking to educate people on our mission, our vision and our plans for the future; we are not selling sponsorships for the Golf Tournament. We are inviting people to pray for the success of our vision; we are not selling Bingo cards. We are extending the invitation to all of our constituents and inviting them to share their many gifts; we are not mailing out raffle tickets to everyone on our database. The above fund-raising events are important, but they in no way "trump" the Annual Fund as the main vehicle to engage people on an annual basis.
- May we resolve in 2008 to organize and implement an Annual Fund that will - eventually -invite Gifts of Prayer, Involvement and Financial Participation from all.

- **Resolution #9: Repel Mediocrity and Focus on Filling the Pews.**

- We believe that Catholic parishes that continually invite, welcome and engage people plus offer, encourage and nurture spiritual growth, will eventually fill the pews with families who will flock to our Catholic educational programs and staff and create ministries that will continually build the Kingdom of God.
- In a Catholic parish of 1,000 families, 30% are involved; 30% are uninvolved; and 40% are actively disengaged. And yet, many of our parishes minister only to those who sit in the pews every weekend. When asked what is being done to engage the 70% into the life of the Church, the answer often is: "That's their problem; they were baptized Catholic; they need to get with our program." or, "It's a waste of money to mail out the bulletin; let them come to Mass if they want to know what is going on."
- Let us not settle for mediocrity! Let us move forward, shake off the "guarded kingdoms" and the old ways of doing things, and find ways to engage people into the life of our parish. It begins with the mission and the message. To use old themes, we must do everything we can to "Light New Fires" and "Open Wide the Doors to Christ".
- Let us resolve in 2008 to look for ways to bring people into our parishes and schools by developing a warm, welcoming and engaging culture that reaches out to all.

- **Resolution #10: Invite! Invite! Invite!**

- The third "I" in our "7 I" process is the most important one of all. We must *personally* invite people to belong. Whether it be through that cup of coffee get-together or inviting people to an input session, or inviting people to a Town Hall meeting once every six months, or inviting people to serve on a planning team or inviting people to fill in a survey, or

inviting people to share their talents and gifts, or inviting people to a covered dish supper in a parish neighborhood, or inviting people - through a Phone Outreach Ministry - to come for hot chocolate and donuts with Christmas caroling after Sunday evening liturgy, or whatever the reason - please invite.

- o May we all resolve to personally invite 100 new people in 2008 to be part of the mission of our Catholic institution.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SPRING 2008 WORKSHOPS

Dynamic presenters share proven strategies and discuss development issues during one and two day seminars for Catholic parishes and schools. These workshops are conveniently held across the country at an affordable price of \$69-\$250 .

We hope you'll join us!

Pending Topics Include:

- ** Become a More Welcoming, Engaging & Affirming Catholic Parish **
- ** Best First Steps to Take in Beginning Your Catholic Development Efforts **
 - ** Capital Campaigns That Produce Results **
- ** Catholic School Enrollment Solutions - One and Two Day Seminars **
 - ** Customer Service in Your Catholic School **
 - ** Long Range Planning **
 - ** Total Stewardship **

ISPD Also Conducts On-Site Workshops

Offered to Catholic schools and parishes within a single diocese, these workshops are designed to meet your specific needs.

- [Check Here for More Information on ISPD Development Workshops](#)

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marketing, fund-raising, and resource development.

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Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you think could benefit from this information. If there are any topics you would like to see covered in a future newsletter, please contact us.

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