



November 2005

Development Directions

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

“AFFIRMATION & APPRECIATION”

During the course of one year, ISPD will usually work with 30-40 Catholic institutions offering on-site consulting with visits on a regular and consistent basis. It is intensive work where we get to know many people in the community and actually have the opportunity to “rub shoulders” with hundreds of them. In addition to our primary consulting processes (long-range planning, total stewardship, capital campaigns, development plans, etc.) we also will take on one parish and/or school and work with them introducing and implementing what we call a “Continuous Quality Improvement” process. In some circles, this is referred to as “Total Quality Management.” The overall goal of this 8-12 month consulting process is to look at the many ways the parish and/or the school can improve, and then set up a Quality Improvement Team to make that happen.

One of the first steps, after the assessment work, is to identify what it is a parish and/or a school wants to concentrate on. There are literally hundreds of areas of concentration – how to improve discipline, how to communicate better, how to welcome new parish families, how to involve the alumni more, and the list goes on and on. Having introduced and implemented a CQI Plan into five Catholic institutions since 2000, little did we realize (on the front end of the work) that all five places would want to address the exact same area in order to improve. In fact, after the third CQI client, we began to suspect what the next school and/or parish would want to bring to the table. It all came down to two words: *affirm and appreciate*.

Internally, with these five clients, we found the following:

- Some principals felt they could use a pat on the back every now and then.
- Some pastors felt they were underappreciated, especially since many parish families do not understand the day to day schedule and role of a pastor.
- The teachers felt the principal did not affirm them enough. They also felt the parents did not appreciate what they did for their children.
- The parish staff felt they were “loaded on” having to do everything, with little acknowledgement and appreciation.
- The school support staff felt people looked “down” at them.
- Students felt they did not receive the support from their teachers in regards to attending sporting events or extra-curricular activities.

- Some volunteers in these schools and parishes felt that the Catholic leaders in charge did not fully appreciate the many hours spent away from their families attending meetings, planning sessions, board retreats, etc.

The work with these five Catholic institutions proved to be very enlightening. I guess what it all boiled down to was this: people simply wanted someone to say, "Nice job!" and "Thank you!".

Within our own Catholic parishes and schools, what processes and attitudes do we have in place that encourage everyone to reach out and say, "I really appreciate what you are doing?" Whether people are paid or unpaid, whether their responsibility is heading up the school board or serving in the cafeteria, we certainly need to develop or re-develop a level of consciousness that affirms and appreciates. Many Catholic institutions host a "Thank You" dinner or ice cream party or something like that, and they invite everyone who ever helped. Does this approach beg the question: Is that personal enough?

Let's go one step further: Do we have a personal and meaningful plan in place to thank our donors? I am certain that most every Catholic parish and school has the old "form letter" that states the amount of contribution, the 501(c)3 tax ID number, the date, the case, and the proper wording that says thank you for your gift. However, is that enough? I know some would think it was, and I am sure those who think that way would go on to add that they have so much to do that just getting these thank you letters out already takes so much time.

Well, we would like to offer two suggestions that address the above scenarios:

1. Internally, we would like to recommend that every Catholic school and every parish develop an Affirmation and Appreciation Plan that seeks to personally and meaningfully reach out to every pastor, president, principal, teacher, student, staff member, employee, and volunteer who work hard in furthering the vision, mission, goals and plans of that Catholic institution – and say THANK YOU. Go ahead and form a CQI Team to develop that plan. Invite solutions and ideas from many. But, above all, we invite you to go a step beyond the norm of collectively thanking people at a large gathering and/or just sending them the "form letter" thank you. While we realize that is important, please try and bring whatever personalization you can to the table.
2. In close connection to the above, we encourage every Catholic institution to develop a personal approach (eyeball to eyeball) to saying THANK YOU to your donors. There are so many ways to thank people who financially support our parishes and schools, and we all need to be creative and meaningful. Invite response from donors and do everything you can to put together a plan that really makes people feel warm and appreciated.

In this season of Thanksgiving, it seems that it is the little things that make such a big difference. Here's wishing you and yours the very best Thanksgiving Season ever.

Let's Work Together to Help Others

There are hundreds of people across the country who have e-mailed or called ISPD wanting to know what they can do to help those in need from Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. You have already given to special collections at your church, or to the Red Cross or to Catholic Charities, plus other key organizations. Many are now asking ISPD to identify churches, schools and people they can directly help.

In response, we have established a section on our website at www.ISPD.com called "**Hurricane Outreach**". Listed there are the names of specific churches and schools that need your help. We are now back in our office at 110 James Drive West, Suite 215 in St. Rose, LA 70087, where we invite you to send any monetary contributions. **Please make sure all checks are made out to the Catholic institution - and not to ISPD.** At this time, money is needed the most by these churches and schools.

In regards to supplies, Our Lady of Lourdes School is the main school that has listed supplies. There is an address to send directly to them. If you wish to furnish any of the other Catholic institutions with supplies, please contact Frank Donaldson at ispd@aol.com in order to specify what it is you wish to send and where to send it.

ISPD will assure that all money and supplies are personally delivered to the specific churches and schools that are posted on our website. Please check our website regularly for additional institutions, and their situations. We thank you in advance for your generous gifts and prayers for these Catholic institutions that so desperately need your help.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN **The ISPD Development School**

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The Development School is designed for pastors, presidents, principals, development directors, teachers, parish council members, parish leaders, board members, diocesan leaders, administrators, and other Catholic leaders.

Plan now to attend or spend the next year wishing you had!

- [Register online or Call ISPD at 800-299-2393](#)

SPRING 2006 WORKSHOPS

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** New Orleans, LA ** Omaha, NE ** Philadelphia, PA ** Pittsburgh, PA **
** San Diego, CA ** San Francisco, CA ** Sante Fe, NM **

- [Check Here for Details](#)

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