

Recruiting Parish Volunteers in 2023

26 January 2023

11.30am - 12.30pm



Overview

Welcome. Introduction.

Opening prayer

Parish Volunteer Recruitment and Engagement in Lent and beyond

Step-by-step | timeline

Links to resources referred to during the presentation

Parish Volunteering in our Diocese in 2019*

		Number of Volunteer Roles	Hours given to volunteering per month (estimated)
Liturgy	LIT	17,120	44,791
Supporting Parish Community	SPC	10,833	28,435
Social Justice/Outreach/Hospitality	CSJH	6,730	16,537
Education	EDU	3,270	9,823
Safeguarding	SAFE	227	1,012
Other	OTH	1,060	3,019
TOTAL		39,240	103,618

*latest available figures.

“Volunteers are the strength of the Church”

Pope Francis encourages and thanks volunteers for their service to the Church and urges them to accept it as a **grace of God** that they should accept with strength. “Do not be afraid”, Pope Francis urged.

The Pope further added that “**volunteers are the strength of the Church**” as they are “**a dimension of the Church’s mission** because you go there with your volunteering and **maintain so many actions of the Church.**”

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2022-12/pope-francis-volunteers-volunteering-world-day-video-message.html#:~:text=Volunteering%20%E2%80%93%20a%20grace%20from%20God&text=%E2%80%9CDo%20not%20be%20afraid%E2%80%9D%2C,many%20actions%20of%20the%20Church.%E2%80%9D>



Journeying towards a synodal Church:

“walk together, pray together and work together so that all are included in the mission of the Church” –

What does that look like with regard to volunteering?

What is the picture in your parish?

What could be the next steps in your parish on that journey?

Synodal listening:

“There is a recognition that so much is undertaken by so few. There is usually a small group of people doing most things in our communities.... there is a deep recognition that priests and deacons are burdened so much.”

Communion
Participation
Mission

Breakout rooms (10 min)

Looking at volunteering in your parish:

1. What is the situation in your parish at the moment?
2. What is going well?
3. What is your biggest challenge?
4. What could be the next step?

Recruiting Parish Volunteers over Lent 2023

	Actions	Potential timing
1.	Assess the current situation in your parish. Is there a need for more volunteers?	now
2.	Gather together a planning group. Involve them from the start. (Include existing volunteer representatives / group leaders, safeguarding rep, parish administrator, Caritas rep, pastoral assistant, people who might help coordinate the volunteers, anyone else?)	now
3.	Together, consider the needs of the parish. a. Celebrate successes to date, discuss opportunities for improvement and enrichment. b. Agree the roles you want to recruit. Any priorities / most pressing needs? Discuss the purpose and scope of each role (see point 5). How many volunteers for each role? c. Discuss how to reach groups not normally reached. Think about who might feel excluded. “Enlarge the space of your tent” (Is 54:2) Identify barriers. Do you know what’s stopping people from getting involved? If not, whom could you ask? d. Plan next steps, agree responsibilities and allocate / delegate tasks	Jan / early Feb

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	Actions	Potential timing
4.	<p>Formation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. during homilies, especially when the readings at mass lend themselves to speaking of the active Christian life. Volunteering as a way to live out the universal call to service. 'Love thy neighbour'.b. Use Love in Action resource (free, https://www.stepforwardinlove.org/) or other resourcesc. Day of reflection, retreat, Bible study groupsd. Guest speakers / series of talks in Lente. Are there other opportunities to offer some formation? For example, for parents while their children are in sacramental preparation classes?	Jan / Feb/ ongoing

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.'

1 PETER 4:10

The Ministry of the Laity

These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the people of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world.

(Lumen Gentium 31)





"One of the golden threads that runs through our Christian faith is that of loving service."

- Cardinal Vincent Nichols

Catholic Social Teaching principles include Community and Participation and Solidarity

"Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good." – Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

"We are all one family in the world. Building a community that empowers everyone to attain their full potential through each of us respecting each other's dignity, rights and responsibilities makes the world a better place to live" – Sollicitudo rei socialis – 'On Social Concern' (1987)

*"One of the golden threads that runs through our Christian faith is that of loving service....It's a golden thread that inspires and captures the message of Jesus in many ways. ... Some people come to the service of others because of their faith. They start with the example of Jesus and his command 'Love one another' and they go out and do it. Other people start with the need around them. They see somebody in need and they want to respond. And in that way they begin to walk the pathway of faith. So help is **both the fruit of faith and the doorway into faith...It ennobles us as people who want to follow Jesus and it draws us and them closer to him.**"*

Cardinal Vincent Nichols



“Being a volunteer who helps others is a choice that makes us free; it opens us to other people’s needs — to the demands of justice, to the defence of the poor, to the care of creation.”

- Pope Francis

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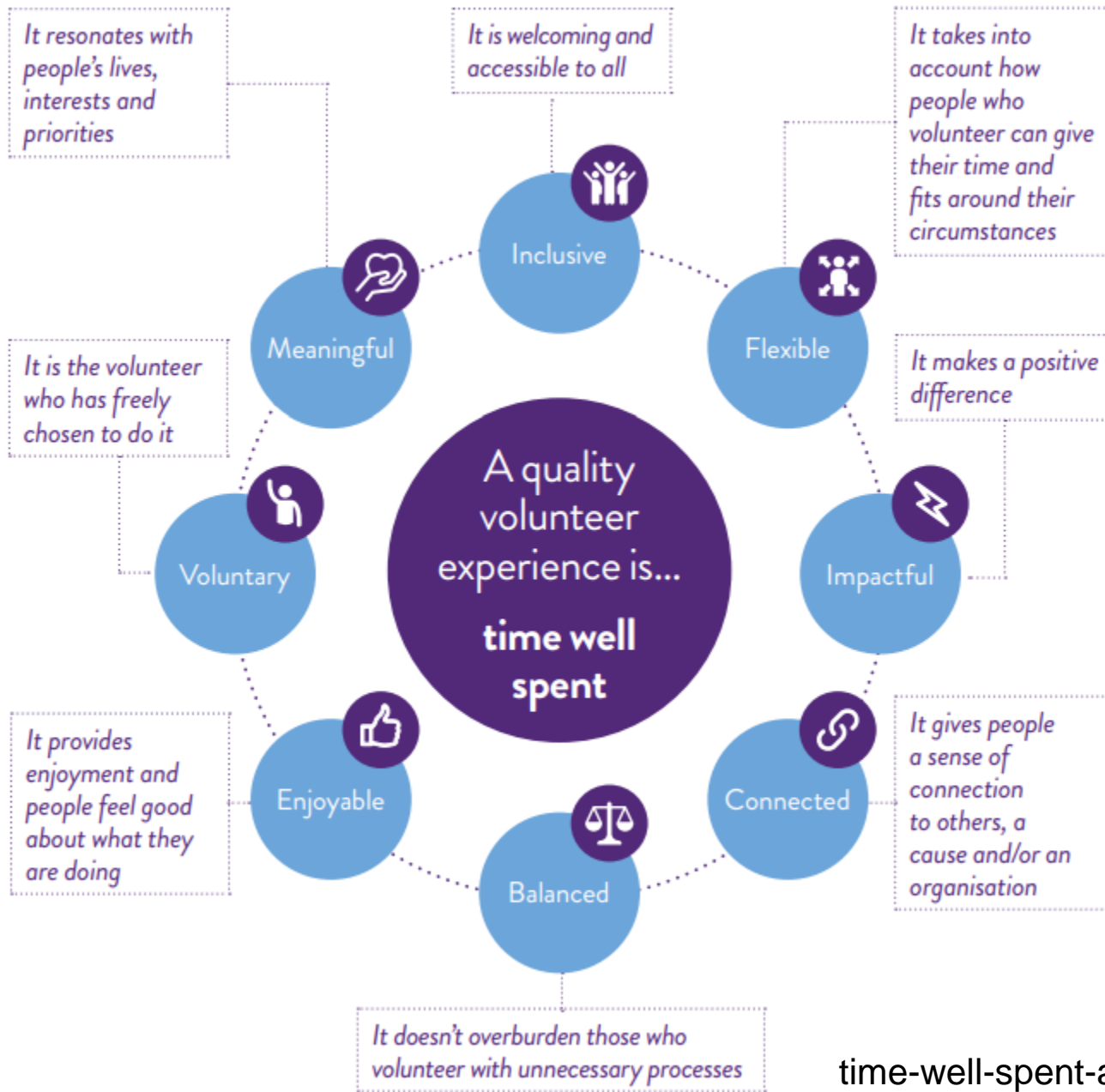
	Actions	Potential timing
5.	<p>Prepare Role Descriptions Don't have to be complicated. Depends on complexity of the role. Purpose is clarity. For you and the volunteer. Include a clear purpose of the role, the main tasks, person specification, time commitment. Make the tasks worthwhile. Diocesan website has ready-made role descriptions for several typical parish roles.</p>	Feb
6.	<p>Prepare / gather other forms needed for the safe recruitment of volunteers. 'Safer recruitment process' flowchart and related documents available on diocesan website. Ensure all involved in the volunteer recruitment process are familiar with it.</p>	Feb. / follow safe process throughout
7.	<p>Promotion – where and how to invite parishioners to get involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Face-to-face / personal invitation /word-of-mouth (these tend to be the most effective) b. posters, flyers, newsletter, website, social media (-> young people) c. Parishioner census / sacramental preparation enrolment form /New online expression of interest form d. Parish appeal (general; for specific roles) h. Volunteer recruitment event 	Lent

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	Actions	Potential timing
	<p>The message: In line with the formation message. Invite, offer opportunities to contribute, appeal to the motivations of the volunteers. People volunteer for all sorts of reasons. Faith / altruism can be one of them, usually in combination with others.</p>	Lent
8.	<p>Volunteer Recruitment Event Celebration, International Day, Love in Action planning, parish volunteer fair, open day</p>	Lent
	<p>Opportunity for encounters. Build relationships. Allows you to get a glimpse of the gifts, skills and interests. Face-to-face, personal invitation is the most effective way. Invite, don't just ask. Say why you think this person has a lot to bring to that role. Invite, no pressure. Being personally invited can be very affirming. Be honest about the commitment required. Don't be tempted to 'undersell' because you're worried about scaring people off. Playing the commitment down can have the effect of playing down the contribution the volunteer can make.</p>	


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	Actions	Potential timing
9.	<p>Follow-up interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Follow up fast! This step is crucial. Once a person’s enthusiasm is sparked, don’t let it go cold by ignoring them. (Message received: “they are not interested in me”, “don’t need / want me”) b. Match the person to a role that matches the interests and strengths of the volunteer. c. Provide information and be ready to answer questions about training and support, skills required, time commitment, flexibility. d. Where possible, get the new volunteer started in some way as soon as possible (always keep within safe recruitment process. Can they do a taster session or shadow another volunteer? Start with initial training or induction?) 	Lent / after an event
10.	<p>Ongoing support, nurturing and recognition of volunteers: Training, support (checking in ‘how is it going?’), recognition (‘thank you!’, social event, outing, reflection day, certificates, nominate for an award) Ongoing review of volunteering needs</p>	



- **INCLUSIVE** – It is welcoming and accessible to all
- **FLEXIBLE** – It takes into account how people who volunteer can give their time and fits around their circumstances
- **IMPACTFUL** – It makes a positive difference
- **CONNECTED** – It gives people a sense of connection to others, a cause and/or an organisation
- **BALANCED** – It doesn't overburden those who volunteer with unnecessary processes
- **ENJOYABLE** – It provides enjoyment and people feel good about what they are doing
- **VOLUNTARY** – It is the volunteer who has freely chosen to do it
- **MEANINGFUL** – It resonates with people's lives, interests and priorities

time-well-spent-a-national-survey-on-the-volunteer-experience.pdf

A landscape of rolling hills at sunset. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, transitioning into a blue sky above the hills. The hills are silhouetted in shades of blue and purple. A quote is overlaid in white text.

Volunteers don't get paid, not
because they're worthless,
but because they're priceless.

Sherry Anderson

quoteancy

Links and resources:

Safer Recruitment Process flowchart:

<https://rcdow.org.uk/att/files/safeguarding/forms/safer%20recruitment%20of%20new%20volunteers.pdf>

Diocesan Volunteer Role Descriptions (and a wealth of other information and forms)

<https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safe-recruitment-including-dbs/>

Safe Recruitment of Volunteers – talk with slides - YouTube recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wcDyc7bLN8>

Love in Action (resource for parishes)

<https://www.stepforwardinlove.org/>

Talk by Fulvio Ornato, CAFOD's Head of Volunteering, on Volunteer Management. Pastoral aspect. Volunteering as giving people an opportunity to develop their faith. Well worth a listen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HM5O4rmo5M&t=6s>

Time Well Spent report (NCVO)

<https://ncvo-app-wagtail-mediaa721a567-uwkfinin077j.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/time-well-spent-a-national-survey-on-the-volunteer-experience.pdf>

Useful websites:

<https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/safeguarding/>

<https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/safer-recruitment-and-dbs-1/>

<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

<https://www.caritasvs.org.uk/>

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk>

<https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk>

(includes 'top tips for volunteer recruitment': <https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/volunteer-recruitment-getting-word-out/>)

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net>

<https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/volunteer-centre-manchester>

<https://doinggoodleeds.org.uk/resources-for-volunteer-managers/>