

MINISTRY MEETINGS

The expectation is that ministry groupings will meet on a consistent basis. The staff liaison, ministry liaison, and ministry leaders can determine what frequency is necessary for the group to function effectively. Monthly to bi-monthly at least should be the norm.

Each member of a ministry group comprises a ministry team under a given area (e.g. Outreach). Although each individual ministry serves a unique purpose or meets a particular need, each is related to the others by the commonality of mission that they all share in their ministry area. It is important, therefore, that in order to carry out the mission of the parish in any given area (e.g. Community Life, Hispanic Ministry, etc.), the individual ministries meet together regularly.

No one wants a meeting for the sake of a meeting. Meetings should have purpose and that purpose should be clear and understood by everyone who participates. This begins by knowing who should attend the ministries meeting, what the role of each attendee is, and what happens at a meeting and what the meeting is intended to accomplish.

Who should attend the meeting?

- The staff liaison and the ministry liaison.
- The head of each individual ministry in that group or an appointed representative. If it is an appointed representative in the stead of the ministry head, this should be the same person for the sake of consistency. Rotating in representatives will impede effectiveness.
- Other members of the individual ministries may attend the meetings for their own benefit and edification, but the ministry head or appointed representative is the spokesman for these meetings.

What are the roles of those who attend?

- The staff and ministry liaisons are chair and co-chair of their ministry group respectively. It is between them who will be the point person to run individual meetings. The staff and ministry liaisons determine the meeting agendas.
- The staff liaison represents the interests of the pastoral office and the communications that come from the Pastor, the Staff and Ministry Supervisor, and the Staff Leadership Team.
- The ministry liaison both assists the staff liaison in her or his role as well as represents the communications from the individual ministries back to the staff liaison and, by extension, to the Staff Leadership Team, Staff and Ministry Supervisor, and the Pastor.
- Ministry heads or person appointed represent the individual ministry in which they serve.
- All attendees serve as members of a team of their larger ministry group to work together on issues of common interest.

What should happen at a meeting?

- **Fellowship:** the life and breath of ministry at St. Francis does not consist in the rules, policies, procedures, or directives. Such things serve as a necessary structure in which to enliven the work and service that we do, but the structure must have life. This life is fostered in building genuine relationships in Christ. Jesus said, “This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another” (Jn. 13:35). We are not recognized as the disciples of Jesus by the number of our ministries, the size of our programs, and not by our rules and regulations. We are known by our love for another. Ministry meetings should foster certain qualities reflected in the following keywords: relationship, trust, collegiality, partnership, service. Therefore, a fundamental reason for meeting in the first place is to build relationships amongst one another.
- **Communication:** Regular meetings are the place to communicate the things that need to be communicated in order to be successful in our ministries. Ministries will report their activities, their plans for the future, or needs they might have.
- **Problem solving:** When faced with a challenge or problem, the individual ministry need not figure it out alone. Receiving input and ideas from others on the ministry team can be helpful in solving problems that challenge us.
- **Support and Idea Sharing:** We need each other for more than just solving problems. Wisdom often surfaces through dialogue and collective brainstorming.
- **Calendar planning:** Through regular meetings, ministries can get ahead in planning their activities. By doing so as a ministry team, some conflicts can be resolved on the level of each ministry team. Staff liaisons can take larger concerns and calendar needs to the Staff Leadership Team. The allocation of our scarce resources can go forward in a more collegial and organized way.

The way meetings are carried out and the content of a meeting can vary. Time should occasionally be devoted to spiritual growth and formation. While the business of the ministry team is a primary focus of a meeting agenda, time for fellowship and relationship building should be an important part. These meetings can take place at the Parish Center when space is available, but going off site in homes or other locations is encouraged. Finally, always remember to open and close all meetings in prayer, placing all that we do under our one God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, giving him all the glory.