



# A Parish Primer:

## Responding to Parish Questions & Concerns

*From the Department of New Evangelization, Diocese of Green Bay*

### What is Pokémon?

Pokémon is a Nintendo franchise that launched in the 1990s. In its virtual world, "trainers" travel the world to catch varied monsters called Pokémon — rats, dragons, swordlike creatures, and more — and use these critters to fight each other. The trainer's goal is to "catch 'em all," and become a Pokémon master by defeating other trainers.

### What is Pokémon GO?

Pokémon GO is a free game available for download on Android and iOS devices. The goal is still for players to "catch them all." The game uses a phone's GPS and clock to decide which Pokémon appear in the game. Different types appear near parks than by water. Some types only come out at night. Pokémon Go is an augmented reality game — it mixes real-world elements with the game — players have to traverse the real world to catch 'em all. The game is so popular that it has more active users than other popular apps like Snapchat, Instagram and even Twitter.

### Why is it so popular?

It was just released (July 6), so it's new and exciting. It's also free. Pokémon has been a popular trading card and video game franchise for over 20 years — which means it has a nostalgia that appeals adults, but is still new enough to appeal to kids, teens, and young adults.

It debuts augmented reality technology in a new and exciting way. Finally, as players encounter each other out in their communities, they are meeting new people, having conversations, and building relationships.

### Why should my parish care about a video game?

In the new Pokémon Go game, points, prizes and levels are gained by catching Pokémon and by going to Gyms and PokéStops — tagged locations in the real world where users can stock up on gear and points for the game. These locations — determined by GPS coordinates and Google Maps — are often found at historical landmarks, parks, and memorials. Many of those stops are also located at churches. Many parishes are reporting massive increases in foot traffic around their buildings and on their grounds. Unlike with other video games, players encounter each other out in their communities — face-to-face. The game is fostering relationship building between parents & children, neighbors and even among strangers.



*The augmented reality technology uses your phone's camera to allow Pokémon to interact with the world around you.*

# Pokémon Primer



## TERMS TO KNOW

**Pokémon:** Creatures of all shapes and sizes who live in our world. Pokémon grow and can evolve into stronger Pokémon. Pokémon that have not been caught are known as wild Pokémon.

**Gym:** Gyms are locations where you can battle the Pokémon of rival teams, or train your Pokémon by battling against Pokémon trained by members of your team.

**Poké Balls:** Poké Balls are items used to capture wild Pokémon.

**PokéStop:** PokéStops are locations where you can gather items such as Poké Balls, Potions (to heal Pokémon after a battle), and Eggs (to hatch new Pokémon).

**Teams:** There are 3 teams that players can choose join: Team Instinct (yellow), Team Mystic (blue), and Team Valor (red).



## Additional Resources:

**Simple Pokémon Go Tutorial**  
<http://www.pokego.org/tutorial>

**Pokémon Go: Getting People to Church**  
(Catholic News Agency)  
<http://bit.ly/2aa57by>

**8 Ways Churches Can Capitalize on Pokémon Go**  
<http://bit.ly/29ITIZF>

**Official Pokémon Go Website**  
<http://pokemongo.nianticlabs.com/>

**Pokémon Go Review For Parents**  
(Common Sense Media)  
<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews/pokemon-go>

## Additional Questions?

Contact Julianne Stanz  
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(920) 272 8270

## Safety Tips

Wild Pokémon are mostly randomly generated. They can show up in backyards, behind fences, or inside buildings. The game has no idea whether it's safe or legal to go to those places, so it is important to encourage all users to only visit locations that are safe and legal.

While you can play Pokémon Go in the car, game play should be limited to passengers (drivers should not play). Distraction while walking or biking can also lead to injury, so always be aware of your surroundings.

Many parents choose to play with kids to help keep them safe. It's always important to check privacy settings, especially when an app uses your phone's GPS/camera. This article outlines how to protect privacy while using Pokémon Go and other apps: <http://nyti.ms/29CTHyE>.

# Pokévangélization



## 5 Tips for Parishes

### 1. Check your location on the game.

Download Pokémon Go on your smartphone. Even if you never play it, you can see if your church is a PokéStop or a Gym. Check where on your grounds it is active. Can people simply drive by on the street and activate it? Or will they need to wander through the parish cemetery? Knowing exactly where to expect people and how long they may be at your location can help you plan how to engage them.

### 2. Engage in conversation.

Take advantage of the natural community-building happening around this game. Find the exact location of the PokéStop or Gym at or near your building(s) and ask friendly, Pokémon-literate parishioners to volunteer for a slot as a greeter. Many youth and young adults are familiar with the game and how it works. Consider setting up an “Ask a Priest” station (see images on the next page for an example).

Train volunteers by giving them basic info such as: which bathrooms are okay for visitors to use, which doors are locked, and where other nearby PokéStops and Gyms are. Teach them how to engage in trust-building conversations with those who may stop by (not necessarily religious/theology focused conversations).

### 3. Meet player needs.

It is well known among Pokémon Go players that the app drains battery life. Consider offering outdoor recharging stations (with extension cords and a variety of mobile device chargers). Playing the game also uses massive amounts of data. Your parish could offer to give out your WiFi password to those who are hunting on your parish grounds. If you are seeing a lot of foot traffic, you may want to become a full service pit stop by also offering food and drink.

### 4. Attract Pokémon to your location.

Players can purchase “Lure Modules” that attract Pokémon to a specific PokéStop for 30 mins. Some parishes have dropped lure modules on a PokéSpot (or asked a parishioner who is playing the game to do so). Players who see an active lure will come and sit at the PokéSpot for a longer period of time waiting for the Pokémon to appear — presenting opportunities for conversation and relationship-building. Some parishes are using lures as part of the draw for an event — for example, buying a lure module for VBS Kickoff event or fall festival and announcing it on promotional materials (flyers, signs, social media, etc).

*“Missionaries...must immerse themselves in the cultural milieu of those to whom they are sent, moving beyond their own cultural limitations. Hence they must learn the language of the place in which they work, become familiar with the most important expressions of the local culture, and discover its values through direct experience. Only if they have this kind of awareness will they be able to bring to people the knowledge of the hidden mystery (cf. Rom 16:25-27; Eph 3:5) in a credible and fruitful way.”*

*(St. John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio, 53)*

## 5. Use signs to welcome players & communicate expectations.

Consider posting signs on your property letting players know they are welcome. The signs could include invitations for players to stop inside or have an address and phone number that players could use text/email prayer requests. The key is to build bridges of trust and break down barriers for those who may not be regular church visitors. Below are just a few examples of signs other churches have used across the country to evangelize using Pokémon Go.

*The Department of Evangelization urges prudence and caution when using new technologies such as Pokémon Go.*

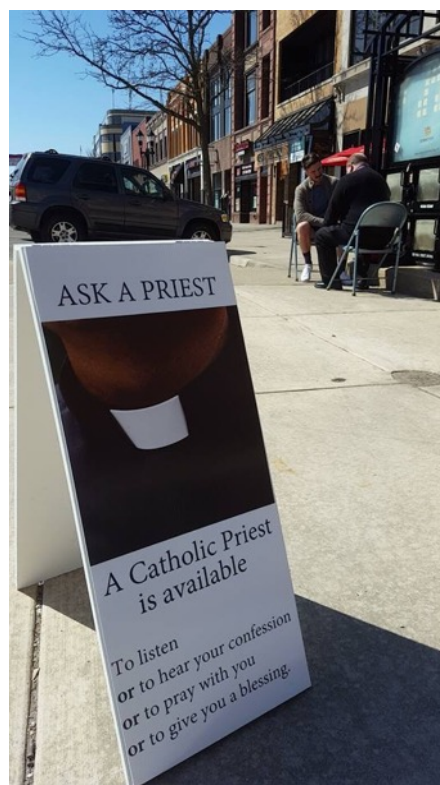


Pokemon GO players -- welcome to our two PokeStops and gym. The PokeStops are at our Angel Statue and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Take a moment to say hello to your Mother and ask for her protection and intercession -- and feel free to stop in the church to say a prayer too!

*Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women  
and blessed is the  
fruit of thy womb. Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*




*Photo courtesy of Christopher Gawel  
St. Paul on the Lake Catholic Church, MI*



*Photo courtesy of St. Paul Street  
Evangelization, IN*



*Photo courtesy of Katherine Torrey  
St. Jane Frances de Chantal, MD*



**Welcome Trainers!**

This Poké Stop is a Columbarium, a sacred place for the permanent repose of our departed loved one's cremated remains. Please take a moment and pray for those who have died and for their families & friends.

**Have a loved one who has died? Email their name to [grow@standrewsaline.org](mailto:grow@standrewsaline.org) and we will pray for them.**

Feel free to come in & grab some water and enjoy the AC. Ask for Dominic if you have questions.

*Photo courtesy of Dominic Bruno  
St. Andrew the Apostle, MI*



**Diocese of  
Green Bay**