

INDICATORS OF A

MAINTENANCE-DRIVEN VS. MISSION-DRIVEN PARISH

Introduction:

In the book *“Becoming a Parish of Intentional Disciples”* edited by Sherry A. Weddell, there is a valuable chapter that explores the differences between a “maintenance-oriented” parish culture versus a “mission-oriented” parish culture.



Diocese of
Green Bay

Written by Bobby Vidal, who is the Director of Evangelization and Lay Formation at St. Kateri Tekakwitha Church in Santa Clarita, California, the list below is an outline of seven differences between them with an eighth added by Sherry Weddell.

1. Activity

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Getting people involved in events and activities in the parish.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Helping all people encounter Jesus and experience conversion through their involvement at the parish and outside.

2. Leadership

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Forming individuals to take on parish leadership roles.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Forming individuals to discern their charisms and God-given vocations.

3. Commitment

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Getting parishioners to give more time, talent, and treasure to the parish.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Helping individuals commit their entire life to Jesus and live out that commitment daily.

4. Sustaining

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Sustaining the current parish structures and number of people.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Sustaining a culture of discipleship, nurturing and sustaining the work of conversion in individuals.

5. Passing Along the Faith

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Relying solely on catechesis as the means of transmitting the faith.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Transmitting the faith through pre-evangelization, initial proclamation, and then catechesis in a systematic way.

6. Formation Processes

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Providing formation for ministries exercised only for the parish.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Answering the outward call of the parish by providing formation for individuals to both take part in parish ministries and transform the secular world.

7. Communication

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Communicating in “insider” language.
- Mission-Driven Parish: Communicating in language both “insiders and outsiders” can understand.

8. Missionary Spirit (an addition from Sherry Weddell)

- Maintenance-Driven Parish: Presuming that the goal is to get people to come to the parish “plant.”
- Mission-Driven Parish: Leaving the parish plant to go out into the neighborhoods of the parish.