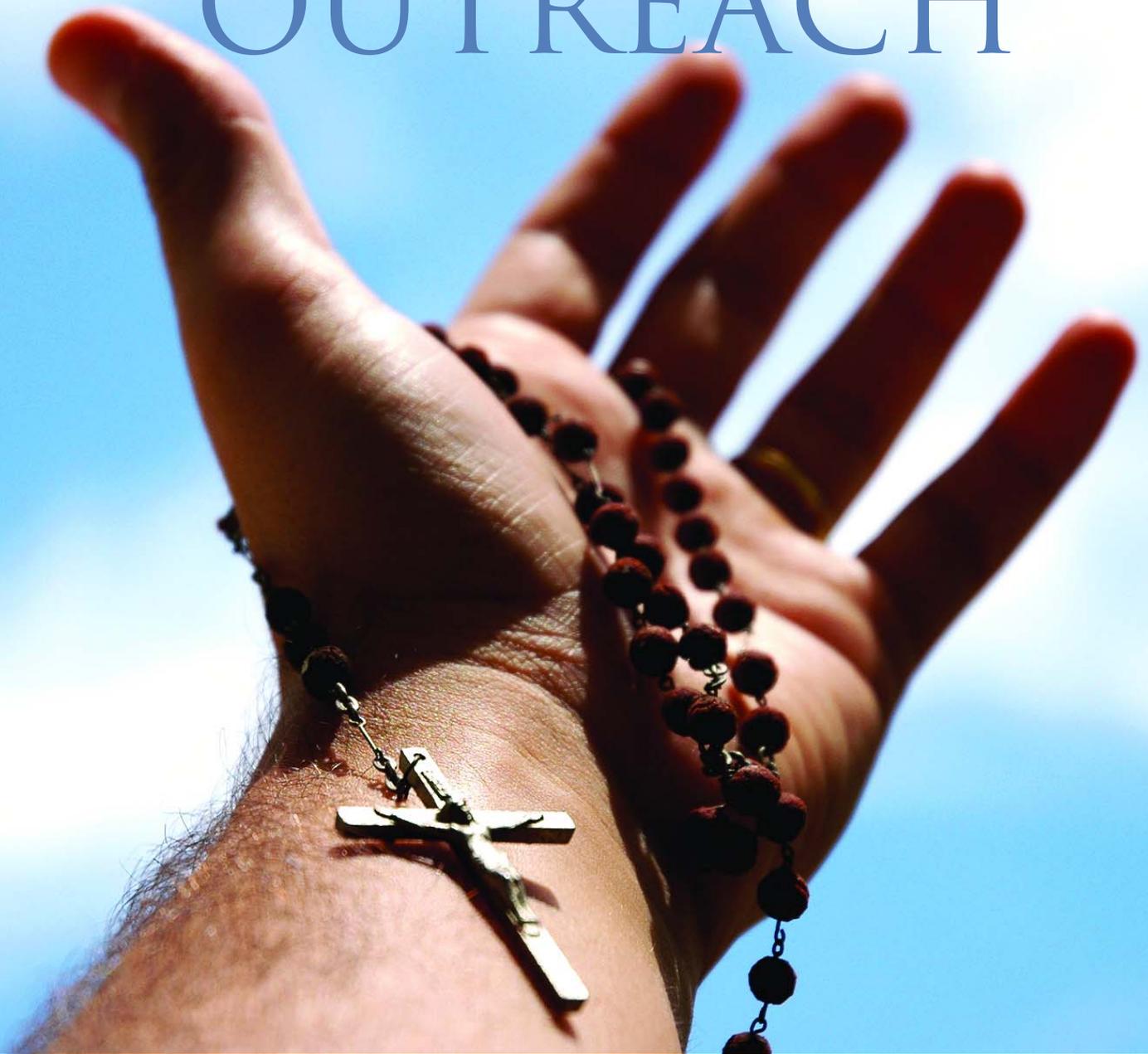


REACTIVATION OUTREACH



Fostering a sense
of community

LifeTouch[®]

Connecting You through
Family Photography

YOUR ROLE

Your role as a volunteer calling members to schedule their photography appointments is vitally important to the success of your new directory program. But even more than that, your efforts are vital in that you may come in contact with inactive members or members experiencing difficulties.

Lifetouch realizes what an important link you are to these members. The following information will help you identify areas of concern and address them in a caring, appropriate and non-threatening manner.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INACTIVE MEMBERS

The following describes the typical characteristics of an inactive member.

- Have not attended services recently
- Generally not attending anywhere
- Have had some religious experience
- Most consider religion an important part of their lives and feel some commitment to Christ
- Have become “dropouts” for a variety of reasons:
 - Had a falling out with the parish
 - May be “burned out”
 - Feel the parish doesn’t care
 - Feel the parish did not minister to them in a time of need
 - May have been hurt in some way

PARISHES MAY BE UNAWARE

The parish may be unaware of the reasons people become inactive. Following are some of the reasons for this lack of awareness.

- When people drop away, they don’t notify the parish, they just “quietly” stop coming
- Much of the pastor’s time is spent dealing with crisis situations, hospital, family and shut-in visits, administration, counseling, etc. Sometimes people may feel neglected.
- Most members do not know how to address inactive people, so little is done to follow up with them
- Fear of not knowing what to say stops us from trying
- Sadly, active involved members sometimes forget about the person who has stopped coming

INACTIVE MEMBERS WHO ARE UPSET WITH THE PARISH

Anger can often turn an active member into an inactive member.

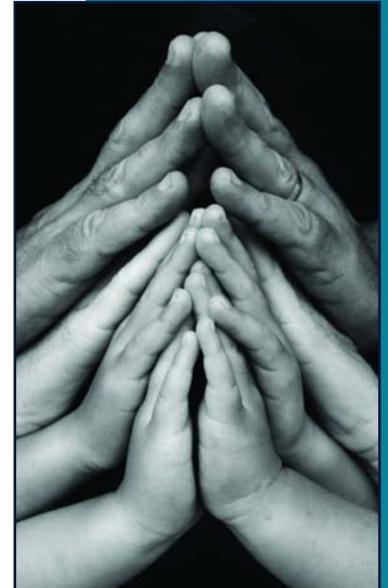
- The offended person may have something going on in his/her life that has created pain; he/she may overreact to situations that normally would not offend
- The offended person rarely tells anyone in the parish why he/she was offended
- It is difficult for the offended members to take the first step back to the parish
- Words spoken in haste and anger may alienate the person and cause him/her to drop out

MINISTERING TO THE INACTIVE

1 LISTEN

Please remember to be a good listener

- Become a *listener*, not a talker
- Your ministry is to listen and make notes of the conversation
- Be sensitive in your caring and relating
- Be sensitive to the need for appropriate timing
- Remember:
 - The inactive member may not know you, and it may be easier for him/her to unload anger or frustration
 - The parish is probably not the cause of the anger, but only the target or outlet
 - Once someone is alienated from the parish, it is often difficult to return on his/her own



2 RESPOND

"You are important to this parish, and we care about you."

- Affirm the person in a caring and loving manner
- Don't defend the parish; defending only makes the wall higher
- You represent the parish and are a "minister" to the person with the hurt, but you do not have the authority to offer advice or solutions
- Do not judge
- If you don't know what someone needs, ask
- Keep any information you receive in confidence

3 RELAY

Ask permission before sharing any information

- Take notes
- Ask the inactive member for permission to share his/her concerns with the pastor
- If the inactive member gives permission, give your notes to the pastor
- The pastor will begin the healing process and begin a ministry of reconciliation

OTHER HELPFUL HINTS

If you feel comfortable, before every call, ask for God's wisdom and presence. The impact of His presence can be empowering. When you rely on God to give results, you are freed from worry and false expectations. Remember, there is some other "hurt" that affects the "vision" of the offended member.

"Certainly there is a risk involved whenever you relate to others in any way, including sharing your faith. But as a child of God you are called to take those risks, and you are assured in advance of God's presence."

Christian Caregiving, A Way of Life by Kenneth C. Haugk



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