

Pastoral Role In Effective Faith Formation

The pastoral leader(s)* is a vital partner in the faith formation of individuals within and for the community of the church. Just as a vital church clearly demonstrates vision, direction & identity in their mission and practice; so too the pastor leads through integrating the various aspects of their role, Word, Practice and Discernment with the vision, direction & identity of the church.

Categories:

1. **WORD:** The pastoral leader is able to *articulate faith, theology and spiritual life* in each ministry expression and within the context of any gathering of the church.
 - a. This is often a challenge for lay people who have either not been churched, had theological training, or developed familiarity with the language of faith. Awareness, sensitivity and flexibility within engagement is essential.
2. **PRACTICE:** The pastoral leader *models a life of continued faith formation*, leading, serving, teaching and caring in a way consistent with his or her words.
 - a. Teach or assist in various settings and engage with various ages.
 - b. Guide congregants to recognize and name their role in ministry.
 - c. Value the abundance of faith formation opportunities by ministering “with” laity and building relationships with persons wherever they are in their journey of (faith) formation.
3. **DISCERNMENT:** The pastoral leader(s) takes on the *spiritual reflection and communal evaluation* needed to discern the Worship preparation and Worship expression for the church. Discernment is key to the *design of transformative worship that inspires and fosters faith* for the individual and the united body.

** We recognize that the pastoral leader in the life of a congregation may take one or more forms given the vision of the church for staffing for its mission and ministry. Therefore, in some faith communities there may be more than one pastoral leader who has responsibility for Word and Sacrament or there may be a pastoral leader whose defined role is faith formation. In any case, we believe the above to be essential for all pastoral leaders regarding effective faith formation.*