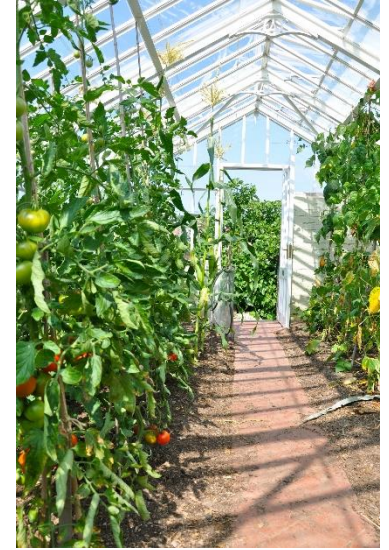


Selecting a Greenhouse for your Parish

Why implement a Conversion Greenhouse in your parish?

As the name implies, a Conversion Engine is often a *driving force* behind a parish's efforts to evangelize and make disciples. It is a tool for bringing people through a life-changing encounter with Jesus and, in response to that encounter, helping them to follow the Lord as intentional disciples. In the work of making disciples (as in carpentry), tools never produce anything on their own; rather, they must be wielded by a person (a carpenter) with the appropriate desire and skills in order to produce something beautiful.



Characteristics of an Effective Conversion Greenhouse:

1. Highly Kerygmatic	Does the program present participants with a clear proclamation of the kerygma (the core message of the Gospel)? Pope Francis gives us the following example of the kerygma in <i>The Joy of the Gospel</i> : “Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen, and free you” (EG 164).
2. Conversion-Oriented	Does the program provide participants with an opportunity to discuss and grapple with the meaning of the kerygma for their own lives, culminating in a decision (or a renewed commitment) to follow Jesus as a disciple? Does the program take into account the process of conversion and respect the uniqueness of each individual's journey of faith?
3. Rooted in Scripture	Does the program help participants to pray with Scripture, enabling them to hear the words of the Bible as the voice of God speaking personally to each one of them?
4. Small Group Context	Does the program enable every participant to be known and loved in a small-group context, and does that lead to authentic community in the broader church? Does the program focus primarily on an encounter with the Lord (love of God) and deepening relationships with others (love of neighbor)?
5. Mentorship of Individuals	Does the program foster the accompaniment and mentorship of individuals? Are participants guided by more mature Christians to transition from passive recipient into active leadership through mentoring? Is care taken to address each participant's particular obstacles to discipleship?

Mission Categories	“We exist to...”
Relational Outreach	Witness to the joy of the Gospel by building friendships with people far from God
Conversion Greenhouse	Bring people to an encounter with Jesus that leads to conversion of heart
Transformational Growth	Build up disciples in the knowledge and habits of the Catholic faith
Missional Teams	Evangelize people at specific thresholds in a particular context

Support Categories	“We exist to...”
Leadership & Maintenance (e.g., Pastoral Council, Liturgical Ministry, Grounds & Facilities)	Direct and oversee the operations of the parish
Social & Other (e.g., Knitting Club, Men’s Club, Fish Fry)	Build social connections around a common interest
Corporal Works of Mercy (e.g., Soup Kitchen, Clothing Drive)	Provide for the material needs of the poor

Examples of Conversion Greenhouse

The Alpha Course	ChristLife	CCO Faith Study Series	Christians Encounter Christ (CEC)	Welcome (Formerly Christ Renews His Parish)
<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 sessions in small groups with a weekend retreat • Each session includes a meal, video, and small group discussion 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 sets of 7 sessions (a total of 21 sessions) • Each session includes a meal, video, and small group discussion • The first 7 sessions include a weekend retreat 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of 5 small group study booklets • Each booklet has material for 6-10 sessions • Need one leader and ideally 6-10 participants for each small group 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A retreat experience over a 2 ½ day weekend • Includes talks, prayer, small group discussion, and songs 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A retreat experience over a 2 day weekend • Includes talks, prayer, small group discussion, and songs
<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free videos with a high production value • May be more comfortable for non-Catholics • Large support network 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs \$1,200 for the full kit (3 sets of DVDs, materials, and parish license) • Natural progression from encounter with Jesus, to growing discipleship, to spirit-filled evangelization 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is \$11.95 for a leader guide and \$8.95 for each participant guide • Relatively easy to begin • A good resource to use in conjunction with retreats like CEC and Welcome 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost to the parish • Requires personal initiative of the participant to get into a small group for ongoing discipleship • Not necessarily grounded in the parish community 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is \$495 for the parish activation fee • Receive personal coaching and mentoring from CRHP teams at Dynamic Catholic • Connected to the parish and run by parishioners

General Instructions and Keys for Success

- In making disciples, our principles will never change, but we must continually reexamine and reimagine our methods to ensure ongoing effectiveness.
- There is no silver bullet — the method we employ to make disciples at any given time will depend on our unique circumstances.
- We should ask ourselves regularly: “What is the surest way to bear the most fruit among the people the Lord has called me to in this specific time and place?”
- No conversion engine can stand alone — it must be part of a larger, clear path of discipleship in the parish.
- Seek out an experienced mentor to help you implement a particular conversion engine.
- Unless you build a culture of invitation to move parish outsiders through your conversion engine, you will short-circuit your efforts.

Examples of Conversion Greenhouses and equip new leaders to replace your current leaders, and help each person to take their next step as a disciple of Jesus.

Ananias Groups (Catherine of Siena)	ACTS Retreats	God Is Retreats	Evangelical Catholic	Catholic Missionary Disciples
<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Sessions in small groups. • Includes talks, prayer, testimony, kerygma presentation, and small group discussions. 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A retreat experience over 3 days and 3 nights. • Activities focus on adoration, community building, and spiritual renewal. 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A one-day retreat experience for parents of children in sacramental prep for First Communion and Confirmation. • Activities include talks, adoration, prayer, testimony, and presentation of the kerygma. 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups led by trained facilitators. • Begins with weekly Lenten small groups. • Participants invited to continue in groups throughout the year. 	<p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups of 4-7 people led by coach via video call. • Meet weekly for 12 weeks. • Additional 30-minute one-on-one each week coaching for individual members. • Highly interactive with prayer, learning, discussion, and collaboration.
<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs \$249 for full leader training Kit, \$25 for additional leader guides, and \$20 for participant books. • Strong accompaniment model. • Relatively easy to begin, all training done in the parish with video and print materials. 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost for retreat weekend is \$200 per person. Based on the Retreat Center fees and expectations. • Requires long preparation time and team training. • Connected to the parish and run by parishioners. 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs \$1,000 for fees. Plus extra cost of flights, and lodging for initial training with <i>Evangelize All</i> facilitators. • Also costs for hosting one-day retreat. • Ongoing retreats run by parish leaders. • Opportunity for ongoing small group participation. 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is \$6,600/year for access to video training platform and weekly personal coaching via Skype. • Requires a 2-year parish commitment and leader to devote 15 hours/week. • Long term small group participation is connected to parish and is free. 	<p>Benefits/Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is \$1,500/individual group member per 12-week session. • Individualized attention. • High accountability. • Teaches practical skills relating to conversion and accompaniment, as well as formation in pastoral skills around evangelization and discipleship.