



Helping transform and improve Orthodox Christian parishes, organizations, and ministries in order to strengthen the body of Christ

Introduction to the Effective Parish Assessment

Is your parish an innovator or early adopter with Clergy and Lay Leaders committed to operational excellence and the best parish health possible? If so, the questions you likely ask yourselves include, how can we accurately assess how things are going at our parish, what operational activities are most critical, how can we improve them, and where can we learn best practices solutions?

After over 20 years of research and work with well over 500 Orthodox Christian parishes in the United States, the empirical data compiled by **Orthodoxy Ministry Services (OMS)** team members shows that there are 6 Operational Pillars and 30 Operational Building Blocks that must be optimized to excellence in the most healthy and effective Orthodox Christian parish.

OMS team members used their research and data to develop the **Effective Parish Assessment (EPA)**. The EPA is a reliable, easy, and empirically proven way to assess the health and operational effectiveness of your parish. OMS can also provide a **Preliminary Parish Improvement Plan (P-PIP)** as a roadmap for necessary operational improvements.

A Free Effective Parish Assessment And Preliminary Parish Improvement Plan

With the support of Leadership 100 and the GOA Department of Stewardship, OMS is offering selected parishes throughout the United States the opportunity to be included in the **Cohort Effective Parish Program**. This unique program allows you to assess your parish with the **Effective Parish Assessment 1 (EPA 1)** of the 6 Pillars of operational excellence and the **Effective Parish Assessment 2 (EPA 2)** of the 30 Building Blocks of operational excellence.

After the Effective Parish Assessment is completed and analyzed, Cohort Effective Parishes will receive a confidential, color-coded, accurate assessment of the “current state” of their parish that identifies where operational improvements would be most beneficial. The Cohort Effective Parishes will also receive a tailored and confidential Preliminary Parish Improvement Plan (P-PIP) plus personalized consultations with OMS subject matter experts. These consultative sessions will help your parish understand some of the most effective things it can do to address its biggest issues and needs.



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OMS will guide and support the selected Cohort Effective Parishes through this entire process. And best of all, everything is totally free thanks to the generosity of OMS, Leadership 100, and the GOA Department of Stewardship.

Assembling the Cohort Effective Parish Team

OMS will work directly with your **Cohort Effective Parish Team** that includes your Clergy and Parish Council President (or their designees) and a **Parish Administrator**.

Parish Administrator

The Clergy and Parish Council President will select your **Parish Administrator**. The Parish Administrator will coordinate the Cohort Effective Parish Program at your parish and work directly with the OMS team.

The Parish Administrator's principal responsibilities simply include: (a) ensuring the parish actively promotes the Effective Parish Assessment and encourages all parishioners to participate; (b) following up with selected Essential Parish Participants (identified below) to ensure they complete the Effective Parish Assessment within the deadline established.

A Parish Administrator should have good communications skills, be dependable, and be able to devote a total of about 10-15 hours during the entire Cohort Effective Parish Program period.

Parish Participants

There is no upper limit to the number of **Parish Participants** who complete the Effective Parish Assessment. The greater the number of parishioner responses, the more reliable the actionable data we will receive. Thus, Cohort Effective Parishes should encourage everyone to be a Parish Participant. Ideally, the Parish Participants will represent the full diversity of your parish.

At a minimum, the **Essential Parish Participants** should include: (a) all Clergy and parish staff; (b) 5 or more Parish Council members; (c) 5 or more Ministry Leaders (not on the Parish Council); (d) at least 20 diverse parishioners not in parish leadership; and (e) the Parish Administrator.



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Minimal Time Commitment

The Parish Participants need **only 30 minutes or less** to complete the simple and easily accessible online Effective Parish Assessment survey that requires no specialized knowledge or parish information.

This Effective Parish Assessment contains a series of statements about the parish which the Parish Participants will assess using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree/Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

Timeline

The OMS and the EPA Team will establish a specific implementation Cohort Effective Parish Program timeline for the entire process. A sample timeline might look like this:

<u>WHO</u>	<u>WHAT</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>SCHEDULE</u>
EPA Team & OMS	Kick-off ZOOM and select Parish Administrator	1 hour	week 1
EPA Team, Parish Administrator & OMS	Plan Parish Rollout and Select Essential Parish Participants	1 hour	week 2
Parish Participants	Complete Effective Parish Assessment	35-40 minutes	weeks 3-6
OMS	Analyze all EPA 1s & EPA 2s and create custom P-PIP	as necessary	weeks 6-10
Cohort Effective Parish Leadership & OMS Team	Present and discuss Preliminary Parish Improvement Plan	as necessary	week 11
Cohort Effective Parish Leadership & OMS Team	Part 2 discussion of P-PIP and next steps	as necessary	week 12



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Conclusion

The Cohort Effective Parish Program has been uniquely designed by OMS for Orthodox Christian parishes using empirical and validated tools. It helps parishes achieve operational excellence and better serve the needs of their parishioners.

This Cohort Effective Parish Program can provide your parish a reliable, efficient, and free way to assess your parish health and operational effectiveness, along with a confidential professional analysis and preliminary recommendations to address your biggest challenges.

If your parish meets the above criteria and is interested in applying to be a Cohort Effective Parish, please provide to cohortparish@effectiveparish.org, your parish name and city, and the name, email address and phone number of the appropriate contact person.