

Hosting Guidelines

A resource for parishes, groups and communities hosting local events that utilise video content from Evangelise Plus.



Welcome

In this guide you will find resources for preparation, promotion, participation and hosting a local event in your parish or faith community. We understand each community is different and may choose to facilitate the experience based on local contexts and realities. The resources offer flexibility to support you in making the most of this moment of grace.

Program: Consider which program type you will offer: full day, half day, evening or online.

Promotion and Preparation: As you make arrangements for the gathering, begin promotion immediately utilising the many resources available online.

Prayer: Pray in the lead-up to the gathering for its success and ensure you have prepared joyful prayers for the gathering.

Hosting and Honouring: Be a gracious and Christian host, honouring those gathered.

About the Commission and the NCE

The Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry is responsible for animating the primary call of the baptised to evangelisation. It also supervises the work of the National Centre for Evangelisation (NCE) and the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office.

The National Centre for Evangelisation is at the service of the BCEL in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ in Australia. It seeks to liaise with different dioceses, groups and individuals within the Catholic Church in Australia involved in sharing this Good News. The NCE offers formation opportunities, develops resources, and shares information about networks and initiatives around Australia.

Program

The videos available on [Evangelise Plus](#) can be utilised in a variety of agenda and gathering styles, however there are several key elements which are essential to all approaches:

- **Fellowship:** We must allow time to get to know each other, our stories, what's happened this week and our faith encounters. This is demonstrated by long breaks to meet and connect with others.
- **Prayer:** We must gather to pray and be prayerful in our gathering. This is demonstrated by allowing enough time to pray in your program, with local preparation and leadership.
- **Small Group Discussion:** We must share, explore and speak aloud to each other in small groups to share our learnings and yearnings inspired by the sessions. This is demonstrated by 'small' groups and suitable discussion time to allow for deeper reflection.

Promotion and Preparation

The invitation, welcome and hospitality of your local gatherings are critical to the success of your event. We are working in partnership with the Holy Spirit to prepare the way of the Lord and allow Him to evangelise.

Some promotional and preparatory guides are included below, to help you make the most of this moment of grace. In all we do we strive to ensure the safety of those gathered (physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually) and to create a space for the Holy Spirit.

Promotion

The National Centre for Evangelisation's [website](#) has a range of promotional resources for events that it coordinates, which can be used at a local level for parish gatherings. Please visit the website and utilise these tools in your local community newsletters, networks, and on social media. Be sure to include a personal invitation and details of your hosting site.

The [National Centre for Evangelisation's Facebook page](#) also has a number of promotional videos for many events. Please consider sharing these videos on your social media platforms. Be sure to follow the page to receive regular updates and news of ongoing initiatives.

Preparation

Hosting a local gathering could seem overwhelming, however the Church often gathers people together and is set up to support you and to make it an easy process. Here are a few simple steps and elements to be aware of:

- **Your Hosting Site:** It is recommended that you gather large groups at a parish, diocesan, or school location, thus utilising existing resources and processes to ensure the safety of all. Existing church sites have trained staff and processes to manage workplace health and safety (or state equivalents), insurance, risk management, catering procedures, COVID-19 requirements, etc. Liaise with venue staff to ensure you have the support you need and meet the standards required. They are there to help.

- **Small Groups or Home Gatherings:** If you are gathering a small group in your home or another location, then please ensure you are aware of local COVID-19 restrictions, attendees' food allergies, and any possible scenarios which may come up. These aren't always life-threatening situations, but a simple brainstorming of situations and how you would deal with them would assist you to respond safely and calmly. See suggestions below.

- **An over 18 Initiative:** This gathering, its content and experience is aimed at adults over the age of 18. If anyone under the age of 18 is to attend, you must adhere to diocesan safeguarding policies and develop a safeguarding response.

- **Hospitality:** Ensure you have created a welcoming and safe space to gather. Simple strategies are essential such as car parking, signage and directions, name tags, tea and coffee freely available, seating and a personal welcome. To meet some of these essentials, you may like to outline a small budget and discuss with your community leadership to ensure you have more than adequate hospitality for your gathering.

- **Ask for Help and Coordinate:** In attempting to do everything ourselves we often fulfil tasks poorly or miss opportunities to be present to the group gathered. Invite others to assist, lead and share where possible. This allows you to 'coordinate' and arrive at the gathering open to what the Holy Spirit might ask of you. At the gathering, we want to be Mary at the feet of Jesus, rather than Martha racing around busy.



- **Some simple considerations for Hosting Site Coordinators include:**

- o If you have to postpone or cancel... do you have an alternative meeting plan and schedule, can you contact participants to notify them of the change?
- o Imagine arriving at your own venue... What time of day is it and how would you feel? What would you expect? What would be unexpected and nice to have?
- o If a participant become ill... can you respond with first aid or by calling an ambulance?
- o If a participant discloses something confronting or challenging... how would you respond, who can you connect them with?
- o If a disagreement occurs... how would you resolve the discussion and move forward?
- o If a participant cannot get home because their car won't start or public transport has stopped... how could you help them?
- o If a participant is moved by the experience and stays behind to chat and wants to know more or share their personal faith encounter... will you have time to invest with them? What would you say? Where would you direct them for ongoing spiritual support?
- o What else can you think of?

Why Gather Locally?

Organising a local gathering can be an easy way to bring together members of your parish, school or diocesan community to share experiences and strategies around evangelisation, formation and discipleship. A local gathering can allow more people to participate in the conference, and can serve as a parish formation event, tailored to the specific needs and context of the community.



Prayer

Prayer is foundational to any gathering of the faithful. We invite all leaders and participants to pray in preparation for the gathering, together during the initiative and then together to discern ways of praying beyond your meeting. Please find some examples and resources for prayer which you may find helpful below.

Your Local Community

In the first instance, you are encouraged to invite local community members to prepare and lead your prayer. Our communities are filled with talented musicians, readers, speakers and leaders, and many others who are willing to be involved if invited. Take the time to identify, accompany and prepare people to lead your community in prayer.

Local Prayer Experiences

The Church has a variety of prayer styles and experiences. Each call us into a deeper relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Throughout the event, utilise different prayer styles as the community gathered grows in understanding and trust of each other. You may like to begin with simple prayer experiences common to all such as Scripture, Rosary, etc. Invite participants to contribute to prayer by either structured style like liturgy of the hours, or spontaneously through prayers of intercession. Include times of beauty and contemplation through art, music, and stories. Allow participants time to be present with Christ through Adoration or the celebration of the Eucharist. Each prayer experience allows us to listen to what the Spirit is saying.

Music and Multimedia

Australia has a number of local musicians and locally-produced multimedia resources that can assist you to lead prayer at your gathering. Below are several Australian musicians and multimedia content that you could draw upon for your gathering.

Music:

Gen Bryant - www.genbryant.com
 John Burland - www.johnburland.net
 EncounterMusic - www.evangelisationbrisbane.org.au/encountercatholicmusic
 Fr Rob Galea - www.frgministry.com
 Gus and Iggy - www.gusandiggy.bandcamp.com
 Stephen Kirk - www.stephenkirk.com.au/music
 Michael Mangan - www.litmusproductions.com
 Liturgical Song - www.liturgicalsong.com
 Prima Luce - www.primalucemusic.com
 Willow Publishing - www.willowpublishing.com.au

Worship and Multimedia:

The Well - Parramatta (Prayer and Worship) - www.thewell.org.au

Hosting and Honouring

As the event occurs, we must be a gracious and Christian host to everyone who attends. Having shared the responsibilities of the gathering with a small team or inviting participants to make contributions, we can be attentive and positive in how we act, speak, and respond to all participants.

Photos and Testimonies

Be sure to take some simple photos of the gathering. Capture small groups and faces, rather than large, broad photos. Collect names if you don't know them. Invite participants to share their experiences with some small quotes and thoughts. These photos and testimonies can make up a parish newsletter reflection or social media post to share the gifts of the day. It can also be shared with the diocese or nationally to celebrate communities gathering in this way.

Thank you

Any gathering requires a time to give thanks for those who have prepared the event, but also to those who have shared. A time of thanks should be prepared and include three elements:

- **To organisers and guests:** To those who planned, prepared and facilitated the gathering. The speakers and those who led prayer locally.
- **To those gathered:** To those who chose to gather, who took a risk to attend and the families who have supported you to attend.
- **What are you thankful for?:** Invite the group to share with the person next to them something they are thankful for from the gathering; something they learnt or experienced during their time together.





For further information about hosting local events please contact the
National Centre for Evangelisation.

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