

# Cultivating Pioneer Advocates

## Tips for engaging parish priests

Pioneers need advocates who will create space for new forms of ministry to thrive. Pioneers have a part to play in helping parish priests to grow into the role of advocate.

### Aspire to be your best

What kind of person do you want to be for God? Aspire to be a better person each day. Practice generosity, vulnerability, patience, courtesy. Demonstrate good will.

### Show interest

Make space to "waste" time with parish priests. Be curious. Ask questions. Seek to understand. Commit to authentic relationship even when you'd prefer to spend less time with your colleague.

### Listen for meaning

Pay attention to more than the words spoken. Listen for meaning. Attune your ears to the longings, aspirations and the unspoken within your colleague's heart.

### Extend reach

The Church needs pioneers to help extend reach. Pioneers are not in competition with parish ministry. Focus on how pioneers can help extend reach by offering different forms of ministry.

### Think win/win

Parish priests and pioneers can easily become 'takers'. Think win/win means finding ways to strategically support one another. Explore ways you might invest in your colleague's ministry.

### Journey together

It takes time to cultivate advocates who will champion and resource pioneer ministry. Be patient. Be proactive in helping your colleague to understand. See the process as a shared journey of discovery.

### Practice the better way

"The best criticism of the bad is the practice of the better."  
Father Richard Rohr, OFM.

# Growing partnerships

## Top tips for engaging pioneers/mixed ecology curates

Parishes need people who have been gifted by God to see the gap between the church and the local culture, and to find ways with others to bridge that gap using their creativity and imagination. Parishes need dreamers who do. Parish priests are key to enabling pioneers to do what God has called them to do.

### Take time to get to know your pioneer as a human being

Whatever you have heard about pioneers or pioneering, you haven't met this pioneer before. Put aside conscious or unconscious bias, listen to their story, try to see them apart from their role. Try to understand why they are on this path. If you had had their disposition and life experience, might you also now be a pioneer?

### Trust your pioneer

Pioneers need to be trusted. They will flourish and be fruitful if they are given space to explore, experiment and fail in an atmosphere of trust. Be willing to take risks with them and support them to do courageous things. Pioneers can amplify the range of engagement of the church to connect with new people in new ways.

### Champion your pioneer

Become your pioneer's greatest advocate. Explain what he or she is trying to do to anyone who will listen. Imagine you were trying to explain Jesus to ordinary Galileans or to the priests and scribes. Do it with the same level of passion and openness to mystery.

### Model equality of relationship with your pioneer

All forms of church are church. They are all equal to each other, connected with each other and distinct from one another. Model this equality in your relationship with your pioneer. As ministers and leaders of churches you are also equal to, connected to and distinct from one another. Be generous and humble in respect of your fellow leader, however slowly their church is developing, or however much excitement and energy their work creates.

### Think win/win

Parish priests and pioneers can easily become takers. Thinking win/win means finding ways to strategically support one another. Explore ways you might invest in each other's ministry. Outdo one another in trying to support the other's ministry.

### Aspire to be your best

What kind of person do you aspire to be for God? Aspire to be a better person each day. Practice generosity, vulnerability, patience, courtesy. Show good will.