

RESOURCE 13

VISITING TEAM EVALUATION SHEET

By being observant, there are many important things you can learn about a prospective rector/vicar in a relatively brief visit to her or his church. This list is only suggestive and is not in any assumed ranking or order of importance. Feel free to add items of particular relevance to your congregation's needs. *Keep in mind that the best indicator of what a person will do is what a person has done.* What has the priest you are evaluating already done, based on your observations during this visit?

About the scoring: It is best not to compare scores you give with those given by other members of the Visiting Team, since others may, in general, be more critical or more generous. Keep in mind that these scores are not meant to add up or establish any grades. They are only an attempt to make you give some thought and some weight to the many facets of a priest's personality that are important in discernment. If you did not observe anything to give you help on a given section, mark an "X" in place of a score.

1. CHURCH PROGRAM: The bulletin, church newsletter, announcements during the worship service and the church bulletin boards will tell you what kind of program the church has, what ages of people they tend to serve, how much they are involved in the community life, etc. What do you see? *Score from 0 (very little program) to 5 (many and varied programs)* _____

2. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: What impression of the educational program do you get from the bulletin and from a walk through the educational part of the building? Note the kind of materials being used for various age levels. *Score 0 (uninteresting, unattractive, unused) to 5 (very active and vital)* _____

3. OUTREACH CONCERN: Was there evidence in the service, in conversation, or in church activities of a concern for general and regional programs and relationships with other denominations or interfaith groups? Does this church seem to support missions? Is the priest involved personally in these activities? *Score 0 to 5* _____

4. OPENNESS TO ALL AGE GROUPS: What is the priest's involvement with various groups in his/her church? Is there a children's sermon? After the service, how does the priest greet children? Youth? Elderly? Peers? *Score from 0 (seems to relate only to own age group) to 5 (relates to all)* _____

5. CONDUCT OF WORSHIP: The formality or informality of the worship service may reflect the feelings of the congregation as much as those of the rector/vicar. In presiding at worship, however, is the priest graceful or awkward, natural or stilted, sincere or mechanical? Does he/she share worship leadership? *Score 0 (poorly done) to 5 (well done)* _____

6. USE OF SCRIPTURE: How did the scripture readings relate to the sermon? Were there other scripture references in the sermon? *Score from 0 (little or no use of scripture) to 5 (scripture basic to worship and sermon)*

7. SERMON DELIVERY: Was the preacher's speech conversational, formal, authoritative, pleasant, varied or monotonous, fast or slow? Were there offensive language, clichés, humor, appropriate gestures, disturbing mannerisms, grammatical errors? *Score from 0 to 5* _____

8. SERMON CONTENT: Was the point of the sermon clear? Was it applicable to your daily life? Was it well organized? Did it demonstrate adequate preparation? *Score from 0 to 5* _____

9. PRAYER LIFE: Did you feel prayed for during the service? Is there evidence of a significant prayer life in the congregation? *Score from 0 to 5* _____

10. THEOLOGICAL STANCE: How would you characterize the priest's theological beliefs: conservative? fundamentalist? evangelical? liberal? charismatic? Do they seem to be compatible with your own? With those of other members of your congregation? With your former rector's/vicar's? *Score from 0 (extremely different from beliefs of our congregation as a whole) to 5 (compatible or acceptable to most of our congregation)* _____

11. ATTITUDE ABOUT LAITY: What attitude does the priest seem to have about the members of the congregation? How widely are men, women, youth used in morning worship? Is there any evidence about their attitudes toward their rector/vicar? *Score 0 to 5* _____

12. ATTITUDE ABOUT STAFF: How does the rector/vicar seem to feel about the other members of the staff? How does he/she feel about other clergy? *If your church has a multiple staff of ministers, score this 0 to 5* _____

13. READING: Did sermon or conversation show evidence of current reading? Is there evidence of continuing education or group study? *Score 0 to 5* _____

14. RECREATION, HOBBIES: Do you see evidence in conversations that the priest takes time to relax? What about interest in art, theater, music, participation and observer sports? *Score 0 to 5* _____

15. PERSONAL APPEARANCE: Is there anything about the priest's appearance, conversation, or conduct that would be an obstacle to relating to you or to others in your congregation? *Score 0 (poor) to 5 (excellent)* _____

16. FRIENDLINESS: Note the priest's manner with the congregation, both during the service and as they greet each other before or after the service, as well as how easily he/she establishes rapport with you personally. How approachable would you consider her/him to be if you had a problem? *Score from 0 (very reserved) to 5 (very open)* _____

17. CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY: Overall, would you describe this as a congregation filled with vitality or barely surviving? Do you see evidence of a deepening spirituality among parishioners, an energizing goal, and a use of tradition in new ways? These characteristics contribute to overall congregational vitality and growth. *Score 0 to 5* _____

18. ATTITUDE ABOUT LIFE: Would you see this person, as a result of your visit, as enthusiastic or discouraged? Affirming or judgmental? Positive or critical about self, people, the world? *Score 0 to 5* _____

In your conversation with the priest after the service, you might ask questions like these:

1. What do you like best about your ministry?
2. What do you feel is your most important accomplishment in your present ministry?
3. Tell us about a time when you ministered to a child. What happened?
4. Describe a financial situation in your church and tell us what you did to deal with it.
5. What are the growing edges in terms of your ministry?
6. What encourages you or concerns you about the present state of the church?
7. What do you like to do in your spare time?
8. What would you like to do when you retire?

Be sure to stress that you view this as a time of mutual discernment, rather than as an interview, and leave time for the candidate to ask questions of you.