

Q&A with Terrel Joseph, Parish Vitality Consultant



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In July, Pillars Trust Fund hired **Terrel Joseph** as its first-ever Parish Vitality Consultant. Terrel's hiring is the result of feedback received from local clergy over the last year identifying tangible actions Pillars Trust could support to reconnect with the clergy and parishioners of the 34 English-language parishes across the Archdiocese of Montreal. We thought we'd take this opportunity to introduce Terrel to you. If you see him at your parish, please say hello!



Welcome to the Fall edition of 'The Column' by the Pillars Trust Fund. As promised, in this issue we shine the spotlight on our first Parish Vitality Consultant, Terrel Joseph, as he embarks on his journey to support our priests and parishioners in their ongoing efforts at pastoral renewal. *Do you have big dreams for your parish (or even small ones)?* Maybe Terrel can help.

Pillars Trust Fund also funds the pastoral ministries of Lay Evangelist, Corey Jolly, and Diocesan Youth worker Holly Kirsten Eugenio of the Youth Ministry Office. Read on to learn more about the roles played by Terrel, Corey and Holly – three pillars of pastoral ministry supported by Pillars Trust.

**The Column:** *What does a "Parish Vitality Consultant" do?*

**Terrel:** At a high level, a Parish Vitality Consultant (or PV Consultant) provides a support service to our parish priests. As a PV Consultant, I'll be working to help our priests, lay leadership and staff to initiate or continue growth in the pastoral vitality of their parish. This focus on vitality was inspired by Bishop Dowd's statement at the November 2016 Parish Vitality Conference to the effect that increasing growth in pastoral vitality (highlighted by Evangelization, Discipleship and Stewardship) will translate into improved parish financial viability, with more people worshipping, more serving, and more financial giving.

**The Column:** *How will that work translate into practice?*

**Terrel:** It will mean helping our priests and lay leadership increase pastoral vitality through improved engagement. Engagement measures people's emotional attachment to their parish and addresses the reasons "why" they are involved at all. Increasing engagement focuses not so much on what parishes are doing, but more on how they are doing it. Gallup research shows that engaged parishioners (1) invite their "un-churched" friends to parish events more often

(Evangelization), (2) are more involved in ongoing faith formation (Discipleship), and (3) tend to give more of their time, talents and treasures in service to their parish (Stewardship). These are key vital signs for parish health.

**The Column:** *Can you provide examples of programs or activities you've promoted in the past to improve parish vitality?*

**Terrel:** The primary emphasis really focuses on the parish rather than on programs. Any program or event that a parish itself identifies as key to meeting its most strategically important pastoral need could be employed. It could be the introduction of something very structured, like an Alpha program or a Parish Renewal Experience (PREX) retreat, or it could be something very simple like a parking lot ministry to make visiting the parish for new comers easier and more welcoming.

The goal of the PV Consultant is not necessarily to introduce new programs to parishes but rather to take a look at the balance of ministries in each parish as a whole, gauging to what extent each ministry engages people. I could then offer suggestions to help parishes tweak what they're already doing in order to improve engagement, vitality and their bottom line. These suggestions will be based on my experience with what has or hasn't worked in other parishes across the diocese.

#### Quick Bio

*Name:* Terrel Joseph

*Hometown:* Brossard, Quebec

*Education:* Loyola High School, Concordia University

*Professional Background:* Business (Banking, Event Planning) and pastoral ministry (Montreal Catholic Challenge Movement, Newman Centre and St. Wilibrord's Parish).

*Favourite movies:* "Forrest Gump" ("A story that's wise about the human experience") and "O Brother Where Art Thou" ("for the one-liners and the music")

*Currently reading:* "Divine Renovation" by Fr. James Mallon and "Growing an Engaged Church" by Albert Winseman

**The Column:** *How did you become interested in parish vitality?*

**Terrel:** What really got me interested was seeing parish renewal happen at St. Wilibrord's Parish. Under Father Gregory's leadership, we started doing very simple things to turn our parish around. We began by looking for opportunities to create fellowship and just getting to know each other.

When we did that, we discovered what people were great at and came up with ways they could serve using their talents and gifts without feeling burdened. For example, we renovated our soup kitchen and repaired our electrical system, basically for free with parish volunteers. Serving from your talents helps people deepen their sense of belonging and provides a personalized way to contribute to and benefit from parish life. In a word, it creates "engaged" parishioners. And the more people are engaged, the more they can serve without feeling burned out and the more they tend to invite and, ultimately, fulfill the purpose of the parish – which is to create disciples.

If done the right way, it's a cycle of pastoral ministry that leads to volunteering out of giftedness and a healthy parish where we love God and love our neighbours as ourselves.

**The Column:** *What will the next 12 months have in store for you as Pillars' first Parish Vitality Consultant?*

**Terrel:** The long-term goal of Pillars is to help all of our parishes with their individual needs, but for this first year I will begin by meeting with all the Pastors individually as an initial step and will work on specific projects with several parishes because there is only one Terrel at the moment.

The meetings with the Pastors of all 34 English-language parishes is designed to learn more about them and their needs, ministries and reality. These meetings will help me to build a profile on each parish so that, when the time is right, we'll have the proper context and information necessary to help each one grow and engage its parishioners in a manner unique to their community.

# Three Pillars of Pastoral Ministry

In addition to Terrel, Pillars Trust Fund also supports the ministries of Lay Evangelist, Corey Jolly, and Diocesan Youth worker Holly Kirsten Eugenio of the Youth Ministry Office. Here's a snapshot to help you understand their different roles.

As a Lay Evangelist, Corey networks, collaborates and shares resources with various ministries, organizations and individuals focused on evangelization and the proclamation of the Good News. He promotes events, projects and initiatives across the diocese that help further the mission of the Church.

As a Diocesan Youth worker, Holly promotes outreach to Catholic youth, aged 13 – 35 through coordination, communication, animation and formation. She assists in organizing diocesan wide youth events, helps to support and train local youth ministers and youth group leaders, and helps to co-ordinate local youth-ministry efforts.

As a Parish Vitality Consultant, Terrel helps priests and lay leaders increase pastoral vitality through improved engagement via Evangelization, Discipleship and Stewardship. See our interview with Terrel above for more details.

*Fundraising Campaign 2017-2018*

## A Sneak Preview

Our annual fundraising campaign is set to launch on the weekend of October 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> with the theme of “*Reinforcing Parish Vitality*”. It's a logical extension of the theme from last year, which was to reconnect with our community and it's consistent with Pillars Trust Fund's recent hiring of Terrel Joseph, our Parish Vitality Consultant.

Reconnecting with parish priests brought home the vital and pivotal role that clergy and lay leaders play in the vitality of our diocese, parishes and family life. Your donations to our campaign will continue to support our priests and parishes in tangible ways.

*Saint John Mary Vianney*

## Pillars Trust Fund adopts a Patron Saint for this year's Campaign

Saint John Mary Vianney, the Curé of Ars and patron saint of parish priests worldwide is the special patron of the Pillars Trust Fund annual campaign this year.

With the campaign focused on supporting parish vitality, we pray to Saint John Mary Vianney to intervene on behalf of our parishes and congregations and to bring special blessings to our priests, and to those who might consider priestly vocations.

His early years were eventful and dangerous. Yet, he was guided by the Holy Spirit to overcome the obstacles to his priestly vocation, which he never doubted. As a youth, he survived the suppression and persecutions of the French Revolution thanks to courageous family commitment.



The Vianneys were devout Catholics who helped the poor and gave hospitality to Saint Benedict Labre, who passed through their hometown (Dardily) on a pilgrimage to Rome.

Saint John Mary Vianney was assigned to Ars - a village of 230 souls - shortly after his ordination, which was about the time of the Battle of Waterloo.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote that he was “warned by his bishop beforehand that there he would find religious practice in a sorry state: ‘There is little love of God in that parish; you will be the one to put it there.’” He obeyed and was rewarded with overwhelming success in revitalising the faith in many souls. He served the parish for 41 years and it became an important destination for pilgrims. He would hear confessions for up to 16 hours daily and his sermons were very popular.

To find out more about St. John Mary Vianney’s renowned devotion and accomplishments, we direct you to the June 16, 2009 letter from the Vatican of his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI proclaiming a year for priests on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “*dies natalis*” of the Curé of Ars. Let us pray to Saint John Mary Vianney for courage to unleash the vitality that wells within all in our English Speaking Catholic Community, and to inspire generosity in support of our Campaign this year.

*Catholic Action*

## “Sharing our gifts to serve our Neighbour”

Pillars Trust Fund extends its heartfelt congratulations to **Judy Wong**, recently named Executive Director of Catholic Action.



Judy comes to Catholic Action following a successful 35 year career in the corporate world and a lifetime of service to the Church in many different capacities.

As a teenager, at St. David’s in Pierrefonds, she was in the folk choir and worked the Sunday night Bingo. Later, at St. Edmunds of Canterbury, she was part of the Faith First team preparing youngsters for their all-important First Communion and Confirmations. Most recently, she chaired the capital campaign for Jesus Light of the World Parish, achieving the financial objectives set out by the wardens.

Under the direction of the Catholic Action board, Judy will work toward strengthening our community through use of our collective talents. Catholic Action will bring the gifts of our neighbours together through a volunteer data base so that community needs can be matched with volunteer talents.

The Catholic Action AGM will be held September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 5:30 at Loyola High School. Come and meet Judy, the Board and hear testimonials of some of the good work already completed by and being done in the spirit of Catholic Action Montreal.



# Are you considering a Catholic education for your child?

*“Faith in their future”*

**Loyola High School, Montreal** – Open House, Saturday, September 16, 9 am till noon.  
7272 Sherbrooke St W, Montreal, QC H4B 1R2 Phone: 514- 486-1101  
Motto: “Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam; (For the Greater Glory of God)”

**The Sacred Heart School of Montreal**, Open House, Saturday, September 16, 12:30 pm till 4 pm  
Parking is available at the back of the school located at 3635 Atwater Avenue. For more information please call: 514-937-2845.  
Motto: “For the sake of one child...”

## Powered by Pillars

### Catholic Professional Network (CPN)

The next CPN event will be held at 5:30 p.m. on October 5th at the Newman Centre of McGill University, located at 3484 Peel Street. The featured speaker will be Danielle Morin, Associate Dean and Professor of Business Statistics at the John Molson School of Business. Danielle has received several prestigious awards during her career, including the YWCA Women of Excellence Award in Education and the first Concordia University Academic Leadership Award. Active in her community, Danielle is a devout Catholic and has led several humanitarian projects. She will talk about our responsibility to spread the good news, and our call to sanctify our life through our work, family and our milieu. Come and listen to Danielle’s testimony and also hear about the formation of the CPN’s new executive committee and its future plans for the organization. This is the fourth CPN event. The CPN is solely funded by Pillars Trust Fund.



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Have an idea for a project we could help with or would you like to volunteer your services?

Contact us at: [ptf@catholiccentre.ca](mailto:ptf@catholiccentre.ca) or at 514-937-2301 ext. 255

Check out our website: [www.pillarstrust.org](http://www.pillarstrust.org)

Donate online and receive a tax receipt immediately

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