

Planning a Pastoral Media Campaign

Session 3 Campaign Planning Workbook

From pastoral need to coordinated action

Course context	Pastoral Communication and Media Formation
Audience	Seminarians preparing for pastoral leadership
Suggested duration	45 minute guided workshop with extended campaign development
Central task	Prepare and present a coherent pastoral media campaign in which mission message media management and measurement support one another

Purpose of this workbook

Sessions 1 and 2 established the principles that guide pastoral media planning. Mission comes before media, people come before platforms, and different media should perform distinct but connected roles. This session asks participants to put those principles into practice. The opening pages explain what makes a media campaign coherent. The larger part of the document is a working space in which a team can choose a pastoral challenge, make planning decisions, test those decisions and present a campaign proposal.

The immediate classroom goal is a concise campaign concept that can be explained in ninety seconds. The extended goal is a plan detailed enough to guide responsible production after the session. The workbook therefore separates the decisions that must be made during the live workshop from the decisions that require further listening, consultation and research.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session, the participant should be able to define a pastoral communication need; identify a primary audience and a realistic objective; formulate a coherent core message and call to action; assign distinct functions to suitable media; sequence the audience journey; name the people, permissions, safeguards and resources required; and connect media indicators with pastoral outcomes. The participant should also be able to explain the plan clearly and receive critical feedback without defending every first idea.

From framework to campaign

A media campaign is a planned set of connected communication actions developed for a defined purpose, audience and period. It may include personal invitation, liturgical communication, print, messaging, social media, a website, photography, audio, video, local news and an embodied gathering. The number of channels does not make the campaign strong. Its strength lies in the relationship among the need, the message, the media and the response that the campaign enables.

A campaign differs from ordinary publicity because it begins before the poster. The team first listens to a situation and decides what pastoral change it hopes to support. It identifies the people whose response matters, studies what may help or hinder them, and decides what they need to notice, understand, trust and do. Only then does the team choose media and begin production.

A campaign also has a clear end point for evaluation. This does not mean that pastoral relationships end when the campaign closes. It means that the team agrees on a period during which it will coordinate communication and then examine what happened. Without that boundary, activity continues but learning becomes difficult.

The pastoral campaign brief

The campaign brief is the common reference from which writers, designers, photographers, videographers, organisers and pastoral leaders work. It should be short enough to use and precise enough to settle disagreements. A useful brief states the pastoral situation, the mission, the primary audience, the objective, the core message, the desired action, the campaign period, the available resources and the safeguards that cannot be compromised.

The brief does not predetermine every creative decision. It gives creativity a shared direction. A videographer may still choose a distinctive visual approach, and a youth inviter may use personal language. Both should nevertheless serve the same objective and preserve verified facts, pastoral tone and human dignity.

Facilitator cue Ask the group to imagine three volunteers producing a poster, a Reel and a WhatsApp invitation without a common brief. Let participants name the conflicts that are likely to appear. Then ask what minimum information would allow the three volunteers to work with both freedom and coherence.

Six decisions that hold the campaign together

Pastoral need	What is happening among the people, and why does it deserve a communication response?
Mission and objective	What good should this campaign serve, and what observable response should it support?
Audience and insight	Whose response matters first, what is their present situation, and what may help or hinder them?

Message and action	What central meaning should remain recognisable, and what should the person do or experience next?
Journey and media	Which stages require communication, and what distinct role should each medium perform?
Management and learning	Who is responsible, what must be protected, and how will the team know what to retain or change?

The two planning routes

The core workshop route contains six worksheets. A team can complete them at a disciplined level within the live session and use them to prepare a short pitch. The extended development route follows the core worksheets. It deepens the audience profile, resource audit, content architecture, production calendar, workflow, ethics, accessibility, budget, risk and evaluation plan. A real parish or diocesan campaign should normally complete the extended route before production begins.

Core workshop Complete Worksheets 1 to 6 during the session. Write brief decisions rather than polished paragraphs. The final pitch should explain the logic of the campaign.

Extended development Complete Worksheets 7 to 15 after further listening and consultation. Replace assumptions with verified information wherever possible.

Choosing a campaign

The campaign should be large enough to require coordination but limited enough to plan. Choose one of the suggested briefs or propose a local need. Do not begin with a favourite platform. Begin with the pastoral situation and the people whose participation matters. The brief may be adapted to a parish, seminary, school, shrine, diocese or religious community.

Facilitator cue *If several groups are working, assign different briefs so that the final presentations reveal different planning choices. Do not allow every group to choose the parish feast simply because its content feels familiar.*

Suggested pastoral campaigns

Each brief supplies a situation and a planning tension. It does not supply the solution. The group must decide the mission, audience, message, media journey, responsibilities and measures.

1 Youth Faith Encounter

Situation A parish wants to welcome Catholic college students and young workers who are not active in parish groups. Existing announcements mainly reach families already connected to the parish.

Planning tension The campaign must build trust without pretending that one event will solve every difficulty. It should create a credible path from first contact to continuing community.

2 Vocation Discernment Month

Situation A diocese wants young people to consider priesthood and religious life with honesty and freedom. Previous communication has relied on formal posters and ceremonial photographs.

Planning tension The campaign should present real lives and questions without romanticising vocation, pressuring participants or exposing personal discernment.

3 Parish Synodal Listening

Situation Parish leaders want to hear from people who seldom attend meetings, including women, youth, migrants, people with disabilities and Catholics who feel distant from parish life.

Planning tension The campaign must make listening credible. It needs several ways to participate, clear privacy expectations and visible evidence that contributions will be received and considered.

4 Family Digital Wellness

Situation Parents and adolescents report conflict around phones, gaming, social media, sleep and online safety. The parish hopes to support conversation rather than promote fear of technology.

Planning tension The campaign should address both generations respectfully and lead towards practical family agreements, trustworthy guidance and appropriate pastoral or professional support.

5 Care for Creation Action Week

Situation The community knows the language of environmental responsibility but has not connected it with local behaviour. The parish wants households and institutions to undertake one measurable action.

Planning tension The campaign must connect teaching with a feasible local practice and avoid symbolic publicity that is not followed by action or accountability.

6 Parish Feast Welcome Campaign

Situation A major feast attracts regular parishioners, pilgrims, occasional worshippers, vendors and local residents. Information is scattered, and newcomers do not know what to expect.

Planning tension The campaign must coordinate devotion, hospitality, logistics, crowd information, accessibility and follow-up without reducing the feast to promotion.

7 Responding to Local Misinformation

Situation A false or misleading message about the parish, Church teaching or a community event is circulating through messaging groups. People are anxious and several versions are spreading.

Planning tension The campaign must verify facts, correct the claim proportionately, identify an authoritative source and avoid amplifying harmful content unnecessarily.

8 Care for Elderly and Homebound Persons

Situation The parish wants to identify older and homebound people who need pastoral contact, sacramental care or practical support. Many are not reached through digital channels.

Planning tension The campaign must use trusted personal networks, protect health and contact information, offer non-digital routes and ensure that enquiries receive a real response.

9 Sacramental Preparation Enrolment

Situation Families receive fragmented information about catechism, baptism, confirmation or marriage preparation. Late enquiries create pressure for families and pastoral teams.

Planning tension The campaign should clarify requirements and dates while preserving welcome. It must distinguish administrative information from pastoral accompaniment.

10 Community Relief Appeal

Situation A flood, fire or other local emergency has created immediate need. The Church wants to coordinate verified requests, volunteers and donations while rumours and unverified appeals circulate.

Planning tension The campaign must balance speed with verification, safeguard vulnerable persons, publish transparent instructions and update information when needs change.

Designing a local campaign

A group may propose another campaign when the need is concrete and the scope is suitable for the exercise. It should name the institution, the people affected, the present communication problem and the reason a coordinated campaign may help. A vague intention such as improve social media is not sufficient. A usable brief describes a pastoral situation in which people need to understand, trust, respond, participate or belong.

Selecting the brief

Choose	Campaign	Mission fit	Feasibility
☐	Youth Faith Encounter		
☐	Vocation Discernment Month		

Choose	Campaign	Mission fit	Feasibility
☐	Parish Synodal Listening		
☐	Family Digital Wellness		
☐	Care for Creation Action Week		
☐	Parish Feast Welcome Campaign		
☐	Responding to Local Misinformation		
☐	Care for Elderly and Homebound Persons		
☐	Sacramental Preparation Enrolment		
☐	Community Relief Appeal		
☐	Local campaign		

Use mission fit to ask whether the campaign addresses a genuine pastoral need. Use feasibility to ask whether a small team could produce a credible plan with available time, access and resources.

Campaign foundation

Agree on the situation before discussing content. The group should be able to state what is happening, whom it affects and why communication belongs within the response.

Campaign selected

Pastoral situation

Describe the present condition without proposing a solution.

Evidence and assumptions

What do we know? What are we assuming? What must be checked?

Pastoral need

What do people need to understand, experience or be enabled to do?

Mission statement

Complete: Through this campaign, our community will serve...

Audience and objective

Choose one primary audience. Other people may support or influence the campaign, but a plan that tries to speak equally to everyone usually becomes general and weak.

Primary audience

Name a recognisable group rather than the general public.

Their present relationship to the issue or community

One insight that should shape the campaign

Consider motivation, trust, access, language, habits, fear, hope or a practical barrier.

Communication objective

Complete: By the end of the campaign, the primary audience will...

Pastoral outcome

What human, relational or community good should the communication support?

Core message and response

The core message is the central meaning that should remain recognisable across the campaign. It is not necessarily the final slogan. Different media may express it in different language.

Core message in one sentence

Write for the audience. Preserve truth, clarity and pastoral tone.

Primary call to action

What is the next meaningful and realistic response?

Three facts that must remain consistent

Tone and voice

How should the communication sound? What tone would damage trust?

Message test Can a person understand the main meaning without Church jargon? Does the call to action make sense at this stage of the relationship? Are we promising only what the ministry can responsibly offer?

Audience journey

Map the movement that the campaign should support. Not every campaign requires equal attention at all seven stages, but the group should notice where the audience begins and what must happen next.

Stage	Audience question or barrier	Communication task	Next action
Notice			
Understand			
Trust			
Respond			
Participate			
Belong			
Share			

Where does the primary audience probably enter this journey

The transition most likely to fail

Explain what the campaign must do to support this transition.

Cross media plan

Select only the channels that perform necessary work. Give each one a distinct function and connect it with the next step. Include personal, embodied or local communication where it serves the audience.

Stage	Channel	Function	Content or experience	Next action	Owner

Authoritative source of final information

Where will corrected and complete information be maintained?

Connection test

Choose two rows and explain exactly how a person moves from one to the other.

Management measurement and pitch

A campaign becomes credible when responsibility, safeguards and evaluation are named before production begins. Complete this page before preparing the pitch.

Responsibility	Named person or team	First action
Campaign coordinator		
Message and fact approval		
Audience response and enquiries		
Consent privacy and safeguarding		
Accessibility check		
Follow up		

One media indicator

For example reach, page visits, enquiries or registrations.

One pastoral outcome

For example new participation, return engagement, requests for accompaniment or inclusion of a previously missed group.

Ninety second pitch

Explain the need, audience, objective, message, journey, distinctive media roles and the outcome you will measure.

Listening and audience research

Return to the assumptions recorded in Worksheet 1. Decide how the team will listen before finalising the plan. Research should be proportionate to the campaign, but it should include people from the intended audience whenever possible.

Method	Whom or what	Question	Owner and date
Short conversations or interviews			
Existing participation or enquiry records			
Observation of present channels			
Consultation with pastoral workers			
Accessibility or language consultation			

What we learned that changes the plan

Whose perspective is still missing

Communication audit and resource inventory

Study the existing environment before creating new accounts or requesting new equipment. The campaign may already have access to trusted people, established gatherings and underused channels.

Area	Existing resource	Strength or weakness	Use in this campaign
Personal and community networks			
Liturgical and institutional communication			
Print and public display			
Messaging and social channels			
Website email and databases			
Photography audio and video			
Local news and partner institutions			

Important resource that is missing

New platform or purchase that is not necessary

Message architecture and content

Develop the core message into a small message system. Each supporting message should answer a real audience question and lead towards the campaign objective.

Message role	Audience question answered	Approved expression
Central promise or invitation		
Why this matters		
What will happen		
Why this source can be trusted		
How to respond		
What follows participation		

Words images or claims to avoid

Consider exaggeration, stigma, pressure, stereotypes, unclear Church language or promises the ministry cannot fulfil.

Story or testimony opportunity

Whose experience may help, what permission is required and how will dignity be protected?

Editorial calendar

Sequence the campaign so that communication introduces, deepens, invites, reminds, accompanies and follows up. Do not publish every item on the same day.

Date or phase	Audience stage	Item	Channel	Owner	Status

Event day or response period communication

Follow up sequence

Team workflow and approval

Assign responsibility to named people. Approval should be proportionate to the risk and sensitivity of the content. The team should know where current files and verified facts are stored.

Task	Responsible	Approver or adviser	Deadline
Campaign coordination			
Pastoral and doctrinal review			
Writing and translation			
Design photography or video			
Website and registration			
Publishing and distribution			
Replies and pastoral response			
Records evaluation and archive			

Single location for approved files and facts

Procedure when a date fact or decision changes

Ethics safeguarding and accessibility

Use the checklist as a conversation, not as a mechanical declaration. Any item marked not yet requires an owner and action before publication.

Check	Yes	Not yet	Owner and action
Facts names dates quotations and links have been verified	☐	☐	
The campaign distinguishes official information from opinion or testimony	☐	☐	
Consent is recorded for identifiable stories photographs audio and video	☐	☐	
Children and vulnerable persons are protected according to safeguarding policy	☐	☐	
Sensitive pastoral health financial and contact information is minimised and protected	☐	☐	
People can decline publicity or participation without pressure	☐	☐	
Images and language avoid stereotypes stigma manipulation and exaggerated promises	☐	☐	
Videos include captions and important images have accompanying text	☐	☐	
Webpages forms and links work on mobile devices and remain readable	☐	☐	
A non digital route exists where the audience requires it	☐	☐	
Language translation and cultural mediation have been considered	☐	☐	
Any use of generative artificial intelligence is reviewed for accuracy rights dignity and disclosure	☐	☐	

Resources budget and feasibility

A responsible plan respects the people who will carry it. Include volunteer time, transport, translation, accessibility, equipment, licences, printing, connectivity and follow-up costs rather than counting only visible production expenses.

Resource	Already available	Need	Estimated cost	Decision
Total budget and source 				

Work that requires professional competence

Workload or deadline that should be reduced

Risk correction and response

Anticipate failures that could harm people, trust or the campaign objective. The purpose is not to imagine every disaster. It is to prepare for the most credible risks and to know who can act.

Risk	Prevention	Immediate response	Decision owner
Incorrect or changing information			
Low response or wrong audience			
Negative comments or misinformation			
Privacy consent or safeguarding concern			
Technical failure or inaccessible link			
Volunteer absence or delayed production			

Correction statement template

State what was wrong, give the correct information, apologise where appropriate and direct people to the authoritative source.

Measurement learning and final canvas

Measure each stage according to the work it was expected to perform. Media indicators show how communication travelled. Pastoral outcomes show whether the campaign supported the mission.

Stage	Indicator	Evidence source	What we will learn
Notice			
Understand			
Trust			
Respond			
Participate			
Belong			
Share			

Evaluation meeting date participants and evidence required

Decision after evaluation

What might the team continue, change, stop or investigate?

Final campaign canvas

Use this page to present the complete logic of the campaign. Every statement should be consistent with the detailed worksheets.

Pastoral need 	Mission and objective
Primary audience and insight 	Core message and action
Audience journey 	Distinct media roles
Management and safeguards 	Measurement and pastoral outcome
Campaign period and resources 	Follow up and next relationship

Campaign pitch and peer review

The pitch should explain the campaign as a chain of decisions. It should not become a list of platforms. A listener should understand the pastoral need, the people, the intended movement, the role of the media and the result that will be examined.

Time	Pitch task	Speaker or note
0 to 15 seconds	Name the situation audience and mission	
15 to 35 seconds	State the objective core message and action	
35 to 65 seconds	Explain the audience journey and distinctive media roles	
65 to 80 seconds	Name responsibility safeguards and authoritative source	
80 to 90 seconds	State the pastoral outcome and evidence	

Peer review

Area	Evidence	Clear	Partial	Revise	Comment
Mission fit	The campaign responds to a clear pastoral need	☐	☐	☐	
Audience clarity	A primary audience and useful insight are evident	☐	☐	☐	
Message	The message and action are clear truthful and appropriate	☐	☐	☐	
Convergence	Each medium performs distinct connected work	☐	☐	☐	
Feasibility	Responsibilities resources and timing are realistic	☐	☐	☐	
Pastoral integrity	Dignity safeguarding accessibility and follow up are present	☐	☐	☐	
Evaluation	Measures connect media activity with pastoral outcome	☐	☐	☐	

One strength to retain

One question that could improve the plan

One revision to make next

Facilitator delivery guide

Use the live session to make participants decide, not merely discuss. The handbook contains a complete development route, but the forty-five-minute class should concentrate on the campaign logic and the quality of the transitions.

Time	Activity	Facilitator action
0 to 5 minutes	Opening exposition	Recall the Five Ms and the audience journey. Explain the campaign brief and the six decisions.
5 to 8 minutes	Choose the campaign	Assign or approve briefs. Form small teams and name a recorder and presenter.
8 to 28 minutes	Core planning	Teams complete Worksheets 1 to 5. Announce time checks and challenge platform-first thinking.
28 to 33 minutes	Management and pitch	Teams complete Worksheet 6 and prepare the ninety-second explanation.
33 to 42 minutes	Campaign presentations	Hear several pitches. Use peer review selectively, focusing on one strength and one question.
42 to 45 minutes	Synthesis	Ask what changed when the team began with mission and audience rather than content. Explain the extended route.

Facilitator cue During group work, ask questions instead of supplying the plan. Useful interventions include: *Whose response matters first? What should this medium do that the others cannot? What happens after a person replies? Who will answer? What will you measure besides visibility?*

Facilitator cue If time permits only two presentations, ask the remaining groups to exchange canvases and give written peer feedback. The extended worksheets can become an assignment or the basis for a later production lab.

Final synthesis

Pastoral media planning begins with attention to a real situation. The team listens, names the need, defines the mission and identifies the people whose response matters. It then forms a message, chooses a realistic action and designs a journey in which different media perform suitable work. Management gives that journey people, timing, resources, verification, approval, care and follow-up. Measurement returns the team to the mission and asks what the communication actually enabled.

The completed plan is therefore more than a production list. It is an accountable pastoral proposal. It explains why the Church should communicate, whom she hopes to serve, what relationship the campaign should create, how the media will cooperate and how the community will learn from the result. The final test remains the one established throughout these sessions: mission decides the

message, the message guides the media, and the media work together so that communication can lead towards encounter, participation and communion.

Personal commitment

Before closing the session, complete this sentence in one clear line. The commitment should name a concrete practice that you will carry into your future pastoral communication.

One commitment I will carry into my future pastoral communication is:

References for further study

Pontifical Commission for Social Communications, *Communio et Progressio*, 1971. Provides the theological foundation for communication as service to truth, relationship, human unity and communion. [Official text](#)

Pontifical Council for Social Communications, *Aetatis Novae*, 1992. Calls for communication to be integrated into pastoral planning and includes practical guidance for needs assessment, communication audit, resource inventory and pastoral communication plans. [Official text](#)

Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guide to the Training of Future Priests concerning the Instruments of Social Communication*, 1986. Supports communication formation that combines critical understanding, knowledge of audiences and media languages, and practical experience. [Official text](#)

Dicastery for Communication, *Towards Full Presence*, 2023. Emphasises listening, community, participation and the relationship between digital communication and embodied encounter. [Official text](#)