

Parish Revitalization Program Grant

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada Foundation

Overview

The Parish Revitalization Program (PRP) grant is designed to stimulate parishes to begin new ministries. Grants from \$500 to \$2000 may be provided to parishes as an incentive to begin internal and external programs oriented to strengthen their parish.

Most parishes have an idea, something that the priest or the parish council or a collection of parishioners have discussed but never quite pulled together. Perhaps lack of funds was a barrier. Perhaps encouragement was needed. Some parishes assuming “we could never do that” even lack a good set of ideas. It is hoped that the Parish Revitalization Program grant can, at least in small part, begin to overcome these barriers.

This initiative can work in the following ways to help breathe life into parishes:

- Stimulated by the prospect of this modest grant a parish can begin a conversation on “what we can do to become a more vibrant parish – to get ‘unstuck’”.
- Parishes receiving grants will be *required* to take action – they will begin to “turn the crank” on otherwise static parish situations.
- Some parishes may become inspired to enact their project without PRP grants -- using internal or parishioner funds.
- Feedback -- “lessons learned” harvested from parishes receiving grants -- can be used to stimulate new efforts in other parishes that had decided to *watch from the sidelines*.

Grant Process

UOCCF Board of Directors will consider completed application forms, including a budget of your parish’s proposed revitalization program. For assistance in completing the grant application please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Peter Kondra 905 546 6356.

Qualifications of Applicant Parishes

Grants are provided only to UOCC parishes in good standing.

Administration of the Grant Program

Parishes receiving grants will be expected to provide interim and final reports as requested. This will be defined based on application proposal at the time of the grant.

Payment terms will be discussed after selection.

Grants are to be used for ministry activities that will become part of parish life. A parish can be starting something new or strengthening something already in existence. The new activities/ministries that are the object of the grant can fall into various parish areas -- charitable outreach, adult education, worship, evangelization, campus outreach. No legitimate area of healthy, vibrant parish life is, per se, out of bounds for consideration.

Parishes are required to do *real ‘work’* as part of the grant. The grants are not simply cash awards to support struggling parishes. The grants provide financial incentive to stimulate action and effort on the part of parishes that desire to begin a cycle of renewed vibrancy.

Grant Criteria

Grants will not be made for facilities improvements or capital expenditures.

The following are the criteria used for selecting grants:

Impact

What is the probable impact of the grant on the parish? Does it address a key issue or need of the parish? Does the proposed action shore up a weakness or build upon strength?

Breadth of involvement

Does this grant engage a broad cross section of the parish? Will this be undertaken by 2-3 persons, leaving the remainder of the parish oblivious to the effort?

Probability of effective execution

How effective is your plan? Convince the Foundation that you can and will do what you say you will do and, having done what you've said, that there is a reasonable possibility of a desirable outcome.

Parish need

Parishes with abundant resources will have a lower probability of receiving an award than parishes that are in difficult financial condition. Nonetheless, strong, financially healthy parishes are not exempt. This is one criterion among many.

Transferability/ Pass it forward

How relevant and transferable is this to other parishes? Ideas/proposals that offer a chance to export learning to other parishes will be viewed as desirable. Look for projects that can be shared with others. Also preferred are projects that build tools so that others can benefit. Consider new ideas or existing activities done in a better way.

Short term progress

Since the size of the grant(s) is modest the projects they engender should also be reasonable. Efforts should hopefully bear initial fruit in 6 to 18 months. We don't want to wait 5 years to share some good news about your effort.

Matching funds

Applications in which parishes demonstrate the ability to multiply the impact of this grant by perhaps receiving a matching donation from a donor, parish itself or local organization will be viewed favorably.

Quality effort/Creativity

We're simply not funding 'business as usual'. What you do should be exemplary in some way. Stand out – within the landscape of your typical parish effort or among others as a 'top notch' effort.

More Information

If desired you may contact **Peter Kondra**, UOCCF Board member, responsible for this initiative at **905 546 6356** or smlmusk@gmail.com who will be happy to provide more information about the parish revitalization grants, offer assistance in defining your project, filling out the application and offer suggestions for potential grant worthy projects.

Parish Revitalization Program Grant Starter Ideas

The following is a list of ideas for worthy parish projects that could be boosted by a Parish Revitalization program grant. Surely your ideas are better!

- Bookstore and information booth for regional summer fairs
- Feed the hungry in the neighborhood via the creation of raised "enabling gardening beds" and raising of food
- Develop, record and/or place radio spots about the Orthodox faith
- Develop classes and welcome materials to strengthen the parish's ability to communicate the orthodox faith and worship to those who enter their doors
- Series of orthodox community outreach workshops on a variety of topics with various speakers
- Liturgical arts workshop for orthodox youth
- Small group ministry pilot project
- Orthodox exposure – “The Mission and Message of the Church”: mall kiosk
- After school neighborhood ESL class or other homework assistance including reading, math and sports activities
- A parish stewardship education program
- Conduct a series of leadership exercises designed to *face forward*. Complete the parish development inventory. Conduct parish revitalization workshop with small group discussions addressing ‘*What are the important qualities we want to develop in our parish in the next 5 or 10 years?*’ ‘*What do we value?*’ ‘*Do we live what we say we value?*’) Survey parish neighbors, “Who are we?” and “What do you know about us?”
- Education project - Begin/ reinvigorate a parish adult education effort. Identify key segments of parish population (seniors, parents, teens etc.) and determine what their formational status and needs really are. *Offer something that fits one or more target groups.*
- Bible study -- perhaps in neighborhoods where parishioners live
- Establish a parish library or bookstore
- Sponsor a personal budgeting training class designed to help young families and invite the neighbors
- Begin an active local charitable effort – one that involves a commitment of time from parishioners, perhaps a regular monthly charitable meal
- “Saints in Strollers” group for mothers with toddlers to attend church and meet weekly

Additional On Line Resources for Parish Revitalization and Growth

- http://uocc.ca/pdf/missions/Missions_Resource_Guide.2003.pdf
- <http://oca.org/resource-handbook/parishdevelopment>
- http://www.antiochian.org/parish_resources
- <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach>
- http://ancientfaith.com/podcasts/illuminedheart/turning_around_an_orthodox_parish
- http://ancientfaith.com/podcasts/illuminedheart/is_your_parish_dead_or_alive
- <https://www.ocadwpa.org/pardev.html>