

# Christmas Carol Festival: A New Way to Reach Inactive Catholics

## 1. What are the goals?

“Christmas Carol Festival” (CCF) is an annual evangelization project that encourages parishes, families or groups to use the rich tradition of religious Christmas carols and hymns:

- to reach out to inactive Catholics and the unchurched.
- to help people encounter Jesus within the community of the Catholic Church through invitations to sing and pray at pre-Christmas festivals (in non-liturgical settings, so as to preserve Advent time for active Catholics)
- to invite participants to reconnect with the Catholic Church through Christmas Mass, follow-up events at a local parish in January, and beyond.

In 2010, "Christmas Carol Festival" won the NCCL "New Wineskins Award" (Diocese) for extraordinary achievement in the New Evangelization and Catechesis.

## 2. What are the major elements or components?

### **Resources developed:**

Website: <http://www.christmascarolfestival.com/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ChristmasCarolFestival2007>

Print and CD materials: Available at <http://www.catholic-evangelizer.com> or

*Christmas Carol Festival Guidebook (Book, 2013 revised)*

[http://www.amazon.com/Christmas-Carol-Festival-Guidebook-Catholics/dp/1490900659/ref=sr\\_1\\_sc\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1382032494&sr=8-1-spell&keywords=christmas+carol+festival+guidebook](http://www.amazon.com/Christmas-Carol-Festival-Guidebook-Catholics/dp/1490900659/ref=sr_1_sc_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1382032494&sr=8-1-spell&keywords=christmas+carol+festival+guidebook)

*Christmas Carol Festival: Tools for Success (CD)*

*When You Notice the Empty Pews: Simple Ways to Share Our Faith (Book, 2008)*

*Sharing the Faith that You Love: Four Simple Ways to Participate in the New Evangelization (Book, Word Among Us Press, 2014)*

### **Articles:**

**“Putting Christ Back Into Christmas Carols” 2009** <http://www.zenit.org/article-27839?l=english>

**“‘Christmas Carol Festival’ Receives Prestigious Award” 2010**  
<http://www.trentonmonitor.com/main.asp?Search=1&ArticleID=901&SectionID=4&SubSectionID=36&S=1>

**“Reconnecting with Christmas” 2010**  
<http://www.trentonmonitor.com/main.asp?Search=1&ArticleID=1836&SectionID=5&SubSectionID=42&S=>

**“‘Joy to World’ Christmas Carol Festivals provide a fun, meaningful way to prepare for the season” 2011**  
[www.trentonmonitor.com/m/Articles.aspx?ArticleID=2943](http://www.trentonmonitor.com/m/Articles.aspx?ArticleID=2943)

**“‘O Come, All Ye Faithful’ - Parishes see Christmas Carol Festivals as way to evangelize, build community” 2012**  
<http://www.trentonmonitor.com/main.asp?SectionID=4&subsectionID=142&articleID=4454>

### **Videos:**

**Advent Fire and Symbols of Christmas Catholic Corner TV Show** (29 mins.)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aaxBrw44vg>

**“Christmas Carol Festival” Catholic Corner TV Show** (29 mins.)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J\\_3GchH6V4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_3GchH6V4)

**Award Winning Christmas Carol Festival: Introduction** (9 mins.)  
Let Christmas Carols shine a light on the Good News of God's love. Use carols as the centerpiece of an evangelizing Christmas Carol Festival. Watch an overview of the whole festival process, winner of the NCCL 2010 New Wineskins Award. Includes clips from several parishes that have sponsored a festival.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ss0WfSxv5n0>

3. Who was involved in the design and implementation?

Therese and John Boucher

Therese: Adult Religious Educator, Author, and Speaker

John: Catholic Evangelization Consultant, Trainer & Writer.  
Former Director/Associate Director of Evangelization, Diocese of Trenton

Contact Phone and Email:

Therese, 774-823-3613, [tmfboucher@gmail.com](mailto:tmfboucher@gmail.com)

John, 774-823-3613, [boucherjohn@hotmail.com](mailto:boucherjohn@hotmail.com)

4. What were the costs involved? (Not including speaker stipends, refreshments or site fees under Diocesan subsidy)

- + "Christmas Carol Festival Training Workshop" (\$20/person)
- + *Christmas Carol Festival Guidebook* (\$14.00)
- + *Christmas Carol Festival: Tools for Success*, CD (\$13.00)

5. What were the evaluation results?

Started in the Trenton Diocese in 2007, "Christmas Carol Festival" (CCF) began with three parishes and about 350 participants. It has spread to 21 parishes in New Jersey, with almost 6,000 participants each year.

Project is very successful at involving active parishioners in inviting their inactive Catholic and unchurched friends and relatives. It has twin impacts: proclamation of Christ and building of the Christian community. Participants are very enthusiastic.

Parish leaders evaluate process in writing annually, as well as in a group meeting each January. They do self-evaluations of their efforts and are supported to improve their efforts by our diocesan office. They make regular suggestions for improving annual training workshop and resources. Guidebook is revised every two years.