I. E. A Community Clergy Lunch Sponsored by the Staff of Robertaccio Funeral Home

Ideas Behind Our Program

During several informal discussions, our staff decided that we wanted our firm to host some type of activity that would benefit clergy members of our community and our funeral home and staff.

Our goal was to host an event that would demonstrate to area community clergy that our *Pursuit of Excellence Funeral Home* is an innovative and creative funeral home and staff. The event needed to be interesting and beneficial for them and would need to be an event they would want to attend.

In the beginning of May 2010 two staff members, David Savicki, CPC and Anthony LiCausi, CFSP,CPC decided that our funeral home should host an event that would *foster* an interaction of local community clergy with our funeral home and staff. Various options were discussed and it was decided that our staff would host:

A Community Clergy Lunch.

Creation of Our Staff's Program

We thought that this event should center on a free luncheon at a local upscale restaurant that would allow clergy to attend in a relaxed, informal and comfortable setting apart from a funeral home environment. A broad perspective of local community clergy from diverse denominations were invited. Over 60 clergy and their associates were invited.

Our staff designed the format and content of the lunch to provide distinct benefits for clergy to attend. Theses benefits included:

- I. An opportunity to meet and network with clergy from diverse and varied denominations
- II. An opportunity to meet and interact with new clergy who have recently become installed in the community.
- III. An opportunity for attending clergy to have their church featured on a DVD specifically created for them by our staff.
- IV. An opportunity to have an afternoon lunch with new and old colleagues in a relaxed setting overlooking the Great South Bay in our community.

Our staff became intently involved in this event for our funeral home. Both group activities and individual responsibilities became necessary for the creation and implementation of our *Community Clergy Lunch*.

The date was determined to be Tuesday, June 8th 2010 from 12 noon to 3pm.

The location and lunch menu at Lombardi's on the Bay Restaurant was arranged by Anthony LiCausi, CFSP, CPC and David Savicki, CFSP, CPC.

Invitations and an informational letter were prepared and sent to over 60 area clergy.

An attractive "welcoming" card with menu choices for each place setting was designed and produced by David Savicki. This card provided the menu choices for each attending clergy and concluded with a "thank you" from our staff for their attendance.

Nametags for all those attending were also created by David Savicki.

Patricia Vitale volunteered to take photographs at the lunch.

Our staff had discussions regarding the specific clergy to be invited to give the *invocation* and blessing for the meal. It was decided to invite Father Ed. Patricia Vitale personally invited him to give the invocation and he was delighted to assist us.

The agenda was prepared to provide a maximum of time for relaxed interactions among the clergy. Our staff wanted this lunch to be for the relaxation of the clergy and it was decided that any "self-serving" presentations for the benefit of the funeral home should be avoided. Our staff wanted to avoid any implications of self-interest on the part of our funeral home.

During one brainstorming session it was discussed that as a point of interest we should have a brief presentation to *highlight a worthy community organization*. It was decided that a most worthwhile and relevant organization would be our local hospice: **Brookhaven Hospice**.

Our staff drafted a letter to hospice to describe our Community Clergy Lunch and invite a hospice representative to join us and give a brief presentation focusing on their organization and how it helps members of the community. Anthony LiCausi personally delivered the letter to hospice and discussed our luncheon with their staff. The staff of Brookhaven Hospice was delighted to be featured at our Community Clergy Lunch as guest speakers and they provided two representatives to attend.

On the day of the luncheon, Anthony LiCausi, Patricia Vitale, David Savicki and Stanley Savicki attended and welcomed the guests upon arrival.

The basic format of the afternoon was:

Appetizers and wine were passed and offered upon arrival

Welcome and introductions of our staff by Anthony LiCausi

Personal clergy introductions by each clergy

Invocation and Blessing by Father Ed

Lunch service

Presentations by our guest speakers

Questions and answers for our guest speakers

Presentation and offer by David Savicki for our funeral home to produce a custom DVD for their church if desired.

Dessert

Conclusion and expressions of appreciation to clergy for attending

Our *Community Clergy Lunch* was attended by 28 people. The reaction of the community clergy who attended was exceptionally positive. Every person attending personally expressed their appreciation to our staff and acknowledged that it was an informative and enjoyable lunch.

Benefits Provided to the Clergy

Clergy of the community benefited in a variety of ways. They were able to meet and interact with individuals from a broad spectrum of religious denominations.

Those attending learned about Brookhaven Hospice and how hospice helps our community. Many were unaware of the bereavement support services offered by hospice to adults and children. They also had an opportunity to have their questions about hospice and hospice care answered by the staff.

Benefits to Hospice

By our staff selecting Brookhaven Hospice to be our guest speaker that afternoon; hospice was given an opportunity to provide information about their hospice and the services they provide. They were also given an opportunity to increase awareness of their hospice to over twenty local community clergy and churches. In appreciation of their presentations; our firm gave Brookhaven Hospice a contribution to sponsor TWO children for their *Camp Hope* children's bereavement care program.

Benefits to the Funeral Home

Our *Community Clergy Lunch* helped establish our funeral home and staff as an innovative and responsive funeral home in the community. Local clergy had an opportunity to meet our staff in a relaxed and comfortable setting and became more aware of our firm as a concerned and positive organization in the community.

Benefits to Our Staff

Our staff benefited from the opportunity to create and improve upon the concept of a community event for clergy. New ideas were discussed and implemented. On the day of our lunch; our staff was able to converse and interact with local clergy in an environment different that our regular interaction at the funeral home.

Conclusions

Our staff was extremely satisfied with the results of our simple *Community Clergy Lunch*. The enthusiasm and appreciation of those attending was very gratifying. The success of this community event provided satisfaction to our staff and a reaffirmation of the nature of *Pursuit of Excellence*.