



THE GIVEN INSTITUTE  
CATHOLIC YOUNG WOMEN'S  
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORKBOOK

NEVER DO THE WORK CARELESSLY BECAUSE YOU WISH TO HIDE YOUR GIFTS. REMEMBER, THAT WORK IS HIS. **YOU ARE HIS CO-WORKER. THEREFORE, HE DEPENDS ON YOU FOR THAT SPECIAL WORK.** DO THE WORK WITH HIM, AND THE WORK WILL BE DONE FOR HIM. THE TALENTS GOD HAS GIVEN YOU ARE NOT YOURS – THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO YOU FOR YOUR USE, FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. THERE CAN BE NO HALF-MEASURES IN THE WORK.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

## INTRODUCTION

Dear Participant,

We are delighted to welcome you into the 2026 GIVEN cohort. This workbook was designed to assist you in discerning and designing your GIVEN Action Plan. The Action Plan is your unique initiative to activate your God-given gifts in the Church and in the world. It helps you in answering the questions: **What do you see is your life’s mission? What moves you? What sets you on FIRE? What gives you life?** The answers to these questions are integral in discerning the Action Plan that God is calling you to develop through your participation in GIVEN.

A GIVEN Action Plan must meet the following criteria:

1. **Is a new initiative.** You are asked to propose a NEW initiative. It can be an extension, or growth, of a project you are already doing, with specific **new elements**, and offer something new for you and the community intended to serve. Ask yourself: *What is the new contribution that I will be adding to this initiative?*
2. **Beneficial to others.** Your Action Plan must be other-focused, in service to your family or another community. Ask yourself: *Is there a particular population, community, or need that I feel drawn to serve?*
3. **Will be realized within one year after Forum attendance.** The plan must be practical and realistic. We ask that as you pray, think, and design your Action Plan, consider your timeline and make goals that allow you to make significant progress towards its completion, even if the launch date is after the program ends.

Do not allow yourself to become discouraged! St. Elizabeth of the Trinity encourages us to erase the word “discouragement” from your dictionary of love.

Every Action Plan will be different because each one **reflects the unique desires** the Lord has placed on your heart. The tools in this handbook are here to support you as you bring your ideas to life. Do not be afraid to **think BIG, dream BIG, pray deeply.** Take note of your desires and your gifts, and shape an Action Plan that becomes a lasting gift of yourself to others.

**Your unique contribution is needed in the Church and in the world!**



# HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook is designed to be a **guide** you as you brainstorm, define, and plan for your Action Plan. It offers an overview of the process and helps you identify key steps needed for a successful launch.

It is not meant to be exhaustive or overwhelming. Instead, think of it as a flexible tool to support you in discovering how God is calling you to use your gifts.

The workbook is organized into sections to help you organize your ideas and details of your Action Plan. Areas covered are:

- Prayer
- Drafting your Action Plan
- Researching your idea
- Creating a timeline
- Working on SMART Goals
- Budget considerations
- Evaluation

**You do not need to complete every section.** Some parts may not apply to your Action Plan = **feel free to skip what isn't relevant.** If you feel stuck at any point, simply make note of it and discuss it with an Action Plan Strategist and your mentor during the mentoring year.

*NO ONE ELSE CAN GLORIFY GOD IN THE SAME WAY YOU CAN.*



# DRAFTING YOUR ACTION PLAN IDEA

IT IS WITH THE SMALLEST BRUSHES THAT THE ARTIST  
PAINTS THE MOST EXQUISITELY BEAUTIFUL PICTURES.

ST. ANDRÉ BESSETTE

At first, just coming up with an idea for an Action Plan may seem daunting. Be assured that the Holy Spirit will accompany you every step of the way! You will also have the opportunity to meet with an Action Plan Strategist who will help you think through your ideas and during the year of mentoring your mentor will support you in executing your Plan. Additionally, your **Fulfillment Stories** and the results of your **Clifton Strengths Assessment** will allow you to have a better understanding of your unique gifts and how to use them as you work to define and develop your Action Plan.

**What gifts or skills make you come alive**, times when you flourish, or activities that others have told you, “You’re so good at this!” (*e.g., hospitality, encouragement, creativity, analytics, relationship building, communication, etc.*)?

Jot these down.

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Look over your list and think about your family, your community, and your workplace. What is the general outcome when you use these gifts and skills? The more you think about this, the more you will recognize a thread in what motivates you and in how you already use your gifts.

Keeping your family, community, and professional life in mind, reflect on the following questions:

**What needs do you see in your family or community? How can you use your unique gifts to meet these needs?** Are there unmet needs in your parish, home, school, work or community at-large that your unique gifts can help address?

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**Are there any programs that are already responding to these needs?** If so, is there an additional initiative that you can add to a program already in place to supplement their efforts rather than recreating them? Perhaps you could create a follow-up program or develop an initiative that brings additional benefit to those being served?

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**Will you need help from others to bring this Action Plan to fruition?** Who are some of your most encouraging friends and prayer warriors you can enlist to help you pray about this idea? What practical support will you need and who has these gifts and might be able to help you?

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Once you have discerned your responses to these questions, use the space below to begin outlining your **Action Plan Proposal**. A completed sample and a template for the full proposal - due May 1<sup>st</sup> - can be found in Appendix A of this workbook.

TITLE OF YOUR ACTION PLAN	
What need do you see and what do you hope to accomplish? What is your vision? (This is the big picture.)	
Write the goal of your Action Plan	
What results will your Action Plan produce? Include numbers if you can.?	

# DRAFTING ACTION PLAN DETAILS

*IF ACCORDING TO TIMES AND NEEDS YOU SHOULD BE OBLIGED TO MAKE FRESH RULES AND CHANGE CURRENT THINGS, DO IT WITH PRUDENCE AND GOOD ADVICE. DO NOT LOSE HEART, EVEN IF YOU SHOULD DISCOVER THAT YOU LACK QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR THE WORK TO WHICH YOU ARE CALLED. **HE WHO CALLED YOU WILL NOT DESERT YOU**, BUT THE MOMENT YOU ARE IN NEED HE WILL STRETCH OUT HIS SAVING HAND.*

*ST. ANGELA MERICI*

Keeping detailed records of the planning stages of your Action Plan can help you visualize the necessary steps and also to keep track of any changes that may need to be made in its execution.

## TIMELINE

The first few months of planning are critical as you lay the foundation for the rest of the year. An Action Plan Strategist is available for you to provide guidance, expertise, and support as you craft your Action Plan. The Action Plan Strategist prepares you for the work that you will do with your Mentor during the Art of Accompaniment mentoring year.

### ESSENTIAL TASKS TO CONSIDER IN DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN:

- What goals do I want to set for each month?
- What resources, financial and other, do I need in order to accomplish these goals?
- Who can I invite to be part of my team?
- What would be some effective methods of evaluating my progress?

Draft a realistic timeline for your Action Plan, keeping in mind you have only **nine months** after the Forum to execute your Plan. These nine months intentionally suggest the gestation of your idea. Create a detailed list of your objectives and the tasks necessary for achieving them. Place them on your timeline according to the order in which they ought to be accomplished. **Be realistic about the amount of time needed for each task.**

## ACTION PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To begin, make sure that your Action Plan has clearly defined goals that will help you make your vision a reality.

Does your Plan have S.M.A.R.T. goals?

S	specific
M	measurable
A	attainable
R	relevant
T	time-bound

### MAKE YOUR GOAL LIKE THIS:

“Increase participation of youth in faith formation program by 5% by the end of the school year.”

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### NOT LIKE THIS:

“Get more kids to come to the youth program”

If your Action Plan aims to foster relationships between the women in your parish by hosting a day-long advent retreat for the women, then your goals might be:

1. Structure the event (date, venue, permission, sponsors, advertise, etc.)
2. Set event details (theme, schedule, speakers, meal, etc.)
3. Create teams of women to assist (prayer, hospitality, volunteers)
4. Host the event

List your goals below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Each goal needs to be broken down into objectives.** Define your objectives for each of your SMART goals by answering these questions:

- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Who?   | When? |
| What?  | Why?  |
| Where? | How?  |

In Appendix B, you will find a worksheet where you can break each of the above goals into objectives. Later you will turn these objectives into actionable tasks (see Appendix D). First, you need to clearly articulate your SMART goals and objectives. Of course, make sure to enlist your prayer team’s help.

## GLOSSARY OF ACTION PLAN TERMS

<b>Action Plan (AP)</b>	Outlines your project’s goals, objectives, specific tasks, and desired outcomes. It includes a timeline with deadlines and deliverables (Milestone Reports and the results of your AP).
<b>Goals</b>	End results that have one or more objectives to be achieved. They are observable and measurable end results that can seem abstract because of their broad scope.
<b>Objectives</b>	Specific steps that will help you reach your goals. Objectives are met by completing specific tasks.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Measure the actual achievement of your goal.
<b>Milestones</b>	Checkpoints during the planning phase of your project. Milestones divide your project timeline into phases marking successful completion of the deliverables of your AP. Milestones allow you to pace yourself and are points for communicating your progress.
<b>Deliverables</b>	Tangible products of your AP. Your Milestone Reports are deliverables and the successful execution and final launch of your AP will produce some good or service that is a deliverable.

*A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH.*  
*ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY*

# BUDGET

*PRAY AS THOUGH EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON GOD.  
WORK AS THOUGH EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON YOU.*

*ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA (CCC #2834)*

Not all Action Plans will require a budget, while others may include big expenses. Your initiative may be a new not-for-profit organization that will require some start-up funding, or it may be a service that you provide to your community with minimal expenses. As you think through the AP details and timeline, remember to consider what funding it will require for a successful launch.

For example, if your Action Plan is to organize a Speaker Series for Young Adults, you can think about:

- Will I need to rent a space to host it or can we use parish facilities?
- Whose permission do I need to get?
- How much will the speakers cost?
- Will I be selling tickets or will it be by donation?
- How will I promote it?

**Example of estimated costs:**

- Venue - \$500
- Speaker- \$1500
- Promotion - \$200

You can use the space below to draft an estimated budget, if applicable, for your Action Plan.

ITEM	ESTIMATED COST

**Don't be afraid to reach out to friends, family and organizations who may be willing to financially support your initiative!**

# COLLABORATION

*THERE ARE DIFFERENT FORMS OF SERVICE BUT THE SAME LORD; THERE ARE DIFFERENT WORKINGS BUT THE SAME GOD WHO PRODUCES ALL OF THEM IN EVERYONE.*

1 CORINTHIANS 12: 5-6

Collaboration does not necessarily mean you need a partner or team to complete your Action Plan. You should, however, consider what other gifts will help you bring your idea to life and enrich it.

**Will my vision require or benefit from the support of a larger entity or community?**

In the previous example of the speaker series for young adults, one of the first tasks is to contact the Diocesan Office of Young Adults. If the objective is to engage parishes to host, then it will require the support of those parishes and may also be enriched by the involvement of some young adult leaders.

EXAMPLE	
Action Plan	<b>Speaker series for Young Adults</b>
Collaborators	Diocesan Office of Young Adults Diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life Young adult leaders Pastors

**Consider:** Are there other leaders I could invite to support and promote my initiative? Are there other diocesan offices that I can contact to help promote this initiative? Are there any businesses or other organizations that might be interested in collaborating with me?

**Possible collaborators:**

NAME	FUNCTION

You can also identify potential advisors who have experience in the field of your Action Plan who might be willing to teach you best practices, share their expertise, and put you in contact with others.

As an added bonus, you can share ideas and brainstorm with friends and other GIVEN participants. You may even find another participant with a similar Action Plan with whom you can work and share support!

**In 2016, Anna Carter attended the GIVEN Forum with an idea and soon after leaving felt the Holy Spirit stirring a new calling. This new calling became what is now known as Eden Invitation. In 2019, Shannon Ochoa attended the GIVEN Forum and became Eden Invitation's co-founder through a similar stirring in her heart that was brought out in her Action Plan.**

**Prayer and discernment** are the most essential parts of your Action Plan. Every part of your plan and efforts should be entrusted to God.

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## EVALUATION

Evaluation is a key component of the planning process. You should evaluate your progress at each objective, at your milestones, and again when the project is complete. This will help you adapt in case of unforeseen difficulties and ultimately will help you serve others well.

A thorough evaluation of your progress will determine how well you are meeting your goals and objectives and whether your desired outcomes are being achieved. If there is an issue, you will identify the problem and adjust as necessary. Sometimes it is simply a matter of adding some missing task to achieve your objective, or you might realize that your desired outcome was unrealistic.

For example, if your desired outcome is to have 50 married couples attend your next event and you still have only 10 registered couples the week before, then you need to take this to prayer and evaluate whether and how you need to pivot.

*Is the Holy Spirit looking for a more intimate-sized group to bear the best fruit?  
Is He looking for more people to come and I need to add key tasks to the process, like reaching out to other partners who can help me advertise and promote this event more widely to increase attendance?*

You can review your desired outcomes, timeline and tasks to assess if you have to adjust in any way, add new tasks, confirm that all tasks were completed in order to accomplish your objective, etc. Milestones are pre-scheduled moments for evaluating your Action Plan's progress.

Evaluations give you the chance to optimize your efforts and fine-tune your goals and desired outcomes.

Examples of desired outcomes:

- 250 downloads of the e-book
- 30 couples registered one week ahead of event date
- Registration of organization's name
- Attendance of all confirmation students at retreat
- 10 people registered for first iconography course

**Write your desired outcomes below.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any adjustments you should make to your goals or objectives to ensure that your Action Plan obtains the desired outcomes you have set in your timeline?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Incorporating an evaluation plan using indicators to measure your progress helps you identify and make necessary modifications as you work your way through your Action Plan.

To further assist in your planning, complete the included templates found in the Appendices. We encourage you to discuss them with an Action Plan Strategist and then again with your mentor during the mentoring year.

The GIVEN Institute will accompany you throughout the year and your milestone report will help you share your progress with us as you work toward the successful execution and launch of your Action Plan. Your mentor will be available to provide support during that time.

# ACTION PLAN LAUNCH

An Action Plan is considered successfully executed when the plan proposal has moved from an idea or a concept to the pre-approved level of completion. The successful execution of an Action Plan can take different forms. For example:

1. **Proposal for an Advent retreat** - The date has been set and the necessary approvals given, funding has been obtained, and registration dates have been set, although the event will be held after GIVEN's April deadline.
2. **Proposal for the establishment of new organization** - Significant steps have been taken toward establishment. A detailed business plan was created, the organizational structure has been defined and 501(c)3 application submitted, sources of funding have been identified, a realistic timeline has been determined and approved by GIVEN.
3. **Proposal for a book** - The manuscript has been written, the target market has been identified, a publisher is being sought, but the book will be published at a later date.

## HOW DO YOU DETERMINE THE STATUS OF YOUR ACTION PLAN?

Here are some criteria to help you determine the status of your Action Plan:

<b>NOT-STARTED (NOT EXECUTED)</b>	No steps have been taken to move your AP from original concept (proposal) to completion.
<b>STARTED (PARTIALLY EXECUTED)</b>	Steps were taken but there was an interruption in moving the AP from its original concept to its launch.
<b>ART OF ACCOMPANIMENT YEAR SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED (FULLY EXECUTED)</b>	<p>Met AP goals and took the necessary steps to move from concept to reality.</p> <p>If the project launch is scheduled after the mentoring year (e.g., an event scheduled for later in the year), all of the pre-approved goals have been met and necessary logistics have been put in place.</p> <p>For establishing a new business, all pre-approved goals have been met.</p>
<b>ACTION PLAN SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED</b>	Your AP has been successfully launched when your vision has become a reality and the lives of people are being transformed, one loving act after another.



## APPENDIX A: ACTION PLAN (EXAMPLE)

<p>TITLE OF YOUR ACTION PLAN</p> <p><i>A short clear name that captures the heart of the initiative.</i></p>	<p><b>Contemplatio:</b> Day of Reflection for Young Married Couples</p>
<p>SUMMARY</p> <p><i>In 1-2 sentences, briefly describe the initiative and why it matters.</i></p>	<p>This initiative fosters a network of faith support for newly married couples, helping them grow spiritually and feel more at home in their parish community.</p>
<p>GOAL (PURPOSE)</p> <p><i>The specific need this initiative responds to and what it seeks to accomplish. This is the “why” behind your initiative - what you sense the Lord is inviting you to address.</i></p>	<p>Many young married couples no longer feel connected to existing young adult groups. This initiative creates a space for them to build community and deepen their faith alongside their spouses.</p>
<p>COMMUNITY SERVED</p> <p><i>Who will benefit from this initiative and how it meets their needs. Please share any geographic or demographic details that you’d like to highlight.</i></p>	<p>Couples married 1–5 years who are seeking faith-based community and support in early marriage.</p>
<p>EXPECTED IMPACT</p> <p><i>The measurable and meaningful outcomes of the initiative.</i></p> <p><b>Quantitative:</b> <i>What will you be able to count? e.g. # of participants</i></p> <p><b>Qualitative:</b> <i>What change or fruit do you hope to see?</i></p>	<p>20–25 couples attend the Day of Reflection, forming new relationships and experiencing a deeper sense of belonging in their parish.</p>
<p>EXECUTION STEPS</p> <p><i>Clear, actionable steps that outline how the initiative will be carried out. Please name any specific individual or institutional partners if applicable.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with diocesan offices and parish leaders</li> <li>• Secure a venue and speakers</li> <li>• Promote through parish communications and social media</li> <li>• Host the event and gather participant feedback</li> </ul>

Visit the [GIVEN Institute website](#) to read the stories of some GIVEN alumnae’s Action Plans.

# ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

<p>TITLE OF YOUR ACTION PLAN</p> <p><i>A short clear name that captures the heart of the initiative.</i></p>	
<p>SUMMARY</p> <p><i>In 1-2 sentences, briefly describe the initiative and why it matters.</i></p>	
<p>GOAL (PURPOSE)</p> <p><i>The specific need this initiative responds to and what it seeks to accomplish. This is the “why” behind your initiative - what you sense the Lord is inviting you to address.</i></p>	
<p>COMMUNITY SERVED</p> <p><i>Who will benefit from this initiative and how it meets their needs. Please share any geographic or demographic details that you’d like to highlight.</i></p>	
<p>EXPECTED IMPACT</p> <p><i>The measurable and meaningful outcomes of the initiative.</i></p> <p><b>Quantitative:</b> <i>What will you be able to count? e.g. # of participants</i></p> <p><b>Qualitative:</b> <i>What change or fruit do you hope to see?</i></p>	
<p>EXECUTION STEPS</p> <p><i>Clear, actionable steps that outline how the initiative will be carried out. Please name any specific individual or institutional partners if applicable.</i></p>	

This is the information to be submitted to GIVEN in the Action Plan Proposal before May 1. Action Plan title and summary will be included in the GIVEN 2026 Network Directory with headshots.

# APPENDIX B: GOALS & OBJECTIVES WORKSHEET

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>		
Use the goals you identified on page 8 of this workbook.		
GOAL #1:	NOTES	
OBJECTIVES		
GOAL #2		
OBJECTIVES		
GOAL #3		
OBJECTIVES		
GOAL #4		
OBJECTIVES		

## APPENDIX C: AP TIMELINE (EXAMPLE)

<b>ACTION PLAN: Summer Speaker series for young adults</b>				
<b>Time-frame</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Sept	Determine Event Dates	Check Diocesan YA online calendar for upcoming events	Diocesan Young Adult Office - calendar of events	Informally check with young adult leaders about best dates and times
Oct	Identify parishes to host Milestone report due	Contact parishes Check parish calendars Complete report	List of parishes in the diocese with young adult groups	Create or find parish directory with contact info and current pastor's name
Nov	Form Planning Committee		YA Diocesan Office/Committee Names of young adult leaders	
Dec	Develop program details	Survey YA leaders about YA needs Pick theme or topics Identify and invite speakers Draft outline of event		Is there any good series out there that could be adapted to our needs?
Jan	Contact host parishes	Make phone calls to parishes Speak with pastor if possible	Pastors	
Feb	Confirm details with the host parishes Milestone report due	Add event to each parish's calendar Complete report		ONGOING Contact each parish three weeks before event
March	Initiate Save-the-Date	Design save-the-date announcements	Graphic Designer	Funds to pay graphic designer
Apr	Confirm details with speakers Milestone report due	Call first speaker to confirm topic Complete report		ONGOING
May	Review planning details with volunteers	Create detailed event plan Meet with volunteers Send announcement for first parish's bulletin		
June	Launch Speaker Series	Host first lecture Prepare any handouts Get feedback		Create a survey for attendees and another for speakers

# AP TIMELINE TEMPLATE

<b>ACTION PLAN:</b>				
<b>Time-frame</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Sept				
Oct				
Nov				
Dec	Mid-year report due			
Jan				
Feb				
March				
Apr	Final report due			
May				
June	Successful execution of your Action Plan!			

# APPENDIX D: AP TASKS (EXAMPLE)

<b>ACTION PLAN: Retreat for young mothers</b>					
	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS	START	END	NOTES
OBJECTIVE - Select the venue					
Tasks:					
Identify venue options	Megan	Complete	09/08	09/20	
Visit venue	Me	In Progress			
Sign Contract	Fr. Tom	Not Started			
OBJECTIVE - Secure the speakers					
Tasks:					
Recruit speakers	Michelle	In Progress			
Speaker bios	Me	Not Started			
Create and send speaker packets	Me	Not Started			
Confirm speakers	Me	Not Started			
OBJECTIVE - Marketing					
Tasks:					
Create Flyers	Katie	Not Started			
Create social media strategy	Me	Not Started			
Call neighboring parishes	Me	Not Started			
OBJECTIVE - Recruit volunteers					
Tasks:					
Invite other women from parish					

# ACTION PLAN TASKS TEMPLATE

<b>ACTION PLAN:</b>					
	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS	START	END	NOTES
OBJECTIVE -					
Tasks:					
OBJECTIVE -					
Tasks:					
OBJECTIVE -					
Tasks:					
OBJECTIVE -					
Tasks:					

# APPENDIX E: DISCERNING GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR ACTION PLAN

## THE HOLY SPIRIT KNOWS WHAT YOU DO NOT YET KNOW – CONTINUING THE DISCERNMENT PROCESS

When we take on a project for God's glory and in service to the Church, we let the Holy Spirit operate beyond our own planning and strategies, and also through our planning and strategies. On our end, we have to pray and work (like the Benedictine motto, *Ora et Labora*). We also have to know that all the details and the measures of success are in God's hands.

The Holy Spirit already knows what will work and what the long-term fruits of our service will be. You can allow Him to lead you.

## HOW TO PRAY THROUGH WHAT COMES NEXT

*You can pray anywhere and anytime, but there are privileged places and times that can take your prayer deeper.*

- **Take time before or after Mass to pray near the tabernacle or spend some time in adoration before the monstrance.** In these moments, you can present the past to the Lord with gratitude and entrust yourself and all of the items on your “to do” list into His care. Remember, He wants to bring your Action Plan to fruition and He wants you to help Him accomplish it.
- **Pray before you begin working on your Action Plan.** You can raise your heart to God with a simple Hail Mary while sitting in front of your computer or between phone calls. Entrusting your work to Our Lady and asking her to present it to God is one way to allow your efforts to be blessed.
- **When things fall into place** – beyond what you could have imagined – take a moment to thank God for these graces and grow as a collaborator in God's plans.
- **When you face a difficulty, remember that He has called you for His own purpose** and for His glory. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (see Rom. 8:30-31) Your Action Plan should first of all serve Christ.

## BASIC TIPS FOR DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

When a new and unexpected idea comes to mind as you are developing your Action Plan, it could either be an inspiration from God, or simply a distraction! Pray about these Spirit-filled inspirations, especially those that “tug on your heart.” Ask yourself a few questions in prayer and listen for God’s answer.

*Would this help someone grow closer to God?*

*Does this lead me closer God and to become more like He created me to be?*

*Does it serve my original inspiration?*

*Does it use my unique talents and skills?*

*Is this a reasonable change to my original plan?*

*Is this something I could do as a follow-up after I launch my original Action Plan?*

You could write out a list of “pros” and “cons.” Look it over and see if making (or not making) this change to your plan seems more obviously not from God, or, in fact, more clearly from God. Don’t let the process be agonizing. Remain reasonable and calm. The Holy Spirit comes in a spirit of peace.





GIVEN

*The GIVEN Institute is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to activating the gifts of young adult women for the Catholic Church and the world. We inspire and equip the next generation of female leaders to “receive the gift that they are; realize the gifts they’ve been given; and respond with the gift that only they can give.” Through leadership training, faith formation, and dedicated mentoring, GIVEN forms women for mission and for life. We are faithful to the Magisterium and entrusted to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the New Evangelization.*

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