

# Italian Catholic Federation



101 Ways  
to Recruit  
and Retain  
Members

1. Host a membership drive after all masses.
2. Have a membership table available at all fundraisers and events.
3. Take part in parish ministry/organization fairs.
4. Hang the ICF poster on your parish and community bulletin boards with permission.
5. Have ICF brochures available at your parish.
6. Include a brochure at each place setting or a few on each table at fundraisers.
7. Speak about the ICF at Masses and fundraisers.
8. Publicize membership at local parishes where a branch is not established.
9. Encourage family members to join.
10. Encourage friends to join.
11. Encourage fellow parishioners to join.
12. Encourage co-workers to join.
13. Encourage neighbors to join.
14. Encourage your parish staff to join.
15. Encourage your Chaplain, Pastor and other members of the religious to join (offer to pay their dues).
16. Encourage families from the parish school and religious education programs to join.
17. Encourage RCIA candidates to join.
18. Encourage scholarship recipients and their families to join.
19. Add your children and grandchildren to your membership.
20. Include a blurb about our charities and programs in the parish bulletin.
21. Create a flyer for your branch and include as an insert in the parish bulletin.
22. Create a membership interest postcard that can either be mailed to a designated person or dropped in the collection basket at mass. Some parishes allow this and will forward postcards to a branch representative.
23. Get the ICF name out there by providing hospitality after masses (serve donuts and coffee, Italian cookies, etc).
24. Ask you parish to include the ICF in the ministry/organization booklet, if available.
25. Create a branch website and post the link on your parish, city and ICF websites.
26. Offer a free meal to prospective members (if your branch holds a luncheon or dinner at your meeting).
27. Advertise membership in local school newspapers (especially to high schools where your branch scholarship applications are sent).
28. Send prospective members invitations to an upcoming meeting or event.
29. Follow-up with prospective members.
30. Offer incentives to members who recruit new members.
31. Invite past members to reinstate their membership.
32. Waive the initiation fee for new members (branch absorbs the cost)
33. Raffle off an ICF Membership as a prize at parish events.
34. Advertise membership at local senior centers.
35. Advertise the ICF by participating in local parades and festivals.
36. Have branch shirts made to show your ICF spirit when attending parish and local events as a branch.
37. Create and maintain a branch program that people will want to be part of.
38. Be positive, respectful and welcoming.
39. Publicize member benefits (Hospitalization and AAA discounted membership)
40. Hold meetings at a realistic time.
41. Send dues notices out well in advance.
42. Include an upcoming branch calendar with the dues notices to share all of the exciting things members have to look forward to in the upcoming year.
43. Follow up with members who do not submit their dues.
44. Offer a free or discounted branch meal during the month of a member's birthday and/or service anniversary.

45. Celebrate Member Appreciation Month
46. Create a carpool program for members seeking transportation to meetings and events.
47. Keep members informed via The Bollettino, branch newsletters, website, phone trees, emails distribution lists and event postcards.
48. Offer activities that appeal to different audiences: families, seniors, couples and singles.
49. Create a member activity card that allows members to earn punches or stamps for their participation. At the end of the year, turn each completed card into a raffle ticket for prizes.
50. Create a calendar that includes a little bit of everything, including: religious and charitable activities, socials, fundraisers, outings and meetings.
51. Recognize members who assist with projects, events and in other areas.
52. Visit members who are unable to participate due to health or age.
53. Form a "sunshine committee." The chairperson is responsible for sending out birthday, get well, sympathy and thinking of you cards.
54. If a member cancels or does not pay their dues, have the person who sponsored them follow up to encourage retention.
55. When a member cancels, seek feedback on why they left to ensure that the issue (if ICF related) is corrected.
56. Keep meetings interesting. Offer programs that will attract members to attend. Consider welcoming a guest speaker, having a cooking demonstration or enjoying an activity such as Bingo, Pedro or other games.
57. Offer children's activities at meetings and events. Ask teenage members or the local youth group to coordinate the activities.
58. Form a youth program on the branch and district levels.
59. Offer and advertise children's prizes at events.
60. Have children's activities available at events (arts & crafts, games, etc).
61. Start a buddy system. When a member joins, appoint a buddy to act as their branch concierge for the first year or two.
62. Make parish recommendations to the Field Operations Director to explore expansion opportunities.
63. Help promote membership in parishes where a local branch is being formed.
64. If the parish allows, hang a small ICF bulletin board in a public area.
65. Create an ICF Facebook page for your branch and district to promote events, meetings and membership to your Facebook friends. Setup a Twitter account for the same purpose.
66. Advertise your branch in local festival souvenir books (similar to your convention souvenir book ad).
67. Order/make inexpensive handouts to distribute at membership drives and festivals (pens, fans, business cards with candy attached, recipe cards etc).
68. Make an ICF poster board to highlight the organization and display at membership drives.
69. Make prospective/new members feel welcome from day one. You only have once chance to make a great first impression.
70. Have an interest sheet available at membership drives and events as well as applications.
71. Offer a prize to the member who recruits the most new members.
72. Keep members informed of upcoming district activities to encourage participation.
73. Appoint a Branch Membership Chairperson who oversees the yearly membership campaign, works with the Financial Secretary to follow up on membership data and retention and provides a report at each meeting.
74. On the district level, appoint a District Membership Chairperson who works with each of the Branch Membership Chairpersons and provides a report at each district meeting.
75. Honor deceased members by reciting the "Farewell to a Member" at their Rosary or funeral with permission from the family.
76. Set yearly goals for new memberships and members retained. Branches who set goals are more likely to achieve them.
77. Publicize your branch/district in the diocesan newspaper.

78. Post recorded segments of your events on YouTube.
79. Remember names...as much as possible.
80. Address member's concerns immediately and in an appropriate manner. Seek advice from your Deputy or the Central Council if needed.
81. Notify the Membership Committee of your success stories, so they can be shared with other branches.
82. Host an "orientation of new members" and share the structure of the organization, view the website, provide printed materials and have a Q&A with leaders of the branch.
83. Introduce new members to existing members and seat them with those who will make them feel welcome.
84. Sponsor events with other organizations. Working together will may lead to members wanting to join each other's organizations.
85. Offer assistance at the parish school with field trips, holiday parties and other activities. Parents can get to know the ICF members this way.
86. If funds allow, provide a Catholic school scholarship to a student who is a member of the ICF.
87. Advertise the ICF on your cable bulletin station.
88. Send a copy of the Bollettino to people who may be interested in joining.
89. Recognize members by choosing one each month to share their family's heritage story.
90. Say yes, when a member asks to help. Feeling unwanted or not needed is a quick way for a member to reconsider their membership.
91. Have an attendance raffle the end of your meeting to encourage members to stay until the end. The more time spent at a meeting the more one will get to know the ICF.
92. Sponsor a little league or CYO team. Placing the ICF name and logo on a jersey is great PR.
93. Form a team with your fellow members and join a local bowling, bocce, baseball or other sport program. If possible, wear the ICF name on your uniform.
94. Seek feedback from members. Ask what activities they would like to have on the calendar.
95. Highlight your branch on a local radio station. Some stations will provide a quick announcement at no charge to organizations.
96. Offer a member discount at fundraisers.
97. Give projects to the children in your branch (leading the prayer, federation salute, Pledge of Allegiance, collecting dinner tickets, etc).
98. Encourage children to take part in the ICF pen-pal program.
99. Purchase ad space on the back of your church bulletin to advertise the branch.
100. Sponsor Italian cooking classes and invite members of the parish to attend.
101. Read the "Membership Message" in The Bollettino for additional membership tips.

*A special note of thanks to the branches,  
districts and individual members who  
submitted suggestions for this guide.*

*The Membership Committee encourages you  
to execute some of these ideas and wishes  
your branch and district much success.*

*If you need help setting up a membership drive,  
planning a member appreciation event or  
following up with members who have not paid  
their dues, the committee's email address is  
membership@icf.org. The committee may also  
be contacted by calling the ICF office.*