

Charlotte/Greece/Hilton Parishes Evangelization Team

September 4, 2024

Notes

Present: **Holy Cross/Our Mother of Sorrows:** John Owens, **St. John the Evangelist:** Marianne Katz, Dominick Zarcone, **St. Lawrence:** Karen Bunker, **St. Leo the Great:** Cindy Craner (for Joan Rohr), **St. Mark:** Carolyn DelVecchio, **Facilitator/link to the Pastoral Planning Task Force:** Karen Rinefierd

Excused: **St. Charles Borromeo:** Rose Marie Lombard, **St. Lawrence:** Patricia Urbinelli, **St. Leo the Great:** Joan Rohr

Purpose of this group: to share parish evangelization best practices, to design and implement shared evangelization projects

Target audiences:

1. Members of our parishes—helping them deepen their relationship with God.
2. Members of our parishes—helping them talk to others about their faith without judging or criticizing.
3. Members of our parishes who pulled back during Covid and those no longer participating.

Opening prayer: James 2:1-5; intercessory prayers, the Lord's Prayer

Continued work on evangelization priorities/actions for the fall

Publish Digital Library

- Brendan Parker has it up on the Roc Catholics Northwest website. He created a format allowing people to sort by format, cost, and intended audience. It will be advertised through parish bulletins on September 8-9.
- Other ideas for publicity
 - Through email blasts and social media for parents in our two schools and through faith formation, and to teens through youth ministry.
 - Ask Mike Latona (a local parishioner and reporter at the *Catholic Courier*) to encourage the diocesan newspaper to have an article about this resource.
 - Publish again in bulletins when there are lulls for parish or other Roc Catholics Northwest news.
 - Have a poster board (foam board on an easel) at parish coffee hours.
- Karen R. distributed copies of a spreadsheet with all the resources that have already been suggested by others. We can use this to decide which ones to add later on.

Share information about each parish's Bible Studies

- We still need to check if St. Mark's has a scripture study. If one is starting later this fall, we can add that information later on. [Since the meeting, we've received information from St. Mark's.] We want to get bible study opportunities on the Roc Catholics Northwest website as soon as possible.
- Karen Bunker will be our central person to coordinate bible study information.
- Karen Rinefierd will run the draft past bible study parish contacts and then publish the information on the Roc Catholics Northwest website.
- It would be good to advertise through parish email blasts and social media, too, if possible.

Advent flyer

- On 10/1 Karen R. will reach out to all those at the parishes who have contributed in the past.
- Information needs to be received by Marianne by 10/16 so she has time to create the flyer.

Develop and publish a list of retreat opportunities beyond the 7 parishes

- We want to create an informational PDF: why someone would want to go on a retreat, description of different kinds of retreats.
- We plan links to local retreat sites (Mercy Prayer Center, Notre Dame Retreat House, Mt. Irenaeus) and Cursillo.
- We need to gather the names/contact information for local contacts for parish retreats at Notre Dame Retreat House.
- Publish this information early in 2025?
- Since Rose Marie is not at this meeting, we will discuss this more on 9/17.

Answer “where did you find God today” through faith sharing at parish committee meetings

- We need to create an information sheet explaining why it is valuable to do this (as part of becoming better at sharing our faith with others)
- It would be helpful for pastoral leaders to encourage their committees to start meetings this way. As the 7-parish Evangelization Team, we can pilot this action at any committees where we are members.
- We will discuss this action more on 9/17.

Other

- After the task force recommendation goes to the bishop, we will ask the task force and the pastoral leaders (in January?) to give us feedback on the best ways to get information out.
- Word of mouth remains an important method of communication.
- We need to drive people to the Roc Catholics Northwest website as much as possible since there is a much shorter timeline for getting information out via the website—one week or less.
- With every deliverable, we need to remember that we require a long timeline for development and communication.

Report from May gathering of the Ministerium on the topic of Evangelization

- The Ministerium (leaders and paid staff) is gathered annually by the bishop for education, fellowship, and prayer. Since this year’s topic was “evangelization,” Fr. Peter invited Marianne to go.
- The speaker, Fr. Ignacio Llorente, is from South America and serves in the northwest part of the United States.
- The morning’s central theme was that the Church exists to evangelize. The afternoon was about forming parishes for evangelization.
- Here is a summary of the points made in "Forming Parishes for Evangelization." The Church exists to evangelize people into the resurrected Christ and to lead them to spiritual maturity. This is a lifelong process of each parish and each person so we must avoid thinking there are "magic bullets" or quick fixes. Fr. Llorente outlined these steps in forming parishes for evangelization:
 - Clarity of Mission: Each parish should have a mission statement that includes evangelization and that mission needs to be articulated, emphasized, and known to all parishioners. Parish missions should emphasize evangelization over preservation; a missionary impulse that avoids "ecclesial introversion." It should have "the eye for the outsider who is looking in," how do outsiders see our church. We need to be aware of who is *not coming to our church*. The mission articulates the vision all parishioners should have regardless of the individual position they have in the parish.
 - Leadership: The goal of each parish leader is to appoint, develop, and empower leaders. Each leader needs to raise other leaders. This is important at all levels, whether a table leader in a group discussion or a parish level leader looking to prepare others for larger responsibilities. Every leader needs to look for her or his replacement.
 - Offer large, wide open entry doors: Offer entry doors to share the kerygma. These should be easy to attend with appealing hospitality in non-judgmental, non-threatening environments. This is where programs like *Alpha*, *Acts29*, *ChristLife* and *the 99* are good programs when

executed well. But *remember, none of these are magic bullets!* Further, these programs need to rely on lay people and avoid clericalism in the offering. Evangelizing creates a community of new life that is inviting. By example, if parking is tight, as at Fr. Llorente's inner city parish, program staff paid for parking off the church grounds to be sure those attending had free and easy parking to attend.

- Stronger through worship: Offer moments where worship happens without explanation - "the veil between heaven and earth is thin." We should have many opportunities where worship is included, creating opportunities that are organic. It is important to invest in Sunday worship that manifests Jesus. Utilize the rhythm of the liturgical year to lead to deepening growth and invitation.
- Some solutions come with more praying than thinking. Church space open for prayer and sacramental encounters will have people stopping in for prayer and frequenting confession! Physically unlocking the church for prayer despite risks of vandalism creates an inviting atmosphere. Do our churches look like a fortress?
- Deeper through formation: Encourage a thirst for learning more about the faith. This will help people acquire and maintain a Christian worldview. Remember electronic resources. The speaker himself said he recently went through the on-line "Bible in a Year" podcasts.
- Warmer through fellowship: Help Catholics connect with one another. "You cannot be a lone ranger of Catholicism." A sense of belonging is important - faith, food & fellowship. Hospitality is key for new people to the community. This helps new people integrate into the life of the community. It helps new people navigate to the next step. Fellowship also includes a nice parish website that is easy to navigate.
- Broader through service: Next steps for new people are to be invited to go beyond the "faith, food and fellowship" to become involved in the mission of the church - service and evangelization.

Closing prayer: Hail Mary

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 17 at 6:30 pm, room #3 in Deacon Hall at St. Lawrence