

CPC Meeting – September 12, 2023 (In person)

In attendance: Fr. Dan, Nick (moderator), Kristina, Beth, Kathie, Charlotte, Peter, Sheila, Isabella, Greg, Ginny, Elizabeth, Saulo, Tom

CORI forms filled out by all present.

Fr. Dan:

New Staff

- Welcome to Marissa Browne, hired as the RE Coordinator for Grades 6-10. Marissa is a 3rd year Master of Divinity Student at BC.
- Welcome to Fr. Guy Sciacca (pronounced Shock-ah), a retired diocesan priest from RCAB. Will help to cover weekends in the collaborative and be present during Fr. Dan's vacation. He has a dog named Mason who will be visible in our faith community! Fr. Dan shared that Fr. Guy's presence will help to balance his schedule/presence between the two parishes at liturgies as Fr. Guy is not a Jesuit and his time off is not tied into an academic calendar.

Fr. Dan shared a quote that set the tone for the meetings discussion:

Looking at small numbers in Mongolia -- Pope Francis in Mongolia a week ago (9/2/23) --"Knowing that being little is not a problem, but a resource. God loves littleness, and through it he loves to accomplish great things, as Mary herself bears witness (cf. *Lk* 1:48-49). Brothers and sisters, do not be concerned about small numbers, limited success, or apparent irrelevance. That is not how God works. Let us keep our gaze fixed on Mary, who in her littleness is greater than the heavens, for within her she bore the One whom the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain (cf. *1 Kings* 8:27). Brothers and sisters, let us entrust ourselves to her, asking for a renewed zeal and an ardent love that tirelessly and joyfully bears witness to the Gospel."

- Discussion ensued regarding the decline in attendance that has been ongoing since the 1960s
- We are called to be God's evangelizers -God works in powerful and mysterious ways.
- Requires us to reach out and not be a church just for the church
- Every October, RCAB requires an attendance count of all parishes
 - SH notes no real change pre-post COVID...numbers are the same however the people may be different.
 - OL numbers not readily available during the meeting
- Network effect: So much going against attending church on a Sunday morning - we must provide other opportunities for people to come together.
 - Retreat days such as the one the Woman's Spirituality Group put together last Spring.
 - Youth group – High School students meeting at 5 pm on Sunday evening for the hour before the 6 pm liturgy.
 - Using Faith community as a positive support mental health. Really listening to/ hearing – determining ways to provide a mental, spiritual, emotional framework...tools that make life better.
 - Evangelize – simply invite your friends.

- Remembering how effective parish run activities can be (and have been in the past)... soccer teams, meet for coffee after church, shows and concerts, keeping young parents connected.

Brainstorming where we can put these ideas into action:

- Asking what other faith communities do in their own faith communities.
- Service:
 - Food pantries...enclosing holiday cards from the collaborative
 - Christian service projects – sock drives.
- Pray and Play Group – Gina will be working with Moms and Tots in a pray and play ministry to reach the age group between Baptism and the start of RE. Also provides a faith opportunity for parents and caregivers.
- Incorporate Family Game nights, Trivia or Bible trivia into the calendar so that friends in faith can socialize together...also events such as pizza and ice cream night, fish fries, spaghetti night (K of C)
- Outreach to the youth –
 - Think outside the box on how to engage kids...cartoons, Christian movies, challenge kids to think of ways they can serve their neighbors.
 - Attend Religious Ed and Mass- Collaborative wide there will be consistent Children's Masses and Grade Level RE masses where the children participate as greeters, gift bearers, youth lectors and children's choirs and family hosted coffee hours. There are Children's Homilies and Lay Reflections by the PA's.
 - Holiday pageants – remembering how important these were in some cultures.
- Encouraging prayer life...Morning prayer with Magnificat, Rosary
- Prayer Card Intentions for the Homebound so that they do not feel isolated from the community.
- Prayers from the altar...building community –
 - prayers for the sick during the prayers of the faithful
 - include prayers in the book of intentions and then include the prayer book in the presentation of the gifts.
- Kathie welcomed folks to join her at the Braintree Synod meeting at RCAB in Braintree on September 23rd.

Next meeting – on Zoom – Monday November 6th at 7 pm