

## **NOTES from Faith Formation Board Meeting May 7, 2024, by ZOOM**

Present: Everyone! *Cory, Angela, Linea, Jane, Ryan, Kat, Jessica, Wendy, Charlotte, Dave*

**FF Update (Cory):** Confirmation and first Sacrament Mass--there was confusion over which kids were receiving sacraments. Several parents did not attend meetings, so it was unclear which kids received prep at home as intended, and which didn't. Some kids had prepared in earlier years but did not receive sacraments, and we had a few kids from Colfax. Next year the list needs to be more organized, with clear communications to families and a cutoff date for kids to participate, so there's enough time for them to receive prep.

**Youth Group (Linea):** The last regular meeting was Sunday May 5. Two sixth graders joined, with a nice family dinner. Unfortunately, the weather was too cold and rainy for the traditional water balloon fight or alternative color-chalk-balloon fight. Linea might try another party in June or July. This Saturday, May 11, youth will volunteer with homeless at House of Charity in Spokane, with laser tag afterward. The McCanns are helping.

**Bullying (Cory):** This happened recently in one of our faith formation classes. Our faith formation has not been a safe environment for all kids, which has caused hurt. How can we address this? We need to incorporate it continually. If it isn't addressed, kids can feel ostracized and stop participating. We should bring this back to core values and the gospel. How do we show God's love to each other? How do people feel when they don't belong? We need to NAME what's happening. We could use Restorative Circles if there is an incident, in which all members share their experiences, with the goal of listening to each other and returning to community. This could work in a faith community, where we share common values, and it's important that parents and kids representing both sides participate.

We need to equip catechists and help them imagine how to respond to different situations, such as bullying. This didn't happen last fall because we didn't secure catechists until later fall semester. Why not set a date/time for training or a catechist's mini retreat a week before classes begin, so they can plan for it. We have materials that were used in the past.

Accountability and follow-up are key. Reconciliation should not be left to the parents. Letting things slide makes bullying worse and isn't good for bullies or those bullied.

We need to train catechists, clearly present our vision for Faith Formation and expectations at the beginning of each new school year and be diligent to follow-up.

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** Who's leaving: Wendy, Jane, Dave. Betty withdrew earlier. We need board members to help make calls and interview candidates. Last year we did interviews all on one night, one after another, which felt a little rushed. Cory wants to decide on night/s of interviews (*conversations!*) before calling candidates. Wendy remembers wine and cheese and an inviting "camaraderie" feeling when she was interviewed. However we do this, it needs to happen soon! Board members need to be invited to the June 4 meeting, which shouldn't happen at the last minute.

**SUMMER STUFF:** VBS will be July 8-12 in the morning, free for all, at Trinity Lutheran. Many volunteers are needed to help lead games, etc. Our only limitation re. number of kids is the ratio of volunteers to kids. A link for registration is in the bulletin, use the same link for both kids (grade 5 and below), and volunteers (grade 6 and up). The Diocesan Middle School Camp for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders will be Aug. 11-16, or 10-16 for volunteers. Registration opened May 1, and the camp fills up quickly. Volunteers are needed, especially men.

**FF TAKE-HOME BAGS:** This idea was presented before. If you have ideas for topics and/or materials, please email Angela [anelson@dioceseofspokane.org](mailto:anelson@dioceseofspokane.org). Some ideas were presented. Materials to help kids learn about saints to inspire a confirmation name. Setting up a table displaying kids' books about saints (of which Sacred Heart has many) when this is timely for Sacrament prep. Bags could be based around holidays, especially more obscure feasts. Themes around the church year could be a good way of introducing bags, a time when families might be motivated to read and do activities with kids. We need accessible materials, e.g. not a 400-page book. Bags could be hung on hooks for parishioners to sign out. We will let parishioners know when they're available.

***Next meeting: JUNE 4, 7pm. Snacks: Dave, Opening prayer: Kat, Closing prayer: Cory***