Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes

Our Lady of Mercy, Queen of Peace, Sacred Heart, St. Benedict, St. Joseph, St. Michael, St. Thomas d'Aquin

Family of Parishes Business Office: 1011 Oak Avenue; Sarnia, ON N7S 1J4
Website: www.sarniacatholic.ca Phone: 519-336-2653 Email: sbrcfp@dol.ca

Communications Guidelines

Effective and on-going communication between all partner groups in the Sarnia-Bluewater Family of Parishes is vital to its on-going renewal and growth. To ensure that the needs of all groups are met and that there is a clear understanding as to what the expectations are, the Communications Team has developed a set of guidelines. These guidelines will be reviewed periodically to ensure they meet the needs of all members as the Family of Parishes grows. They are available on the website, in print form and electronically upon request.

Forms of Communication

- monthly Newsletter – emailed and printed copies
- bulletin boards
- printed material such as handouts to parishioners
- verbal announcements at Mass
- announcements from the pulpit and witness talks/testimonials
- website
- social media
- YouTube, podcasts, livestreaming
- communication to parents through school principals via the school board EDBSY system for English and to the principals for French

Bulletin

- Submission Deadline: Wednesday, 5pm for the coming Sunday bulletin
- Ads to be sent to the bulletin editor Annie Ferrera at **aferrera@dol.ca**.
- Components of bulletin announcement/advertisement:
  - Title
  - Contact person
  - Date & time
  - Location
  - Descriptor including target audience if applicable
  - If included, images must be sent as black & white jpeg or png
  - Each event/announcement will appear in the bulletin up to three times on the dates chosen by organizers (i.e., Bazaar in October; 3 ads can appear beginning of Sept, mid-Sept, and end of Sept OR 3 ads, 3 weeks in a row…)
  - Ads may be edited for spacing purposes, etc. at the discretion of the bulletin editor.
  - Group/Committee monthly reports and similar are to be communicated through each group's individual communication platforms (website, member emails) rather than through the bulletin.
  - Ministry reports will be included in monthly newsletters.
  - Week at a Glance & Upcoming Events for the following week will list the meetings and events scheduled.

Monthly newsletter

- Submission deadline for newsletter items is the **15th of the previous month** (May 15 is deadline for June newsletter).
- The purpose of this form of communication is to:
  - advertise and promote upcoming events in our Family of Parishes
  - Celebrate events and achievements in our Family of Parishes
- Articles should be brief.
- Can include photos.
- Newsletters will be distributed through email, print and on the website.

Bulletin Boards

The purpose of the bulletin board is to advertise spiritual, social and ministry events pertaining to the life of the Sarnia Bluewater Family. It is not intended for the personal use of members to advertise businesses or other market ventures.

- Posters need to be dropped off or emailed to the Family of Parishes business office for distribution to the churches by Wednesday at 5pm.
- Emailed posters can be in Word or in pdf format (8 ½ x 11) and are to be sent to the bulletin editor (**aferrera@dol.ca**) for distribution to the churches by Wednesday at 5pm. Larger than 8 ½ x 11 will be subject to space availability and must be provided in printed form by the organization.
- The Family of Parishes is moving away from signs being posted on church doors and windows. Only in exceptional cases should this method be used.

Promotions at Masses

To avoid the appearance of a marketplace and to maintain the spiritual and welcoming atmosphere of each parish, ministries and groups are asked to adhere to the following:

- All promotions and sales take place after mass.
- Narthex/entrance displays, event sign ups, selling of tickets, pies, etc. must be coordinated with the Family of Parishes office to avoid over scheduling at a particular site.
- If possible, events should be limited to one group/committee on any given weekend.
- Groups are encouraged to request a once-a-year membership drive, witness talk or similar. Talks are limited to a maximum of two minutes and must be scheduled in advance. Groups such as KofC, CWL, SVP, etc. are encouraged to coordinate their membership drive/witness talk weekends, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- If your group/committee's membership wishes to serve as welcomers, ushers, readers etc. on weekends when you have a promotion taking place, please work with your parish liturgical ministry.

Mass announcements

Announcements at the end of mass should be limited to three or four key messages, identified by the Communications Committee on a weekly basis.

- Additional brief announcements pertaining to individual parishes may be added if time allows. For example: Please join us for coffee in the meeting room following mass. The CWL is selling pies in the meeting room following mass.
- Submit this request to Annie Ferrera at aferrera@dol.ca. by 5 pm on the Wednesday, prior to the Sunday.

Website Guidelines

The Sarnia Bluewater Family of Parishes website is an important communication tool, not only for the Church but for all its ministries. It is a vehicle through which we promote all that our parishes and their ministries have to offer.

- Each group/committee is required to maintain their own webpage; training will be provided, and a volunteer is available to help when necessary.
- Pictures must be in accordance with Diocesan website rules and copyright laws.
- Content needs to be in line with your group's mission.

- Website content will be overseen by the website Administrator (Annie Ferrera).

Calendar of Events

A Family of Parishes calendar of events is another avenue through which events can be reviewed to ensure that there are no conflicts or overloading of events on a particular day or week.

- Each group/committee is encouraged to submit a yearly calendar of events (January to December) to Annie Ferrera (**aferrera@dol.ca**) in November of the previous year, if possible.
- As new events are planned, updates need to be submitted as soon as possible for scheduling and advertising.
- Where there may be major conflicts, the Communications Committee, along with the Core Leadership team will work with the parties affected to find a satisfactory solution.